

New Galloway Community Enterprises Ltd

Minutes – Board Meeting

12 May 2016, 7:30pm, Dalveen

Present: Mike Brown, David Briggs, Dawn Spernagel, Margaret Watson.

Apologies: Mary Smith, Sarah Parry, Emma Harnett

Also Attending: Helen Keron.

1. Minutes: Minutes of last meeting were accepted, proposed MW, seconded DS.

2. Review of actions:

Most actions complete – HK to progress Share plan actions and holiday schedule information.

3. Progress update.

The progress update given by HK was noted with the following comments:

3.1. Comms Officer. Agreed to interview just one candidate in the light of the last-minute withdrawal by the second candidate. **Update** – Sarah Ade was appointed as Communications Assistant with a reduced workload.

3.2 Environmental Health. Noted

3.3 Big Lottery advice. Noted

3.4 Project Plan. Noted that progress had slipped by approximately 2 weeks, but submission still planned for mid July (deadline end August). **Update** – Andy Normansell has intimated the first review will take 3 weeks not 2 due to the volume he has in. It will depend on the number of comments he has as to whether this will impact the submission date.

3.5 Business plan. * **Action** – HK to progress with Andrew Ward as the critical step in finalizing the application form and in starting the Share Offer.

3.6 Share offer. * **Action** – HK to discuss with MS whether taking on the Share Offer documentation is feasible for her.

3.8 Community Engagement. Noted. The first meeting with EH, HK and Amy Tigh-Dee of Creetown Initiative went well, and creating the video should not be too much of a drain on NGCE resources. * **Action** – HK to progress.

4. Financial review:

The modified spreadsheet by which transactions and budget compliance will be tracked was reviewed and accepted by the Board.

Current position is £743 under-spend on the £44k BLF grant – predictions are that the under-spend may increase to £4000. * **Action** – HK discuss with Andy N what to do with any extra money, and to confirm that money can be moved around within budget pots to balance out over and under-spend.

5. Post Office Governance:

The situation regarding the Post Office was discussed further with respect to the best interests of Adrian Morley and NGCE.

***Action** – HK arrange a meeting with Adrian to discuss further, as the details of any arrangement need to be agreed in principle before bid submission. **Complete** – planned for Thurs 26th May, 12:30pm.

* **Action** – HK to discuss TUPE with Jim Hopkins.

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6. Application form:

- **Services to offer** - Agreed

- **Micro-grants**

The Board agreed with the principle of these, but didn't want setting it to be too much of a drain on resources.

- **How should we spend our profits?**

The Board agreed with the 4 areas of spend, but wanted to be clear that the first amount of any profits would go into a contingency fund, as per good governance and operating procedures. Only profits not required to ensure that the enterprise is sustainable will be disbursed. * **Action** – HK to ensure this message is clear in the application form.

- **Vision Statement / Aims** - Agreed

- **Staffing levels, costs, performance related pay**

We need one person in the shop at any given time, whether they are a Postmaster, Shop Manager or Shop assistant. This will therefore be 2 x FTE (40hr/wk) jobs, to cover the 71 hours of shop opening plus stock sourcing and administration. There will be some exceptions to this at busy times – mornings / Christmas. * **Action** – HK to work with Andrew Ward on the business case on this assumption.

The concept of performance related pay was agreed, with details to be confirmed.

- **Flats - vision and markets**

Agreed. Interested parties will meet for a Mood Board creation session. * **Action** HK organise.

7. AOCB.

- MW requested that meetings not be 2 weekly, as this is too frequent.
- MB suggested that a regular day-time debrief is held after Board meetings to catch up with Board members who could not attend. * **Action** – MB to suggest this to all Board members by email. **Complete.**
- MB suggested that all existing members are emailed before the Share Launch to make their position clear i.e. we are not asking them for more money – they already have a share - but they can buy more shares if they like. * **Action** HK.

8. DONM.

Thursday 2nd June, 7:30pm, Dalveen.

Helen Keron, 19th May 2016.

New Galloway Community Enterprises Ltd
Progress Update – 11th May 2016

Comms Officer

Two candidates have applied and are being interviewed by MW and Mary Smith of Castle Douglas with HK in attendance on Friday morning (13th)

Environmental Health

Linda Kain from DGC Environmental Health has visited the shop and given advice on necessary systems when operational and on the layout of the shop facilities. For example, the toilet in the back office needs to have a double-door access, and the back office needs to have a double sink if we ever want to prepare any food in there. See full write-up in DropBox.

Big Lottery advice

As previously circulated, Andy Normansell of BLF was quite happy with our direction and had a few suggestions. I would like to get the application form to him for first review tomorrow (Friday).

Project Plan

The plan is progressing reasonably well towards submission at end June. We have probably slipped a week, due in part to Mike's suggestion that the final review of the form by Andy could take place in the summer holidays, ready for almost immediate submission afterwards. This would still put us in line for submission in the middle of July – the deadline is the end of August.

Business Plan

Andrew Ward has been working this, and I will start work on in earnest next week, when the application form is away for review. The business plan is the critical factor for filling in the rest of the form and for starting the Share offer.

Share offer

Morven is waiting on our business case to take the next steps with this.

Amy Tigh-Dee from Creetown Initiative is meeting myself and EH on Thursday (12th) morning to discuss plans for the video.

Community Engagement to date

- Writer's group attended; 3 questionnaires recovered.
- Kells School visit for myself and MS on Thursday (12th) afternoon.
- Dates planned for other Connecting in Retirement projects and Church groups.
- Need a plan for local business owners.

Other

TLT Solicitors of Glasgow have dropped their quote for providing State Aid advice to £920+VAT.

Flood risk assessment visit planned, but still no date yet.

Decisions required by the Board.

Services to offer

We need a finite list for the application form. At present, they are:

1. Operate an advocacy / signposting service from the shop back-office, offering advice on:
 - Understanding and accessing benefit entitlements (particularly older and unemployed people).
 - Accessing relevant services in the event of a life-changing event.
2. Partner with the CAB, charitable financial service providers and other experts to hold regular drop-in sessions in the back office.
3. Run volunteer food-business courses in the shop on how to meet Environmental health and labelling standards.
4. Create and administer an oil and a wood-pellet buying co-operative system.
5. Open the communal laundry needed for the self-catering accommodation to New Galloway residents at certain times.
6. Partner with the local community Transport Initiative to offer a free bus service to and from the shop on Tuesday mornings.
7. Offer bike hire to the self-catering visitors and residents to create a self-employed opportunity and increase activity levels in the area.

Also (community offerings):

1. Strongly promote local produce in the shop, thereby both encouraging people to consider food miles in their purchasing behaviour and supporting local businesses.
2. Operate a surplus food swap in the summer months.
3. Run a cider / apple-juicing day in the autumn, for people to bring their surplus and windfall apples to.
4. Maintain and improve the current advertising of local events via posters.
5. Run a weekly lottery with profits to local causes.

Should we have anything else in here? Are we happy with these?

Staffing levels, costs, performance related pay

I think that we need a part-time Enterprise Manager in the back-office if we are to offer all the services that we list above.

I also think we will need 2 x FTE shop managers and 2 x FTE shop assistants, of the shop is to be open from 8-7.

Also a housekeeper and gardener.

Can we discuss staffing levels and the rates we expect to pay them. Also do we think performance related pay for the shop manager is a good idea? (Lower base salary, bonus linked to shop performance).

This will tie in with our earlier conversation about PO Governance – we need to discuss here how having 2 shop managers / 1 manager and 1 post-master would work.

Spending our profits!

The 4 areas that I have put in our application form, linking them of course to our Needs survey, are:

1. **Job creation:** Encouraging entrepreneurship through targeted grants to help start-up of micro businesses.
2. **Public transport:** Supporting and extending existing community transport links.
3. **Community well-being:** Maintaining facilities and services that contribute materially to the physical or mental well-being of the residents.
4. **Legacy projects:** Money set aside as seed money to help fund larger schemes such as micro-generation projects that will in turn provide an income for the village for many years to come.

Are we happy with that? What kind of proportion would we want to spend on each?

Micro-grants

Plunkett has advised that giving out start-up grants to individuals to allow them to create micro-businesses may be problematic, because all of our funds are to be spent for community benefit. I have challenged that on the grounds that we see a clear community benefit to having our residents enabled to start small businesses – after all, you can never tell which will be the business that grows and ends up being an local employer. It's about removing the barriers to work, which could well include start-up costs. It also comes from our Needs survey, which is very clear that one of the main needs of the community that this project should try and address is the lack of local jobs. Fostering entrepreneurship seems to be the obvious solution.

It would also not be just money – because our project includes an Enterprise Manager, who would give advice on business start-up, it becomes a whole package with a very specific aim.

What do we think? Do you want me to carry on fighting this

Vision Statement / Aims

This is what I have at present:

'The outcome of our community engagement over the last 18 months is that we have a clear view of what success will look like for our village.

In 5 years time our village will :

- Have a thriving village shop and post office which operates as a social hub and focus for community involvement for all residents as well as providing them the groceries and services they need.
- Have established itself as a well-known and well-loved visitor destination with a coherent tourist offering that leads to repeat bookings and hence has increased the viability of the other local businesses.
- Have generated £100,000 of profit of which £50,000 has been reinvested into the community and £50,000 has been set aside for legacy projects such as micro-generation.
- Have created an environment where local people know how to access help, whether that be a start-up grant for a micro business, advice on what to do when their partner is diagnosed with Parkinsons or advice on what benefits they are entitled to.

We are also clear on what the future would look like without a village shop. 5 years after the closure of our last shop:

- The community will have fragmented, with no single point of community cohesion to bond around.

- Social interaction within the village will be much diminished, with people less aware of their neighbours and vulnerable members of the community.
- The village will be a less attractive place to settle than the neighbouring villages with shops, resulting in a downward spiral of population and school roll.
- Tourists will not return to the village due to the lack of basic supplies, adversely impacting on all local businesses.

We believe that our project mitigates all of the negative effects and goes further, to produce the many positive effects of our Vision Statement.'

Is that ok? What else should be in there / not in there?

Flats – vision and markets

I have put in the application form that the vision for the flats is:

'Comfortable, modern, Scottish'. The prices will be mid-range – not cheap and cheerful, but not luxury hotel standard. We want people to feel at home in the accommodation, but it must be resilient enough to cope with repeated visits without looking tired.

- Flooring in the kitchen, bathrooms and halls will be XX
- Flooring in the living room / dining areas will be XX
- Flooring in the bedrooms will be carpets that are easy to clean.
- The colour scheme will be neutral, with highlights in XXX
- The Scottish theme will appear in the restrained use of tartan and themed accessories, as well as prints by local artists.
- Kitchens and bathroom fittings will be modern but classic, and easily cleanable.
- Sofas will have removable covers that can be machine-washed.
- Beds will have comfortable mattresses, white sheets and duvets and rugs or throws in complementary, warm colours.

I think we need a session to create Mood Boards for this – who would like to do that?!

The markets as I see them are

- Outdoor enthusiasts – Walkers, fishers, mountain bikers, astronomers, bird watchers.
- People with an existing connection to the area – Visiting family and friends, re-living old haunts.
- Families.

Is this right? Anyone missing?