

New Galloway Community Enterprises Ltd

Management Committee Meeting MINUTES

4th January, 7.30 pm, Dalveen, New Galloway

1. Present: Mike Brown, Dawn Spernagel, Jean Marsden, Emma Harnett, Margaret Watson, Sarah Lane.

Attending: Helen Keron.

Apologies: Mary Smith, Dave Briggs, Craig Millar.

2. Minutes of the last meeting approved; Proposed JM, Seconded SL.

3. Matters Arising

Actions carried over:

- HK check that LH has implemented electronic clock in / clock out.
- HK write up shop Risk Assessment
- HK move last Direct Debits from Co-op

4. Shop

4.1 Operations

Weekly Gross Sales in December were excellent, reaching a peak of £4,876. In November they averaged £3,160, which is also well on track for predictions.

The shop closed over Christmas on 25/12, 26/12 and 1/01. Sales on 2/01 were lower than average. **ACTION** – LH consider only opening until midday on 02-01-2019.

Christmas strategies which were well received by customers:

- Tasting night
- Focus on luxury goods not available in supermarkets
- Hampers that could be personalised.

New Year retail plan:

- Move to Healthy Eating theme.
- Work with Kells School P4-7 class for window display
- Create recipe cards and ingredient displays to showcase low cost healthy meals.

New Suppliers

Locally sourced: Gallovidian Liqueurs, Hills and Harbour gin, The Damn Fine Cheese Co and Steilhead Cider. From further afield: Alexander Wines and Cotswold Fayre.

It was noted by the Board that LH identified a potential conflict of interest with stocking Alexander Wines and had therefore brought this to the Board for approval before stocking the lines.

Equipment

The milk fridge inherited from Jim Hopkins has broken down. A replacement fridge is required to accommodate the twice weekly milk delivery due to the large volume of milk being received at one time. **ACTION: LH and HK** to investigate options.

It was noted by the Board that the shop operations continue to be of the highest standard, and that the Christmas marketing and sales were particularly impressive. Our thanks to Lynsey and the shop team for an excellent few months.

4.2 Chip and pin system

The Chip and Pin provider is proving very difficult, since the name of our BoS bank account does not have 'Ltd' in the title. Various options have been explored, including sourcing a card reader directly from BoS, but their terminals are not compatible with the EPOS system although JM indicated that there were ways to accommodate this. JM's daughter Karen has experience of this through her shop.

The current status is that the title of the BoS bank account needs to be changed to include 'Ltd' (which may or may not be straightforward) and from then it should be relatively easy to get a card machine. The option suggested by JM will also be explored. This is a priority as customers are asking for it and it will undoubtedly boost sales. **ACTION – HK** contact Karen through JM, and progress card reader.

4.3 Sickness / Holiday cover

Three applicants responded to the advert for casual shop assistants. All were found to be suitable and will begin training in early January. They will need to be fully shop trained in all processes and complete a 2-hour alcohol licensing training prior to start date. The casual shop assistants will predominantly be used for holiday cover but may also be required for sickness and emergency cover. They will be self-employed.

4.4 Volunteers

Lynsey has had a request for a volunteering opportunity to facilitate return to work. It was agreed that this was a key benefit that the shop could

provide for the community but that it would need to be managed carefully in the interests of fairness.

ACTION – **HK** work with **LH** and **SL** to update the Volunteer Policy in the light of operational experience.

ACTION – **LH** to progress the volunteer opportunity once the policy is updated and agreed.

4.5 2016/2017 Holiday allowance.

Some staff members did not take their pro-rata holiday allocation between the 14th July 2017 and the 30th Sept 2017, due largely to the heavy operational constraints on the shop in that opening period.

It was agreed that this pro-rata allowance could be rolled over for all staff into 2017/18, on the understanding that from now on, leave will be managed on a ‘use it or lose it’ basis. The end of the next leave year is 30th Sept 2018.

ACTION – **LH** manage this 2017/18 leave allowance as per usual procedures, ensuring that leave does not accrue disproportionately into August / September.

It was noted by the Board that HMRC guidance states that ‘The only time someone can get paid in place of taking statutory leave (known as ‘payment in lieu’) is when they leave their job.’

5. Building and refurbishment

5.1 Progress report

The plan laid out with McGowan Miller at the end of October went as expected, and we received 5 replies to our tender on the 20th December 2017. This means we have satisfied the BLF requirements for an open tender process.

The 5 bids have come in higher than the budgeted figure, partly due to a number of options being put in for quoting, and so further work is now required to understand and reduce the numbers. The Big Lottery will be kept fully up to date with progress.

ACTION – **HK** work with Marc Henkleman and **EH** to understand the figures further and suggest options for cost reduction to the Board.

5.2 Shop fitting

Two quotes are in progress for the shop fitting. These scopes may also have to be addressed, but this will be done as part of the overall cost optimisation exercise.

5.3 Temporary Accommodation

ACTION – EH visit the preferred location and confirm whether or not it will be available.

6. Community Engagement Worker

6.1 Update

Samantha Rushton has accepted the post and started work at 20 hours/week on the 3rd January 2018. She will be working mostly out of the back office of the shop. Her core hours are Mondays and Fridays, alternate Wednesdays and floating hours on a Thursday evening or Saturday morning to facilitate cross-community engagement. Her priorities for the first few weeks are:

- Creating the policies and protocols that will allow her to work safely and effectively e.g. Lone working, referral routes, data protection, evaluation and monitoring
- Meeting the key members of the business, charitable and other organisations in New Galloway.
- Starting to understand the needs of individuals within the community.
- Supporting the Student placement.
- Creating a list of objectives for her first 6 months.

She will be supported by Mary Smith, Margaret Watson and Helen Keron, with Mike Brown holding 6 monthly performance review discussions as Line Manager.

6.2 Student Placement

Bright Green Placements advertised and gained 6 applicants for this 10-week placement starting in mid-Jan 2018. They short-listed 2 and both were invited for interview, but one dropped out today (4th Jan). The Board agreed that just because there was only one candidate for the role did not imply that they would inevitably be successful – it must be clear that they would add value to the organisation.

Update – Janosh Schnee was interviewed by MW and Sam Rushton on 5th Jan and was subsequently offered the role. He will start work on a number of community projects, including starting the oil and wood pellet co-operatives in on 23rd January 2018. This 10-week placement is fully funded by Bright Green Placements, and incurs no cost to NGCE.

7. Finances

7.1 Bank accounts / reconciliation.

The BoS bank account is now run almost exclusively by Lynsey for shop operations. Not all Direct Debits have been transferred but it is reconciled weekly so it is operating as it should, and remains healthy.

A reconciliation of the Co-Op account at the end of November showed that we have around £12,000 of Unrestricted funds in addition to the CEW first 6 months' salary and the remaining subsidy for the shop.

As of the end of November 2017, we had subsidised the shop £9,255 out of our allocated £15,016 first 6-month BLF subsidy. We had been running for 4.5 months at that point by which time we would have expected to have used £11,262 of subsidy. Therefore, at that point we had underspent the subsidy by some £2000.

7.2 VAT

We are registered for VAT from the 14th July 2017 but only have detailed information on sales from the end October 2017, when the EPOS system started. We will therefore submit a return for the first quarter based on the 'Retail Apportionment' scheme. We will opt out of that scheme for the quarter that we started EPOS in and all following quarters.

7.3 End of Year Accounts.

The bulk of our receipts, plus a reconciled bank statement analysis, were submitted to Bell Ogilvy in mid-December. Our end of year was 30th Sept, and the AGM is on the 1st March 2018. Bell Ogilvy is therefore working to mid-Feb to return the accounts.

ACTION – **HK and DS** continue to work with BO to create official accounts and also a lay-person's narrative version for use at the AGM.

7.4 Yodlee / Sage Integration

ACTION – Defer discussion of Yodlee to February Board meeting. **ALL** to read briefing document and digest.

8. Staff

8.1 6-monthly appraisals.

MB has LH's appraisal planned in for mid Jan. **ACTION** – **MB, SL and EH** to have a meeting before then to discuss and agree the process and appraisal form (draft to be supplied by EH).

ACTION – **LH** carry out shop assistant 6-monthly appraisals before end Jan.

8.2 Remuneration

It was agreed that Shop Assistants will be paid at 2% over the minimum wage, rounded up to the nearest penny, from April 2018. Their hourly rate will therefore increase whenever the minimum wage increases.

It was agreed that the GRM will be given annual pay reviews unless the Board agrees to shorten the review period. The pay reviews will be linked to the appraisal process and operational circumstances.

9. Electric vehicle

We have been approached by Alan Smith, Chair of GCAT, to see if we would like to work with them to optimise the use of our budgeted electrical vehicle. It was agreed that this could be a partnership that would have significant mutual benefit, and it was agreed to continue the discussions.

ACTION – EH to arrange a meeting with GCAT / GTI. BLF consent must be sought for the suggested partnership model in advance of agreeing to it.

10. AGM

Date confirmed for the 1st March 2018 in New Galloway Town Hall.

11. Audit Committee – MW confirmed she would be a member.

ACTION – MB to approach DB to ask if he would be the second Board member. [Later: DB agrees to serve.]

12. Expenses Claims – none.

13. AOCB

- JM offered to ask GCAT if they would like to be included in the First Aid training offered by a member of the community, and to work with LH to set the sessions up. **ACTION JM.**
- EH reported that she and HK attended a Data Protection briefing session with Third Sector Dumfries & Galloway and had received some useful advice on compliance with the new regulations coming in May 2018. **ACTION** – HK write up the meeting and circulate recommendations to the Board for discussion.
- Food wastage in the event of fridge / freezer breakdown – in the light of recent events, a discussion on policy is needed. **ACTION** – LH create a draft policy for action in the event of fridge malfunction and bring it to the Board for discussion at the February meeting.

14. DONM: 1st Feb, 7:30pm, Dalveen unless notified otherwise.

Helen Keron, 10th January 2018