



Board Present (not present / apologies)	Mike Devenney (Chair), Mark Conti (Vice Chair), Linda Marquhardt (Treasurer), Janice Hyndman (Treasurer), Neil Millward (Sec.), Barbara Beaton, Rana Bedawi (Elgin Academy), Bob Cunningham, Doug Hartley, Stacey Macdonald, Glenn Munro, Donnie Squair, Maggie Wellinger, & Angus Whitton.
Matters arising	
Declarations of interest	NM reported that under the new Conflict of Interest (Col.) Policy each member of the committee should fill in and keep current a Col. declaration. MD thought that Col. should include situations where members of the board are working for groups hiring the hall. These should be kept on file. Discussion about Col. – online or physical. What constitutes a Col.? The Col. list to be kept in the office and made available on request or sent out for a fee.
Minutes	Adopted SM BC
David Adams	DA legal experience will be of value – DA to be invited to join the group as a full member. Action MD
Portal	AW stated it's on the website – Action AW - NM to upload minutes
Developer Obligation fund	MC reported that there are four applications in process. (Development work in the flat / design of bar / refurbishment of bar / marketing brochure)
Buildings listing	MD reported he had written to Jim Grant but had not had a response.
El:gin Contract	MC been in contact, but no contract is yet forthcoming. MD to chase up
Finance	MD reported that we have not yet created a set of financial policies.
Utilities	<p>NM reported: several (7) utility brokers have been contacted and are in the process of quoting. Currently there is only one quote, which is 115% of the average rate supplied by the public procurement initiative last year. The Public Procurement initiative will not quote as the price changes every month dependent on...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The cost of the gas or electricity itself (often called the 'Wholesale Cost', 'Cost of Energy' or 'Commodity Cost') 2. Costs for maintaining the networks of pipes and wires that transport the gas or electricity (the 'Transportation' or 'Distribution' costs) 3. Costs for keeping gas or electricity flowing at the right level (balancing costs) 4. Government charges that are added to your bill ('levies'); and 5. Supplier management fees (the supplier's charges for processing your bill) <p>They recommend we budget on the average price</p> <p>If ETH joins this scheme, we would not be eligible for the negotiated rate until the new contract came into force in May – NM / MC to clarify and post in Phoenix. Action</p> <p>NM Asked if it was possible to speak with Moray Council about staying on the current scheme until the new tariff kicks in, in May. (correction: Since the meeting, INM has been in touch with the Scottish government and there is a 45day mandatory standard rate, before we are eligible for the negotiated contract rates. See phoenix for details)</p> <p>NM asked for a copy of the signed lease – as brokers are asking for it Action MD</p> <p>MC indicated Forres have gone with Citrus Utilities.</p>
Invitation to arts event	SM able and happy to go will apply for funding.
Defib	To go by the bus stop.
Chamber of commerce	Decision not to join as per vote on Phoenix.
Reflection on current situation	MD stated that we are at a momentous time coming to the end of the first six months and gave a brief history of the project. Summary of the current situation to go with these



	<p>minutes. (see appendix one) He thought that the full £48K of the deficit fund will have been spent by the end of the first six months.</p> <p>MC highlighted that different members will give different amounts of time and commitment. Consequently, the work load can be quite stressful on individual members. MD spoke about the desire to have more paid staff when finance allow. Discussion regarding staffing levels and needs of a larger building (growth fund) as part of the 'cultural quarter'.</p> <p>JH reported on a TSi one-day course on volunteer management. SM asked if we can do a volunteer push. AW suggested a volunteer skills audit. MC raised the issue of having no one to run the volunteer base. SM suggested an online staged approach and volunteered to get it going. MD indicated the need to have a clear idea of what we want them to do. MC stated that we already have a list of possible volunteer activities. Bill is currently managing two volunteers and they could help us getting the process right. BB indicated Bill already deals with bookings and could take some of the strain from Donnie. BC highlighted the difference between responsibility and delivery.</p> <p>Action SM / AW to set up Survey Monkey poll and JH to pursue TSi course with a view to doing a volunteer evening at some point.</p> <p>LM highlighted a need to get booking and invoices right. Discussion on the financial process. NM proposed the finance committee sit with the process paper and highlight any differences. Action: Linda to set up and coordinate.</p> <p>DS thought that we work together quite well as a team on the big events. Different people's priorities don't always align. E.g. Problem with Box office. He thought that AW probably needed help with the technical side of operations. AW outlined how in the run up to an event the operational resources are focussed on the event, when the day to day operations still need to be covered. Discussion on how individuals can help for this period.</p>
<p>Financial position</p>	<p>BB near completion of Nov / Dec accounts and moving on to Jan. MD reported that we should be able to do an accurate forecast later this month. MD thought that the full 47.5K had been spent and that we would have to find this in months to come. He estimated that monthly costs were in the region of £10K.</p> <p>BB suggested creating entries in the nominal ledger for the Bar company to track income and expenditure and remove bar costs from the ETH accounts. MD thought that we should be speaking in terms of targeting rather than budgeting. MD indicated that we should be aiming for a budget surplus and hoping to employ someone to take on some of the strain. Young talent programme.</p>
<p>Social Event</p>	<p>MW asked if we could set up a social event – MD especially for the members. The members need to be engaged and given the chance to steer the project. BC reported that The Grant Lodge group had been doing this already.</p> <p>Feedback from public – Cards to be put out and handed to visitors.</p>
<p>CAT</p>	<p>MD highlighted a change in attitude from TMC and HiE: both being keen to see the transfer going ahead and are keen to help. A suggestion was made that the CAT should be written without too much reference to the Growth Deal. NM reported that the first draft of the CAT Business Case was taken to Elaine from the Moray Council Support group and after a discussion with her was adapted to contain the elements she had requested. The current document still needs to have the financial projections and the public engagement activities added. MD stated that public consultation should be an ongoing process.</p> <p>NM reminded the board that we have response cards printed and they need to be using them at every opportunity. MW to put out: Action - all</p> <p>MD reported that HIE and TMC community support team were very keen for us to get on with the process and move forward with the CAT.</p> <p>SM thought that the growth deal would not affect the Cat business case and that should be written as such. MC indicated that HIE and MC were starting to look for our</p>



	<p>aspirations for the longer term. MD also thought that HIE were expecting to have to support us in order for the project to be a success. MD presented a number of supporting documents that had been issued by TMC / HIE wrt. the Growth Deal.</p>
Front reception desk	<p>MW asked if it was possible to renew the front desk to make the area more attractive – Action: MW to pursue and report back</p>
Growth Deal	<p>MD reported that the tender for the EIA had not been awarded by HIE yet, but the contract was still expected to be finished on time by May '19. The assessors will be expected to review the whole breadth of options available and may have some far-reaching recommendations. MD outlined some of the options that had been considered in previous Growth Deal discussions. There was a feeling that organisations promoting the arts should be more included in the development plans.</p> <p>BC indicated that we are well ahead of Grant Lodge in terms of having an existing facility that is able to generate funds in its current state.</p> <p>AW reported that by way of admin, ETH4c have sent over 12K emails and sent in excess of 3K</p>
Adam Foundation	<p>MD reported meeting with the Adam foundation (Anne Adam, & Louise Nairn). BC reported that they were very receptive to our ideas for moving forward – positive meeting. MD reported that one of the options might be for them to contribute to some staffing costs. They were very understanding of our current circumstances. MD hoped that we would shortly be in the position to share financial information with them and others. BC reported that they were impressed with the amount of work the volunteers had put in.</p>
Policies and Procedures	<p>MD asked about the policies and procedures document and NM reported that there had been some minor typos corrected – no major feedback. It was agreed that the computers are left on in order to facilitate automatic updates. Data Officer is currently AW. It was agreed that the policies should also be applied to the board. Action NM to add – MD to take on financial procedures document.</p>
AOB	<p>Bar – MC proposed that we prohibit hires from running their own bar. Once the license is awarded there will be a prohibition on the sale of alcohol except under our own license. SM seconded and asked for an event diary so we can see what is coming up. Discussion ensued Action MC to investigate and clarify individual implications and report back. MC suggested that we were able to donate a percentage to organisations that traditionally have run their own bar as a charity fundraiser. Levels to be decided at a future meeting. Agreed.</p>
Date of next meeting	<p>1830 hrs on Wednesday 6th February 2019</p>



Appendix 1

ELGIN TOWN HALL FOR THE COMMUNITY

1 Board Takeover of Hall - August 2018

After agreeing as a Board not to push for a 1st July 2018 date to start running the Hall (on the grounds that there were significant concerns that we wouldn't have enough cash to see us through the first few months), we did convince the Council, in July, that we should be allowed to take the Hall on from 1st August 2018.

As expected, this involved the signing of a Lease and the following are extracts from that:

i Lease Period

From and including the Date of Entry for a period of one year to (and including) the Date of Termination and monthly thereafter up to a maximum term of two years from the Date of Entry.

ii Date of Entry 1 August 2018

iii Date of Termination 31 July 2019

iv Notice

If this Lease has not terminated by the Date of Termination by at least one month's notice having been given by either the Landlord to the Tenant or the Tenant to the Landlord in accordance with Clause 7 of this Lease, this Lease will continue on a monthly basis and that on the same terms and conditions as herein contained until either the Landlord or the Tenant gives to the other at least one month's written notice to quit.

2 Six Months On

As we approach the end of our first 6 months, it's essential that the Board takes time to reflect on what we have achieved, as well as what hasn't worked so well. This should inform us about our ability and capacity to move on, as we enter a second phase, one that will require us to become financially self-sufficient from February 2019.

Based on the public's reaction, we certainly appear to have delivered on much of what we said we would do from the outset. This has been done in circumstances made difficult by the Council given the huge cut back in their own use of the facilities (which we were told, originally, was not going to happen). Additionally, having to honour prices that were contracted by the Council has introduced a complexity to bookings and these have, at times been ludicrously low and not equitable.

We have discussed this problem before and clearly need to revisit these arrangements and put them on a footing that provides a reasonable return in furtherance of our overarching desire, first and foremost, to keep the Hall financially afloat.

However, not all of our problems were caused by others and we have to accept, for instance, that the financial forecasting arrived at back in August have been



consistently wayward and we must get much better at doing these if we are to be taken seriously.

It's also been unfortunate that there has been friction and expressions of dissatisfaction (mainly but not exclusively relating to some of the decisions taken involving Board members and the Hall Keepers). This has clearly been unhelpful and has hindered the building of harmonious and purposeful working relationships and, as a Board with collective responsibility, this must be ceased forthwith.

On a more positive note, the Board has managed to oversee a number of very good developments even although we have lost 6 (?) of the original Board members but have recruited another 7 (?) during the same time period and which has very recently taken our Board membership to its highest level.

3 Community Asset Transfer

In common with the other community organisations that have taken on the running of their local Halls, the expectation is that we will seek to take the Hall on a Community Asset Transfer basis. However, as with so much, the challenges that are involved for us are somewhat more acute than for the others.

When we have discussed this as a Board during the last 6 months or so, we have recognised that our top priority is placing the Hall on a sound financial footing, with developing the case for a Community Asset Transfer taking second place.

As things stand, we do have a draft business case in place (previously supplied by Neil) but it is recognised that this is a `work in progress`.

Added to this, the onset of the "Moray Growth Deal" (see below) has made it doubly difficult for us to know when the optimal time might be for us to seek a transfer. The impact of the Growth Deal on the other community organisations now running halls will be negligible and gives them a much clearer road ahead.

This complexity has recently become one that both the Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise are taking a keen interest in (because of their important part in the Growth Deal/Cultural Quarter which is set out below).

Their preference would be that we still aim to make a transfer within the 24 months previously referred to above. However, they appear to be suggesting that we should only look to the `here and now` as the basis of our case and our preparedness. This is being styled as the "as is" option.

We must each look at this carefully, but it does seem a tad ridiculous to be envisaging a case that makes no (or a muted) reference to the potentially dramatic changes that might take place to the Hall but which doesn't have anything to say on the matter of how the Board will manage all of this through to a successful conclusion..

There are many issues that could arise from this, some of which are set out below in the section on the Growth Deal. Given what's at stake, we need, as a Board, to make much more of this and to be in control of things and not reacting to events.

***For members who are not particularly familiar with community asset transfers, a basic guide will be sent as part of the papers for our meeting.**



4 Moray Growth Deal

Consequent upon the Board being allowed to take over the running of the Hall in August 2018, we were invited to join the Project Board of the Cultural Quarter, which was formed in September 2018. Mike Devenney took on this role.

The Cultural Quarter project forms only one part of the entirety of the Moray Growth Deal, but it has clearly caught the eye of both the Scottish and Westminster Governments and encouragement has been given to press on with this aspect.

Board members have been kept in touch with progress over the months that have elapsed and the project is now proceeding to have "economic impact assessments" undertaken. These were due to get underway in January 2019 but have been delayed. However, these are still intended to be completed by May 2019.

Highlands and Islands Enterprise in Forres are now leading on this. The economic impact reports are "...required to compare options to determine the optimum impact."

By now, most Board members should have seen the options, with option 1 being the "Preferred" option for each of the four elements, i.e. Town Hall, Grant Lodge, Hotel and Public Space. These will also be forwarded for our meeting, as well as a single sheet which sets out the foreseen benefits from the Cultural Quarter.

Again, most of the Board members will be aware that the specific amount of funding earmarked for a massive refurbishment and modernisation of the Town Hall has consistently been around the £9m mark. An entirely new Town Hall is no longer being talked about.

The potential that this could afford the Hall is clearly huge and would certainly deliver what we have consistently been saying, i.e. that the people of Moray deserve much better than they've currently got and that they should expect a venue that will put Moray on the same footing as many other parts of Scotland take for granted.

However, it doesn't take a genius to work out that getting from the current status of "as is", to a venue on the scale and sophistication of what the preferred option provides for will, of itself, be a massive exercise and certainly not one that could be expected to be delivered on the backs of 15 or so volunteer Board members (no matter how hard we work away at this).

The challenges facing us have not been lost on the Council and HIE, including the financial pressures that we are likely to remain under for some time. Of course, the importance of our survival is now being looked at somewhat differently given the essential part that the Hall is expected to make in the development of the Cultural Quarter. Indeed, the project, as envisaged, would struggle to happen without us. This reality might well prove to be the basis upon which financial assistance comes our way, with HIE being the most likely to provide this.

However, even if we can assume financial stability in the coming months, many other questions will need to be answered to our satisfaction before the Board would be wise to sign up to this (no matter how attractive it a proposition it might seem).



For example, will there be operational funding available to allow us to appoint a project manager working on our behalf? If the Hall is required to be closed for a major refurbishment, will there be any financial help tide us over?

Discussions on this have already started with a recent meeting involving HIE and the Community Support Unit. However, given that this is an issue that the Project Board of the Cultural Quarter recognises needs to be addressed, a meeting with Donna Chisholm (HIE Director for Moray) and Dave Moreton (Moray Growth Deal Project Lead) will be held with Mike Devenney on Wednesday 23rd January.