

COLLIESTON & SLAINS COMMUNITY TRUST
MINUTES
MEETING 3rd SEPTEMBER 2007



Present: Fiona Chaplain, Susan Somner, Vicky McNiff, Alan White, Steve Rainey, Elizabeth Hay, Craig Leuchars, Peter Somner, Trish Robinson.

Apologies: Roddy Junor, John Allan.

Chair: Steve Rainey

1. Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of 6th August 2007 meeting proposed by Vicky McNiff, seconded by Alan White and approved by the Committee.

In the future, we will have a rota set in advance for minute taking.

Action 1.0: Steve to draw up a rota.

2. Actions from the last meeting

Action 2.1: Neil to investigate obtaining a new notice Board for the hall – Ongoing

Action 2.2: User Group minutes – Ongoing, Steve has chased up Ann-Marie, who has changed jobs, but will get onto these for us as soon as possible.

Action 2.3: Funding application – still open, should be closed within the next few days

Action 2.4: CADISPA / DTAS website – There is still a minor error on the web site, Alan will check this.

Email reply to queries on user group representation from Andy Clucas and Roddy Junor – Steve has responded.

Architectural Workshop Press Release – completed.

Dragons Den – decided not to proceed with these.

Action 2.5 Presentation at the Palace Hotel in Peterhead on building coastal communities and how to get a web site working. Alan had originally intended to go, but now can't make the date (the evening of the 13th September). Steve will look into whether he can do this instead. Susan, Alan & Peter can assist with the content of the presentation. One of the points to get over is that we are the legally constituted body in the village.

3. Work Group Reports

3.1 Architectural Work Group

The 2nd public Architectural Workshop was held on 11th August 2007 and went very well, with the latest concept being enthusiastically received by those present. It was clear that Reiach & Hall had taken onboard the feedback received at the 1st workshop and responded positively.

Reiach & Hall then revised the drawings to take account of discussions and feedback generated from the 2nd workshop. This was compiled into a small booklet (comprising 9 sheets), summarizing the proposals in simple graphics and text. The purpose of this booklet is to accompany the initial lottery submission, and to enable the pages to be uploaded onto the CASCT website as an update for the community (*booklet now available on line*).

Whilst the booklet describes Reiach & Hall's outline concept, and they have updated the plans to reflect general discussions at the 2nd public workshop, there is still some way to go in terms of finalising the outline proposal.

The key decisions that Reiach & Hall believe the community are all agreed on for now are that:

- (a) The building is in roughly in the right place, with the right orientation.
- (b) The building is approached from the north, and car parking is located along a gentle curve.
- (c) It is a 2-storey building with a pitched roof.
- (d) The entrance, nursery and storage areas are located at the lower level.
- (e) A meeting room, cafe, main hall and storage are located at the upper level.
- (f) There is a 'core' containing stair/lift and WC's at both levels.

Reiach & Hall also built a new physical model, prepared a 3D movie fly through and provided some views of the latest design concept from particular vantage points within the village, again for grant funding application submission and website use.

These views are from:

- (a) the Dairy Path
- (b) Braehead
- (c) Cransdale
- (d) the Post Office
- (e) the road into Collieston

Action 3.1.1: Susan to put 3D movie and stills / views from the movie onto the web site.

Reiach & Hall have spoken to representatives from both Aberdeenshire Planning and Roads Departments whereby it was agreed the first step would be for Reiach & Hall to send outline proposals through so that initial comments may be formed. This was followed up with an email on 3rd September to establish a few key principles prior to proceeding much further as these are fundamental to the proposals.

These principles are:

- (a) That the proposed development and location of the building on the Rivie site is acceptable in principle.
- (b) That the existing village hall and adjacent former schoolhouse are retained and converted to provide respite accommodation is acceptable in principle.
- (c) That the formation of a new and improved access to the new and existing buildings is acceptable in principle.

Clearly, we are just at the start of the process, and it is imagined that further discussions will be required on more detailed aspects such as parking and materials etc. Reiach & Hall indicated that they are happy to meet with Planning & Roads to talk through these proposals, either at their respective offices or on site in Collieston, if they believed that would be beneficial.

The Architectural Work Group responded to a request from the Business Plan Work Group for information on costs. This has been clarified and entered onto the Business Plan Work Group's CAPEX spreadsheet accordingly. Reiach & Hall also clarified the VAT position (17.5% on Fees and 5% on existing buildings refurbishment).

The QS (Quantity Surveyor) has advised that build costs have increased by approximately £200,000 from the Architectural Competition entry submission. This is as a result of inflation and increased scope (addition of lift, retaining wall and extra storage).

Reiach & Hall have agreed to work closely with the community to achieve the best balance between building size, specification of materials (e.g. slate and stone would be expensive) and costs.

Reiach & Hall stressed that the above issues are by no means exceptional - that is, they are usually faced with issues such as these. The skill with any project is in achieving the best compromise between the client's requirements and the available budget and timescale.

Query from Vicky on the cost of providing a clerk of works. This needs to be clarified.

Reiach & Hall had raised the question of what we intended using the kitchen for, as a full "restaurant" style catering kitchen would cost a large amount (more than our current budget would permit) and require significantly more space (i.e. for dry storage, cold storage, extraction etc.). The CASCT committee discussed and agreed that this was not what we require, though a kitchen with appropriate equipment and plenty of preparation & serving space to allow for outside caterers, whilst also suitable for the community catering needs (e.g. Burns Supper) would be beneficial. We will have to assess the exact specification when we get into the details of the equipment and prices.

Heritage items for inclusion within the new community centre. A list of items (and space requirements) that could be included should be compiled.

Action 3.1.2: Elizabeth to start compiling a list of the potential heritage items.

It was discussed that the current design concept is perhaps not as multifunctional in terms of internal space usage as was the desire expressed at the 1st public workshop, however, the community didn't raise this as an issue / concern at the 2nd workshop. Reiach & Hall have subsequently clarified that with any design there has to be compromise and it was not possible to have every space (e.g. playgroup, café, meeting room etc.) all off the main hall whilst also trying to reduce the overall footprint and visual impact of the building.

With that in mind, one thing perhaps to put to Reiach & Hall and the community would be a way to maximise the use of the main hall on a more regular basis i.e. perhaps as additional seating space for the café, introduce a shower adjacent to the toilets so floor space in hall could be occasionally used by outdoor pursuit groups for bunking down etc.

Further communication of the current design proposal to the community is required in order to gain feedback. It would be beneficial for example taking the current information (i.e. Reiach & Hall's booklet, design as viewed from village, 3D movie etc) to the user groups or perhaps having an open night. Alan will take these suggestions to the Communications Work Group to work on and propose a way forward.

Next step is to await a response from Aberdeenshire Planning & Roads Departments to see if the concept is acceptable in principle.

The Architectural Work Group will then meet to organise (in conjunction with the Communications Work Group) the next public Architectural Workshop. The purpose of the 3rd workshop will be to reaffirm the key decisions made by the community at the 2nd workshop i.e. that the community are still happy with the proposed design & positioning having had time to digest the information provided.

Reiach & Hall will then look to progressing detail of the design i.e. trying to reach community consensus on room sizes, room orientation etc. If time allows there will also be a discussion on external building materials & appearance.

3.2 Business Plan Work Group

The work group has met and worked up a set of actions which they are progressing.

- Architectural design
 - Architectural Work Group assisting with the detailed CAPEX budget spreadsheet.
- Big Lottery pre-qual application
 - The figure on this application includes the building CAPEX (£1.3M), plus inflation at 10%, plus contingencies, start up and operating costs for the first few years. This figure takes us up to £2M, which sounds a lot, but seems more reasonable when looked at relative to the general costs of housing locally anyway.
 - Big lottery form being circulated and commented on by the work group.
 - Pack being compiled for the big lottery submission.
- Users and income generators:
 - Steve will create a template for letters once Alan updates the logo.
 - Functions
 - Neil is compiling a list of all halls in the area
 - Communication work group to start research on the function venues.
 - Seminars/ meetings – meeting room.
 - Communication work group to start research in the meeting room venues.
 - Accommodation suitable for respite care.

- Writing to the Voluntary Service Association to see what the interest and requirements are.
 - Contacting Aberdeenshire Council.
 - Discussing requirements with Aberdeen Council.
- Accommodation – potential additional units.
 - Enquiring about the potential users of an arts studio.
 - Enquiring about the potential users of a twitchers flat.
- Café / post office / retail.
 - At the moment this is just about investigating options. Discussion on the importance of this. The view is that we would need to be in a position to provide some provision for retail and space for any post office service if the existing shop closes. This could simply be a few essentials, plus some, “impulse buy” income generating items. The question of whether the centre will be able to fit this in is one for the architectural work group.
- Arts - noted that we should give this more prominence, and include performing arts, music nights, etc.
 - Investigating how the Dolphin Gallery could operate in the new centre.
 - Discuss with Village Sunsets how they see these nights operating.
- Other potential income generators.
 - Discussing renewable energy options.
 - Investigating obtaining commission from hosting a commission based online shop link.

Noted generally that the group is open to all ideas at the moment, and will record the ideas that will be progressed and those that are discounted, after consideration and investigation (and we will document this).

Next steps: Working on all the actions and once we have built up the proposed plan, we will hold a public business plan workshop, we can invite external parties and consultants to this as well.

3.3 Communications Work Group

The communications work group have worked up a list of target project supporters and have made some progress with obtaining various letters of support from our elected representatives. Steve to scan these for our records, and to use for the big lottery application.

Have decided to delay the joint meeting with the Amenities Committee until after the Amenities AGM (on 28th September), as this is so close now.

Next steps: Alan is to call a communications work group meeting, to communicate the concept further and obtain more feedback.

4. Treasurer's Report

The balance of account is £21,091,70 as at 31 August 2007.

We have received the Aberdeenshire Council Formartine Area grant of £1,000. The Cults over-50s group gave us a donation of £50 in return for a tour of the village. Still awaiting final expenses for the Dolphin Gallery.

5. Any Other Business

Awards for all: We need to close this out.

6. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 22nd October 2007 at Steve Rainey's.

We will also shortly need to look at dates for the next public architectural workshop (likely an evening date) and the business plan workshop, both groups are to look into this and feed back on timescales.

Minutes by: V. McNiff