

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **TAVISTOCK TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE PROJECT MANAGEMENT BOARD/GROUP** held at the Council Chamber, Drake Road, Tavistock, on Tuesday 28th February, 2017 at 10.00am.

PRESENT Messrs D Incoll, R Jones (Community and Business Representatives), C Hearn (Chairman).

**ADVISORS/
OBSERVERS** G Lawrence, R Plumb, M Searle (Project Manager), H Smith, W Southall (Finance Officer), S Spackman

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence had been received from K Stokes (Land Owner Representative).

2. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The notes of the Meeting of the Tavistock Townscape Heritage Initiative Project Management Board/Group held on Tuesday 22nd November, 2016 (Appendix 1 refers) were received and endorsed.

Noted that arising from consideration of the above the Project Manager undertook to seek to develop a skills programme for consideration at the next meeting.

3. 'TRAFFIC LIGHT REPORT'

A copy of the Project Programme ("Traffic Light Report" – Appendix 2 refers), indicating property by property progress against projects and objectives included within the THI scheme was reviewed.

Attention was drawn, and comment made in particular, to:-

Critical Projects

- a) Butcher's Hall – two claims had been processed and submitted. Arising from consideration of this item reference was further made to role profile and person specification of the 'Market Development Officer' further to which it was:-

AGREED THAT the person specification be amended to include reference to social media in the 'knowledge and skills' para to and information supplemental to the advertisement to include suitability for job share/secondment.

It was recognised that, in view of the potential scarcity of the skill set sought for the role, consideration could appropriately also be given to setting a timeline for advertisement which married with the possibility that a second advertisement might be required.

Additionally it was noted that the timeline currently scheduled for appointment of the Market Development Officer indicated the commencement of market operations in the Butcher's Hall in the latter

part of 2017 (Autumn) which potentially would be accompanied by 2/3 very quiet months at the start of 2018 and the tail end of repair works to the Pannier Market. Indications from market related users suggested that January/February (and early March) were particularly quiet months of the year and did not lend themselves to high levels of trader interest and/or support, especially for a new project. Consequently it was:-

AGREED THAT Greater Dartmoor LEAF and Heritage Lottery Fund be consulted on deferral of start (as opposed to the recruitment exercise) of the Market Development Officer to June 2017 with a view to a seasonal opening of the Butcher's Hall from the end of November – Christmas and then a proper opening with accompanying schedule of events throughout the year commencing at Easter 2018 and taking advantage of the improved trading environment.

- b) Pannier Market – an update was provided in connection with the above. Trader consultations had been undertaken and arrangements were advanced in terms of scaffolding and the sequencing of works. It was anticipated that application would be made to the Grants Panel at or before the end of March which would run in parallel with the tender process.

Priority Projects

- a) 2 Market Street – attention was drawn, in particular, to the increased grant allocated by the Grants Panel in view of an increase in project costs.
- b) Kingdon House – a discussion took place regarding the conditions of the grant application and outcome of consideration by the Grants Panel. In assessing the application it had taken the view that any submitted scheme should have a minimum value of £100,000 in order to meet the appropriate needs of the building and parameters of the THI scheme which was primarily aimed at heritage conservation and regeneration.

Public Realm Projects

- a) Guildhall Car Park – reference was made to current proposals for the Guildhall which had removed the proposed ramp at the front of the premises and therefore made the mutual dependency of the THI and Guildhall Gateway Centre schemes less significant than had previously been the case.
- b) Market Street – the meeting welcomed positive progress made in discussions with Devon County Council together with the indicative support received to date from the Conservation Officer of the Local Planning Authority.

Complementary Initiatives

- a) Heritage skills training – the Project Manager indicated that he was planning to do more work in this area.

- b) Energy efficiency best practice – the Project Manager reported that to date a written proposal had not been received from Tamar Energy Community concerning the production of energy efficiency leaflets, but that an update on progress was being sought. It was recognised that the optimal way of encouraging good practice in energy efficiency would be to find an exemplar but the challenges faced by the Devon Historic Buildings Trust and others in securing access to a Bedford Cottage in substantially original condition in order to undertake and deliver this initiative were noted.
- c) Story of Tavistock – the meeting welcomed a proposal for the Tavistock Heritage Festival to fulfil this and certain other of the complementary initiatives identified (the original proposal for the Story of Tavistock not having developed as first envisaged). The potential benefits of this method of delivery included same being embedded within the community, having a strong heritage link but also tied to events which, in addition, pulled in significant numbers of visitors to the Town. Whilst the proposal was broadly supported it was:-

AGREED THAT:-

- i. The Heritage Festival be requested to give an indication/estimate of what the anticipated cost of delivery was likely to be;
 - ii. The craft open days/heritage skills training would, in order to be acceptable and appropriately tie into the THI need to include heritage focused initiatives (for example laying of cobbles, stone carving, slating, lead work, cob block making, timber scarfing repairs, hurdle making in the traditional design of fences as between Bedford Cottages etc).
- d) Scheme output and evaluation – the meeting considered for information an evaluation report undertaken at the end of 2015 together with a draft evaluation form proposed as a basis for consultation upon the scheme. The evaluation form was welcomed provided that a shorter version could be developed for completion by visitors. Reference was also made to the possibility of such a shorter questionnaire being circulated to cafés and other service providers, placed on the internet etc.

AGREED THAT subject to confirmation by HLF

- i. The evaluation questionnaire be adopted as a basis for evaluation of the scheme with residents of the town;
 - ii. A 'short' version of the questionnaire adapted to visitors to the town be prepared and utilised for that audience;
 - iii. The evaluation exercise be undertaken on/around Easter 2017, and, where possible, other community groups within the Town be involved in its conduct.
- e) Tavistock Conservation area – Review – the meeting welcomed notification from the Borough Council that it was proposing to undertake a review of the Conservation Area as part of the work connected with producing a supplementary design guide for the World

Heritage Site. This aligned with a commitment given by the Local Planning Authority at the start of the THI project and it was:-

AGREED THAT the LPA review of the Tavistock Conservation Area be included upon future editions of the traffic light report.

4. FINANCE

The Meeting considered and noted the Summary Finance Report. Arising therefrom there was a discussion regarding the emerging impact of schemes being developed/submitted which appreciably exceeded the estimate originally included in work undertaken for the THI Scheme. The potential net impact of same being to either reduce the number of projects capable of being delivered within the scheme, or require intervention rate changes such that landowners made a greater contribution (with whatever consequential impact that might have upon landowner participation).

At the present time the reasons for this uplift were not clear, they could include variously an understatement on the initial assessment when the THI Scheme was put together, the impact of building cost inflation since then, a level of 'gold plating' by landlords in trying to pull as much as they could into the Scheme, a tightness in the construction market within the Town etc.

Concern was expressed at the impact of this trend and it was acknowledged that it might be appropriate to hold a further meeting when the costings for the remaining critical building (Pannier Market) came back in order to agree the best way forward. This would undoubtedly involve discussion with Heritage Lottery Fund around intervention rates, number of deliverables, prioritisation, the guidance to be given to the Grants Panel in the conduct of its assessments etc.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

The Project Management Board received and noted the Scheme Risk Register as at February 2017 and endorsed the same.

6. OTHER MATTERS

No other matters were raised.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be arranged at a time commensurate with feeding into the next HLF Monitor meeting.

The Meeting closed at 11.50am

