

Glendale Gateway Trust Full Board Meeting  
Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021  
7pm by Zoom

**Present:** Patrick Sheard, Julian Bales, Becci Murray, Shirley Mills, Cindy Thatcher- Wait, Siobhan Younger, Tom Johnston, Rachel Sinton & Gemma Douglas.

1 **Apologies:** Mark Robson

2 **Declarations of Interest:** Patrick – local accommodation provider & Cindy– local accommodation provider and tenant of the GGT.  
Becci- Trustee of Northern Soul Kitchen & employee of Berwick Community Trust

3 **Membership applications:** There are none

4 **Minutes of Previous Meeting (held 25 November 2020)**  
**AGREED as true record**

5 **Matters Arising:**

**Bond Scheme Repayments:**

It was agreed at our last meeting we would write to all bond holders to give them the opportunity be repaid their bond.

TJ reported he had received positive feedback from several bond holders who were grateful for the offer but declined to have it returned at present. This was a good PR exercise.

PS told the meeting we have recently received a donation of £1000. The donor has requested this is added to the Margery Stephenson fund. It is a nice gesture for which we are very grateful.

6 **Report from CEO:**

Please see report circulated.

**Ground floor Barclays:**

The money has been received for the feasibility study. Tom has been in touch with a company based in Scotland with a view to exploring the suitability of the building as a catering outlet. In particular, extraction options need to be considered. They visited the site yesterday and will report back their initial thoughts, but it does look like using the old chimney is out of the question. The most likely location for a kitchen would be the safe- therefore extraction is possible. It will be a challenge due to the thickness of the walls but it is doable.

It will depend on the outcome of a pre-planning application.

**Youth Hostel:**

He has visited Karl & Cindy at the Hostel and it is looking smart!

Julian asked where we are with regards to helping tenants.

TJ: the Drop-In have paid their rent for the next quarter (we had offered assistance to them)

A couple of the Cheviot Centre tenants are behind on their rent, and there is one tenant on the High Street who couldn't pay their February rent but will start again from March.

**Drop-in Centre**

PS: there have been positive changes at the Drop-In following the arrival of Maurice Ward as Chair of the Trustees There is a new energy and purpose.

7 **Finance Update:**

Please see report circulated.

JB: If you compare our 9 months to our 6 months, things have improved. This is due mainly to the extension to the furlough scheme, plus lower costs and further grants received. It is quite a robust situation.

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There will be an uncertainty for next year when we get to March.

JB raised the matter of our cash position. There is close to £300,000. There is a risk due to the level the government will underwrite £170,000 (£85,000 per account). We will therefore be unprotected to a certain extent. The cash surplus is likely to continue for the next 18 months. We must balance the extent of the risk with the cost of dealing with it.

Tom highlighted the time consuming and aggravating nature of opening a charity bank account. It is worth remembering we have a number of properties – a lot of which are old- and will need maintained, e.g. roofs to replace on the High Street.

It was **agreed** that Siobhan would look into what the Newcastle Building Society are currently providing for community banking, and report back.

Tom will look into the Northumberland Community bank- Yvonne Carter

SY

TJ

8 **Appointment of Officials:**

PS advised the meeting his term as Chair comes to an end in July. He is prepared to stay on in the role for a further 6 months until January 2022 if the Board agrees (at TJ's suggestion), but believes it's not healthy to have a Chair in post for too long, and would like to devote more time to his business. He is happy to be Vice Chair.

JB suggested the Board appoints a new vice Chair mid-year, who is prepared to step up to the role of Chair.

PS- encouraged all Trustees to have a conversation, and asked Julian to make sure those conversations happen.

JB

9 **Current Staffing Arrangements:**

Patrick read a letter out from Tom Johnston tendering his resignation from the Trust. He explained Tom has toyed with the idea of retirement for some time. February marks 21 years of Tom's involvement in the Trust.

He is working three months' notice period, and will step down as CEO and leave at the end of May.

We therefore need to look at our staffing arrangements, and how we move forward.

Patrick also announced Rachel would like to reduce her hours to three days per week. He would therefore like to look carefully at staffing arrangements. And there may well be an argument for continuity when it comes to Trusteeship.

We enter a period of change, and Trustees need to think about how we best tackle it, and how we approach it. It comes at a time when the future is difficult to forecast. We don't know how the community will develop as we emerge from the lockdown and pandemic restrictions. It will take a degree of imagination and consideration as we make the most appropriate decisions.

He suggested tackling this in phases. In phase 1 of this, Trustees should look at what currently happens, what's going on at the moment, what the workload might look like, and how we might want to adjust that. He started the process with Tom at Christmas, and he has been noting down everything he does. This should help the Trustees have an understanding of how the office runs, and what the workload looks like, in order to make informed decisions about the best way forward.

JB asked for a list of key tasks, partners and other valuable information in Tom's role to be circulated.

TJ

PS- will schedule a meeting with the Trustees to discuss thoughts and suggestions.

PS

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**Project Updates:**

1. Dark Skies:

Cindy has shared information on social media about how to get a dark sky accreditation. She isn't sure how successful it was.  
She viewed the YouTube channel on dark skies  
PS commented the channel demonstrates the huge amount of interest in dark skies.

2. Barclays Food Hub:

PS- progress delayed due to Gemma getting C-19.

3. Town Centre Plan:

JB- met with the super network, and they have grasped the issue of whether the town centre is ready for the distillery. Following that, he rang Tony Kirsop at NCC to ask whether there was anyone there who could spark things off.

He is awaiting contact from the Rural Growth Group, to see if they can help

Patrick asked if there will come a point when we will need to kick-start it

4. Remote Learning Centre:

TJ- we have received several small grants in the last year, and more recently £9.5K. The application to NCC was handled poorly (on their behalf)

The money will get us started

JB- suggested a discussion with TJ & GD regarding funding

BM, TJ & GD to meet and report back

TJ,  
GD  
&  
JB

BM  
,TJ  
&  
GD

Rachel confirmed the Centre will be a polling station in May for the elections.

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**Date of Next Meeting (s):**

Policy Meeting: Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2pm

GGT Board Meeting: Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May, 7pm