



## **Grantown Initiative - Board Meeting**

**Minutes of Meeting on Tuesday 14 June 2016 –  
House, Grantown-on-Spey**

**at Town**

Present: **Directors** – Dan Cottam (in the Chair), Melanie Dick, Stewart Dick, Basil Dunlop

**Advisers** - Karen Derrick, VABS

Apologies: **Directors** – Jane Hope, Karen Martin

**Advisers** – David Lyle, Company Secretary

### **Welcome / Directors**

**1** The Chair welcomed all to the Meeting.

### **Declarations of Interest**

**2** There were no Interests declared by any Director.

### **Membership of Grantown Initiative**

**3** No applications for Ordinary Membership of Grantown Initiative had been received since the Last Meeting.

### **Grantown Business Association**

**4** Stewart Dick updated the board on the progress of this merger with the GBA.

A new subcommittee is being formed which will draw from the existing GBA committee and from the GI board.

It is expected that the merger will take place sometime during the autumn/winter after the major events of the year, including Thunder in the Glens are passed.

Whilst some work may take place before this, it is expected that the bulk of this work will take place after the summer season due to the various commitments of those involved.

## **Grantown Forward – The Master Plan**

6 With the various apologies in mind, this item and Rails to Grantown in general became the main focus of discussions.

It was previously reported that there was to be a workshop on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June. This was reported on by Karen Derrick who was in attendance in her role with VABS.

It was reiterated at the meeting that the key factor for moving Grantown forward is the Rails to Grantown project which offers the biggest and best opportunity to increase visitor footfall to Grantown and its high street and in turn provide opportunities for funding of other projects.

David Fraser of SRCT had reiterated the need for Grantown to show support for the project. In response to which Dan Cottam had asked for examples of how Grantown could show its support. Whilst suggestions from SRCT were limited, it was suggested by Karen Derrick that it would be worth creating workshop groups to discuss the impact of the railway returning to Grantown. This would allow the community to see the advantages of the increased footfall to the town and to see where there are areas for development to improve visitor engagement during their visit.

It was highlighted by Basil Dunlop that SRC would be encouraging passengers to disembark the train at Grantown and visit the town rather than just visiting the station and returning on the next train. Basil also commented on the opportunity that the rails could be used not only as an attraction but also as public transport, connecting Grantown to the main North/South line at Aviemore.

The final report from Ian Clark is expected in July.

## **Grantown Community Website**

7 Stewart Dick reported on latest position with 3<sup>rd</sup> Pixel, the web development company awarded the contract for the development of the Community Website for Grantown.

Subcommittee previously supplied 3<sup>rd</sup> Pixel with an illustrative site plan to demonstrate the key areas and sections required on the site. 3<sup>rd</sup> Pixel were also provided with examples of features on other sites that the committee felt worked well and could work well on the new Grantown site.

The week before the Board meeting, the subcommittee had met to discuss the initial design concepts received from 3<sup>rd</sup> Pixel which were based on the information and directions provided. After reviewing these design concepts in detail, the subcommittee provided 3<sup>rd</sup> Pixel with feedback and a number of requests for changes to the design.

The subcommittee is in the process of arranging a meeting with the developer to discuss the functional specifications of the site, which Stewart hoped would take place before the July board meeting.

Stewart explained that he was hopeful that there would be a design proposal to present for board approval at the August board meeting.

### **Tourist / Town Map of Grantown**

**8** The town map has been a success.

### **Treasurer's Report**

**9** Karen Martin, the Treasurer, had submitted the latest Receipts and Payments Report, to end May 2016. There was no discussion of these by the board.

### **Grantown 250 Foundation Week – Update**

**10** No discussion or report.

### **Grantown Initiative – Website Report**

**11** The monthly (April 2016) report on the website traffic had been circulated and this was noted. There was no discussion or report.

### **GI Projects**

**12** No discussion or report.

### **AOCB**

### **Strathspey Steam Railway**

During discussion of the Rails to Grantown project, it was apparent that there was some confusion about the differing roles of Strathspey Railway Company (SRC), Strathspey Railway Charitable Trust (SRCT) and Rails to Grantown (R2G)

Basil Dunlop provided the following outline of these groups and their roles and responsibilities.

SRC is the commercial arm of the organisation; it runs the trains and sells tickets etc., shareholders do not get a dividend, and Directors are unpaid. All the profit from this company is put into development and maintenance of the track and trains and extending the rails towards Grantown.

SRCT was formed to develop and progress the R2G project. As a charity, it is able to access various sources of funding not open to the commercial arm of the railway.

It was explained that development of the track up to this point has been piecemeal with new stretches added where funds allowed. Basil explained that alternative to this is for SRC to complete this as one single, big project. This approach was

suggested by Fergus Ewing, who also recommended the inclusion of the public transport element.

Basil also explained that whilst this approach is likely to be the most successful and effective regarding Government funding, the SRCT is currently not in a position to progress this due to lack of experienced officials and funding. There was further discussion around how this could be progressed and how the SRCT could be re-invigorated to provide the necessary man power for this project possibly through a Community Interest Company (CIC). Add another sentence ' It was decided to wait for the draft Master Plan before discussing with the GoSVCC.

### **Grantown and Vicinity Community Council**

The board was advised by Basil Dunlop of the need for a new, official representative of the GVCC on The Grantown Initiative. Previously, Basil had filled the role of official representative between the two organisations. By default, this role has been filled by Bill Saddler, however, there is a need for this to be formalised. Basil has agreed to raise this matter at the next meeting of the GVCC on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June.

### **Complaint from Fay Hampton**

The Board has received further correspondence from former member Fay Hampton. Mrs Hampton has previously lodged a complaint with the board. Mrs Hampton's complaint was discussed by the board at the meeting on 9 February 2016. The board agreed that this was a private matter and not relevant the board. The company secretary of the GI was specifically asked about this matter; Mr Lyle would not discuss the matter as it was a private and personal matter. Mrs Hampton has previously been informed in writing by the board (see March minutes) that her complaint is a private matter and not a matter for the GI. Mrs Hampton was also informed that The Grantown Initiative is no longer responding to her correspondence, the board is upholding this decision.

It should be noted that the Grantown Initiative has never directed anyone to send or approved any mail to be send out to members of the community, furthermore, all actions by the board on behalf of the GI are minuted. Should any member of the public have any grievances with the Grantown Initiative, with the conduct of its directors or secretary or any allegations of fraud or improper conduct by the company or its representatives, these should be directed to Companies House, who will investigate these matters fully.

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### **Next Board**

The next Board would be on Tuesday 12 July 2016.

**Minutes Secretary – Stewart Dick (Interim)**