

## **Minutes of the Holmehill Community Buyout Board Meeting held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2006 in Leighton House.**

**In attendance:** Rosemary Bland, Gerard Hastings, Steve Mason, Andrew Gould, Liz Law, Dave Topliff, Claire Watt

### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies were received from Graham Whittaker, Alastair Hulbert, Caroline Crawford, Dave Prescott, Jim Bennett and Deirdre Wilson

### **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May were approved with the amendment that Graham Whittaker should be added to the list of those in attendance.

### **3. Matters arising**

Any matters arising are covered in the following Agenda items.

### **4. Aftermath of the Appeal Case**

Steve Mason has emailed John Thomson to say that we are now in a position to pay the bill from Simpson and Marwick. Lawyers for both the Hilton and the Scottish Executive are taking instruction from their clients with reference to pursuing us for their costs. We have put down a marker about appealing the costs; both solicitors have indicated that they would not join us in questioning the Sheriff's decision to award costs without a further hearing.

There is to be a meeting next Wednesday morning between Rhona Brankin, Sylvia Jackson and either Rosemary Bland or Caroline Crawford. Rosemary is meeting with Sylvia Jackson on Saturday to discuss the points to be raised at this meeting. All Board members are invited to email Rosemary with their thoughts as to what we wish to say. We need some positive points that Rhona Brankin can take to the Minister and his advisors to persuade them that we are a) not 'Nimbys' and b) worth keeping solvent as a focus of community opinion. **These must reach her by Saturday morning at the latest.** Mark Ruskell is not involved in this meeting. It was agreed that the current situation is as good as we could hope for at present but that some Directors are fearful at the possibility of being individually pursued for costs.

### **5. Financial Update**

Steve Mason has received £3.5k of the £5k pledged and this has enabled him to pay Scottish Churches House and Simpson and Marwick.

## **6. Future of the Site**

Rosemary Bland and Gerard Hastings met with Mike Baynham and Douglas Lowe of the Caledonian Trust. This is a development company which had offered for the hill but pulled out when we registered our interest. They are considering re-offering but would only do so if they felt they had the support of the local community. Their plans are unclear at this stage but would include building flats on the footprint of Holmehill House plus some additional houses – 'less than ten' was mentioned. It was agreed that we would continue to talk to them and that Rosemary and Gerard would report any further discussions back to the group.

## **7. Business Plan**

We are still going ahead with the application for Lottery funding for the Business Plan.

## **8. Date of Next Meeting**

A further Board Meeting is planned for Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30pm, venue tbc. This will be an opportunity to discuss the meeting with Rhona Brankin. All Board members are urged to attend.

**CW/REB**