

## Supplementary Representations – Portpatrick Harbour Community Benefit Society Request for Review of Decision

Dears Sirs,

Having made a previous representation in favour of the Portpatrick Harbour Community Benefit Society in their application for Asset Transfer of Portpatrick Village Hall, I now make further representation in support of their appeal for review of the same.

As stated previously, the credentials of this registered charity speak for themselves.

The extent of community engagement and due diligence exercised by this group is exemplary to how this process should be carried out.

It is however disappointing to find that such level of commitment has been misrepresented by the Local Authority and their application marred with groundless and unsubstantiated claims of inadequate community engagement and poor financial credibility.

This group have presented a valid and comprehensive application for Asset Transfer of Portpatrick Village Hall which is relative to the local environment and takes into account the real financial position of the village Hall. The application is widely supported within the community of Portpatrick and is backed by the security of an established and successful applicant.

The Community Empowerment Act Scotland and all Third Sector services clearly support such approach to Asset Transfer and I would encourage the Committee conducting this review to exercise their own due diligence in conducting this review with a view to righting the previous wrongful and unjust treatment of this application to date.

Yours sincerely

Dear Sirs I write in full support of the Portpatrick Harbour Community Benefit Society's application for the asset transfer to them of Portpatrick Village Hall. I was one of almost 200 people, mainly Portpatrick residents, who last year signed a petition, organised by the Community Council, denouncing a bid by the then newly formed Portpatrick Development Trust to take on the hall, in effect supporting the Society's bid. Although I have followed the actions of both groups since then, nothing has altered my opinion that the Society is best placed to take on and successfully run the hall. One example to support this view was last Christmas when the Society was fully instrumental in sourcing several large Christmas trees for the village, erecting them and decorating with lights etc. The Trust made no effort to help. The Society, along with the Portpatrick Community Council, the Portpatrick RNLI, Portpatrick School and almost all the local businesses joined together to organise an extremely successful Xmas fair, children's lantern parade and lights switch on which was attended by hundreds of people and is a highlight of this village's calendar. Again the Trust made no attempt to offer any assistance and were notable by their absence. This does not seem like a group who are concerned about the heart and goings-on of the village and I know many of my friends and neighbours in Portpatrick totally agree with that sentiment and fully acknowledge the Society's support and being instrumental in the success of village events.

In fact, I totally believe the Society has the majority of support from the residents of this village who applaud the fact they saved our harbour and turned it into a profitable concern, have wonderfully refurbished the harbour sheds, now a fantastic "Community Hub and Workshop", have taken over and kept open the public toilets and have exciting plans for the future. I understand they have more than 500 stakeholders and amassed impressive financial funds. They

also have the full backing of the Portpatrick Community Council (elected by the residents to run this village), The RNLI and many village businesses. The Society, important to note a charity organisation, I believe have the best interests of Portpatrick and its residents at their heart

There has been a suggestion that this village is fractured. I have not witnessed any evidence of that at all. The only slight fracture may be the small break away group that support the Trust.

Finally I would like to add that I have signed up with a group of twenty or more local people, including business proprietors, who have offered to assist in the running of the hall should the Society succeed in asset transfer. It seems to me, and the majority of others here, as verified by public meetings, the petition and the general consensus, that the PHCBS is the only body well enough supported and well enough equipped to look after the long term future of Portpatrick Village Hall by taking it under its umbrella along with the other assets it has made a success of.

Kind Regards

I would like to make representation regarding the stage 2 application for Asset transfer of the Portpatrick Village Hall by PHCBS.

When I became a shareholder of PHCBS, I was keen to see the Harbour taken into community ownership. The prospectus for the PHCBS to take over the Harbour stated, **“our new legal form is open and democratic, ensuring that the way the harbour operates henceforth is transparent and engaged with the community to whom the harbour matters.”**

The discussion forum on their website was closed and shareholders and community members have found it very difficult to openly address any issues they may have.

With regards to the transfer of the Village Hall, any community member with an interest in being involved in the future of the Hall cannot join PHCBS, as this organisation is closed to new members. With No new community members, I cannot see how this set up would have any future stability to ensure that Village Hall remained at the heart of the Village for years to come.

Regarding the “public consultation on the 25th March 2019” (Stage 2 of PHCBS application). I believe this meeting was run by PCC and not, as suggested the PHCBS. There was no notification to Shareholders of this meeting taking place, no notification of their intention to submit an application for the Village Hall and certainly no opportunity for shareholders to discuss this major project. It is fair to say NO consultation took place with PHCBS shareholders.

Since the decision of the stage 2 application, there has been No feedback to shareholders whatsoever from PHCBS, nor any consultation regarding the option to go to mediation prior to requesting a Review. This again highlights the fact that the PHCBS do not engage with their members regarding any decisions that are made.

In view of my concerns detailed above, I oppose the application from PHCBS.

Kind regards

We the Portpatrick Community Council would like to add to our previous representation our continued support for Portpatrick Harbour Community Benefit Society in their application for Portpatrick village hall. Over the past four years PHCBS have shown their commitment to Portpatrick and its Community by securing the Harbour, building a Community hub and workshop equipped with an emergency generator and de-fib. They have worked with the Community and Community groups in open and transparent public minuted meetings and have supported community events and fund raising. This has earned them the trust of the Community of Portpatrick the majority of whom support their C.A.T for Portpatrick Hall.

**27/05/20**

**Response submitted by Portpatrick Harbour Community Benefit Society – 9/06/20**

"Portpatrick Harbour Community Benefit Society has submitted a large and comprehensive number of supporting documents along with its valid stage two application for asset transfer of Portpatrick Village Hall.

Those documents clearly evidence the extensive and open community engagement process undertaken by the charity.

Submitted documents including, minutes of open public meetings, professional reports, constitutional documents, newsletters and many letters of direct support from residents, business and other community groups including Portpatrick Community Council, clearly outline how the Society which also has 554 active and fully supporting members has overwhelming support from within the community of Portpatrick for this application.

The charity has repeatedly asked Dumfries and Galloway Council for these documents to be published on the council "Asset Transfer" website for open public access and consumption, in line with the requirements of the Community Empowerment Act Scotland 2015.

Despite several repeated requests by our charity to Council Officers since June 2019 for this to be done, our requests remain ignored and the documents have remained obscured from sight and inaccessible.

The charity's application which is now the subject of appeal under the Community Empowerment Act, has clearly therefore been frustrated and misrepresented to both the public and adjudicating Councillors to date.

Portpatrick Harbour Community Benefit Society continue to request that our application be treated fairly in line with the Community Empowerment Act Scotland 2015".