

Questions for Peter Schaufuss

1. I assume the 200 free hours for the community is per year.
If it is per year then that is just 4 hours a week - how will those hours be managed and allocated?
2. Much more important is the availability of the Town Hall for community use on a paid-for basis. How many hours will the community have access to the Town Hall? If the community is to get access in the evenings and at weekends the available hours need to be more like 2000-2500 hours per year. Will the Town Hall be available to hire for something like this number of hours?
3. How will the community get involved in the management of the Town Hall? Will there be any public accountability to judge how well the community aspect of the building is working? Something like a monthly or annual report of the community use?
4. Are there any other ways to foster better links between the building management and the community, possibly things that have worked well at the other two Edinburgh buildings?
5. What guarantee will there be that Portobello Town Hall would remain as an integral part of the local community?
6. Your proposal includes a commitment to 200 hours of free community use. Whilst this may bring some benefits, the Town Hall previously operated a two-tier charging system, with a lower tariff for community as opposed to commercial activities. Could this be considered in addition to, or instead of, a set number of free hours?
7. I would like to question if/ how Schaufuss is going to continue to finance improvements in his existing 2 Edinburgh properties (Rose street Theatre , St Stephens) if he invests in Portobello Town Hall ?
8. Both these venues remain far from "World class", in fact very little in the way of renovation appears to have taken place and they remain much lacking in modernisation.
9. Is it his intention just to collect Edinburgh Venues and in fact offer very little in terms of improvement and would his finances not be better spent concentrating on the properties he already has ?
10. Is it correct to say that you intend renting town hall to MGA and will you regret putting local dance schools out of business?
11. Are you not better spending your time and money on your current projects such as the venue at At Stephen's Street? It's not quite the wonderful and buzzing venue it was originally promised to be...
12. Portobello Central have been open, transparent and consulted the local community widely how has the influenced their proposal/bid? What consultation exercise has Mr Schaufuss

(the company)undertaken. If the response is yes how was this done and how did it influence their proposal/bid.

13. Could he detail the type, scope and results of his community consultation. Who he asked, what he asked and how he asked.
14. where is the data of your community consultations and when can you show this?
15. how do you envisage 200 hours of free community space a year benefiting the community?
16. will you sublet or bring in other performing arts groups and if so who are they and what will they provide?
17. are you aware of the many local arts/ performing/ dance groups that already exist? How do you envisage similar companies working alongside each other in Portobello?
18. What are your company's main aims and goals and how do they benefit a community?
19. What is your 3, 5 and 10 year plan for The Town Hall?
20. Have you ever had any bad experiences of working with a community before? If so can you go into detail?
21. what will you do to the other rooms in the town hall?
22. what will you do with the kitchen?
23. what will you do with the grounds eg will you keep the elec car charging points?
24. How many hours a week will be available for local groups to hire and will evening and weekend slots be available. And as your business grows will availability to the community lessen?
25. Will you be setting up evening and weekend classes for children who are not fulltime dance students? And if so how do you feel about the 6 dance schools nearby and next door that will be put out of business after a lifetime of serving the community?
26. Who in the community has he consulted?
27. How was this consultation held?
28. Where is the resulting data and proof to back it up?
29. And why wasn't it shared?
30. Does he intend to install MGA as an anchor tenant? This would spell the end for quite a few similar, long established, similar businesses that are based in Portobello – proper, community based businesses.
31. He's quite happy to flaunt his other 2 venues – but doesn't quite say how successful they have been – and what detrimental effect have they had on their respective communities.
32. He has given no indication as to how it would be managed – especially as he is not resident in the UK.
33. He has given no indication as to costs that would be incurred to use the space
34. He states he will 'allow for 200 community hours' – given that it was in use by the community for a lot more than that, with no proper management of the space, this is a paltry amount – how does he justify this figure ?
35. Does he plan to buy the building? Or lease from Council?
36. You are saying that you want to be beneficial to the local community. But you did say that to the people of Stockbridge when you bought St Stephens. To date there was not a lot of local activities happening (pre covid) It seems that if your dance school or another dance related activity comes up then they get in first. My question is. How can you convince the people in Portobello that this won't happen at the Town Hall? In other words can you let us know more detail in how you hope to achieve this?
37. When will the building be open for community use?

38. What changes will you make in the layout of the building?
39. How long will it take to get planning and listed building permissions?
40. Your Visuals show an inserted floor – what will be underneath?
41. Have you been in the building since it was put on the market?
42. What attracted you to the building?
43. How long do you want your lease to be?
44. Would you buy the Town Hall if the Council offered it for sale?
45. What regular activities will there be for the community?
46. Who will organise these?
47. Which one of your companies submitted the proposal and will this company be responsible for running the Town Hall?
48. What percentage of your students are from Edinburgh?
49. Why were you not represented at the PCC meeting on 25 February?
50. You offer 200 “free” hours for the community. Are these free of charge or freely available? When?
51. How will they be allocated?
52. What space is likely to be available for community or fee-paying hirers?
53. Will any public money be part of your renovations at any stage in your term?
54. You mention an aim of your bid 'is to enshrine the minimum of 200 hours of free community usage as part of the legal terms attaching to my bid'. What are the other parts of the legal terms attached to your bid?
55. In what company or organisation's name will this contract, should it be successful, be signed in?
56. In the running of your current venues, do you make a distinction between community hirers and community partnerships?
57. Although your premises are expensive to hire, several organisations have done so: have they had the kind of positive experience that would inspire and reassure future interested parties - can this be communicated by them?
58. Do you see the leasing/conversion of the Portobello Town Hall as a relocation or an expansion of your ballet company/school?
59. The wording of your proposal is almost identical to that which you used for the St. Stephen's centre when bidding for that. What specific research have you done into the Portobello area that would give the local community assurances that you are treating this as a unique opportunity as opposed to just another piece in your business portfolio?
60. Do you have any concrete feedback from the Portobello Community which would lead you to believe that your presence and plan would be welcome?
61. You detail that at the heart of your proposal would be your ballet school and company. Can you give assurances that you are only looking to provide dance education at a professional level? There are two very well established dance schools in the Portobello area, one right behind the town hall, as well as a Youth Theatre and various choirs. Not to mention several others in the areas directly outside Portobello. What consideration have you given to local businesses which are already operating? Can you promise that you will not be looking to bring in young people's classes which would be set up in direct competition with the established organisations?
62. How do you see the community utilising the 200 hours per year that you mentioned? It works out to less than 4 hours per week so it would be good to know exactly what you think it could be used for.

63. Many local people several years of letting the town hall from the council. If you are offering lets, does the community have assurances that these lets would be affordable and comparable with what they have previously paid?
64. Curious to know why you need to lease P.T.H. for your ballet school when you have two other buildings much more central and your school is only in its 2nd year so is still relatively small as yet.
65. What anchor Tenant are you really putting in ?
66. Are you aware there are other really good dance schools in Portobello already. Have you been in touch with them and the local youth theatre to ask how they feel about this. (When you did your consultation)
67. Are you not aware that there is strong feelings in Portobello that the town hall should remain as a building for the community and that masses of local groups are now without premises.
68. Your 200 free hours. Does that mean free as in availability or free as in no cost? That was not made clear.
69. 200 hours a year is 3.85hrs a week. If that is your commitment to community use then it's not enough. How can you improve this offer?
70. You and Portobello Central have been asked by the council to meet to discuss a possible partnership. I believe that Portobello Central is open to this but that you have been elusive. Can you confirm that you are not interested in a partnership or even discussing it.?
71. Can you please confirm if you intend to start up weekly evening and weekend classes in ballet, Jazz, Tap, Street & Drama or will it just be your full time student ballet course during the day?
72. Have you considered the effect on the 5 or 6 dance/Drama schools & youth groups in the Portobello already? can you explain how you mean to address this.