

MINUTES

Present:

Robert Sword (RS) - Chair, Dave Evans (DE), Stephen Parker (SP), Robert Peacock (RP), James Risker (JR), Karl Gerhardsen (KG) – appointed at item 5

In attendance

Will Watts (WW) – Hidden Horizons Ltd, Angela Doherty (AD) - Administrator and Company Secretary

Description

Action

1. Apologies

Roy Blenkin (RB), Cllr Bill Chatt (BC), Ian Horton (IH), Simon Marrington (SM), Julie Stewart (JS), Mark Feather (MF) - Woodland Trust. Cllr Andrew Jenkinson (AJ) was absent.

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3 Minutes of meeting on 17 October 2017

The minutes of the meeting on 17 October 2017 were **AGREED** as a true record.

a) Matters Arising not on the Agenda

(i) *Right to Roam* –new legislation means that, unless rights of way are recorded on a definitive map by 2026, they cannot be claimed as such after that date. Most of the paths in the woods are already protected as they are on the National Park definite map so are not affected by this new legislation. The only area where this is not clear is Row Brow as this lies just outside the National Park. Any application needs to be supported by evidence of usage – 6 people have to have used it regularly for 20 years from the date on which access was denied. KG, working with DE, will check which paths are not designated with a view to applications being submitted.

KG/DE

(ii) *Secure storage* - SP has found out that the potential storage building adjacent to the wood was used by Cable and Wireless. He still needs to ring them but feels that Thorn Park Farm would be a better option.

SP

(iii) *Woodland Trust support* – RS is still to arrange a meeting. This will be done after the Business Plan review is completed.

RS

(iv) *Press Release* – RS and Jo Ireland are working on the press release. Once he has heard back from Jo Ireland, RS will circulate his initial draft to the Board for comment. It was agreed that the press release should be issued after the Business Plan review was complete.

RS

(v) *Public Meeting* – RS has been informed that the public meeting on 14 December had been cancelled with no new date given.

b) Confirmation of Confidential items

The Board agreed the items on the minutes which are deemed to be confidential to the Board. The minutes will now be posted on the website, excluding those confidential items.

AD

4. Governance

a) Appointment of new co-optee

Karl Gerhardsen (KG) left the room.

As previously noted by the Board, KG is a retired Access and Public Rights of Way Officer for NYMNP and his skills and knowledge are felt to be of great value to the Board. KG had attended the last meeting as an observer and had indicated to the Company Secretary that he would be interested in being co-opted on to the Board.

By a unanimous vote, the Board **AGREED** to the appointment of Karl Gerhardsen as a co-optee. AD will confirm his appointment with Companies House. As per the Articles of Association, he will need to stand down as a co-optee at the next AGM.

AD

KG re-joined the meeting, and was informed of the decision.

b) Julie Stewart

Julie Stewart has not been able to attend any Board meetings for the past 6 months due to work commitments. Because of this she felt it was appropriate to seek the Board's view re her continuing on the Board and had asked the Chair to raise this. She had sent apologies to every meeting and, as Vice Chair, had met with the Chair once during this time.

SP was concerned about the level of commitment moving forward, but RS confirmed that the work commitments which had prevented her attendance had now come to an end.

The Board **AGREED** that Julie Stewart should continue as a member of the Board with 5 voting in favour and one abstention (SP).

5 Financial update – year end 2016/2017 [CONFIDENTIAL]

For an update on the funding grants see item 9.

The accountants will now be instructed to make up the draft year end accounts to be presented to the Board at a future meeting.

AD

THE REST OF THIS ITEM IS CONFIDENTIAL TO THE BOARD

6. Making Local Woodlands Work (Plunkett Foundation)

The Board were disappointed that the Business Plan/Governance Review Proposal and Action Plan had still not been received. AD will chase MW/NL again for an update of when the documents will be sent.

AD

They will be considered by the Board at an additional Board meeting to be held on Monday 11 December at 6pm at Woodend. Anyone unable to attend the meeting in person will be asked to email any comments/queries to RS, copied to AD, so that they can be fed into the discussion at the meeting.

7. Licence and lease update

RS had still not had an update from Martin Pedley at SBC. He has emailed Jo Ireland to see if she can help move things along.

The Board again expressed their concern about the lack of progress from SBC. Without a lease RWCE will be seriously hampered in what it can do. Martin Pedley anticipates that he will be responding in the next 14 days.

8. Woodland Management

MF was unable to attend the meeting but had circulated an update report to the Board, the contents of which were noted

MF will present the review of WT work at the meeting on 16 January.

MF

DE wondered if some of the WREN money could be used for more than to waste work to be done by a local company (after a tender process) who could be more responsive to weather conditions. This could work in principle, however the main issue would be supervision of the work if it wasn't WT. MF would be asked to comment.

AD

9 Wild about the Woods /Stronger Communities

WW had circulated his report prior to the meeting. The key points to note are as below:

- Well over target in terms of engagement and numbers for the WATW project.
- Now working with Askham Bryan College providing Employability in Bushcraft for local over 16s not in education, employment, or training (NEET). The first cohort have just finished and another 6 are signed up for January.
- Pre-school nurseries are very keen to be involved and Barrowcliff continue to come to the woods 2/3 days per week.
- Gladstone Road school are keen to use the woods more and have committed one member of staff to do a day a week to talk to students in every class in the school.
- The Xmas events are attracting a lot of interest on Facebook.
- WW has met with NL to see how Hidden Horizons might be able to support RWCE. In the short term they have the capacity and trained staff and they are keen to continue to work with RWCE.

Funding

- Stronger Communities will be sending the claim form to WW for the balance of the money due.
- People's Health Trust have now confirmed that the WATW project can be extended to March 2018. This means it now finishes at the same time as the Stronger Communities grant. The funds need to be spent on the community in Barrowcliff and Northstead postcodes only. There are some restrictions – for example, it cannot be used to pay for extra staff or freelance staff.
- The next grant payments should hopefully be with RWCE by December. WW will not submit any more invoices until the grant money is in place. WW will submit a final report once both projects have finished in March 2018.

WW

The Board expressed their thanks to WW and his team for the great work they have done in engaging with the local community and attracting large numbers of participants at the various activities held.

Moving forward there are a number of funding pots which RWCE could apply to, for example:

- Sirius Minerals are funding community projects although the initial focus is on Whitby and Teesside.
- National Park Section 106 funding – this is for the planting of new woodland but, longer term, there could be some funding for ancient woodland sites. It might be able to be used to counter the effects of ash dieback.
- Welcome to Yorkshire and SBC have money for marketing the natural environment.
- LEADER is still active and have funding available for capital grants.

10. Publicity, marketing and events

Nothing to report.

11 Health and Safety

None

12. Any other business

- a) *Plunkett Foundation– Inspiring Rural Communities Conference* -to be held in London on 6 December was noted. Most of what it covers is part of the Business Plan Review.
- b) *Thorn Park Farm* – SP indicated that he would like to speak to NL regarding Thorn Park Farm and how they could provide support for RWCE. RS confirmed that he had asked NL to speak to them so was hoping they would be included in the Business Plan Review. He was happy for SP to approach NL. **SP**
- c) *Boardwalks*– DE reminded the Board that there are planks of wood at Thorn Park Farm which belong to RWCE which can be used for eg boardwalk repair. However, it was noted that Forge Valley and Throxenby Mere boardwalks are the responsibility of the National Park.

13. Date of next meetings

- Monday 11 December, 6pm, Woodend – one item agenda: Business Plan/Governance Review
- Tuesday 16 January 2018, 6pm, Woodend

All members of the Board are bound by the principle of Collective Responsibility. This means that whilst Board members are at liberty to express their individual points of view at Board meetings, and are encouraged to engage in full and frank discussion, once a matter has been agreed, that decision is then owned by the Board. All Board members should present a united front outside of the meetings taking collective responsibility for that decision whether they personally agreed with it or not. Board members should not share with people outside of the Board the views expressed by individual Board members in discussions, or how they voted. Only the decision should be shared as recorded in the minutes.