

Board Meeting

29 May 2018

6.00pm Woodend, Scarborough



MINUTES

Present:

Robert Sword (RS) - Chair, Roy Blenkin (RB), Karl Gerhardsen (KG), Stephen Parker (SP), Robert Peacock (RP), Mark Vesey (MV)

In attendance

Angela Doherty (AD) - Administrator and Company Secretary, Will Watts (WWV), Hidden Horizons

Description

Action

1. Apologies

Cllr Andrew Jenkinson (AJ), James Risker (JR), Ian Horton (IH), Dave Evans (DE). Simon Marrington (SM) was absent.

The Chair welcomed MV to his first meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

RB declared an interest Item 7 in respect of Big Local Funding.

3. Minutes of meeting on 27 March 2018

The minutes of the meeting on 27 March 2018 were **AGREED** as a true record.

a) Matters Arising not on the Agenda

(i) GDPR

- RWCE is aware of the requirements of GDPR and has already taken appropriate steps to protect the data it holds. It has also already stated that (although not critical) it will contact its members to reconfirm their membership. This had been an action for JS. Who now completes the action will depend on the outcome of Item 4. JS
- Consideration needs to be given to Board members having RWCE email addresses rather than using their private addresses. The email licence currently held would allow for this. RP is seeking advice on this and will update the Board once the advice has been received. RP

(ii) *Memorial Trees* – This is an idea put forward by MV to plant some trees in the woods as a memorial to mark the centenary of WW1. The Woodland Trust would provide the trees free of charge. New trees could be planted throughout the wood, or in some of the empty tubes near the Greengate car park. Relocating some existing trees might also be possible although the trees might be problematic to establish. The other option is the Meadow – although this is not part of Raincliffe Woods and is used by Scarborough Conversation Volunteers (SCV). A joint RWCE/SCV event is being planned for September and this could coincide with the memorial tree planting. MV/SP to take forward and report back to the next meeting. MV/SP

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.

4. Governance

a) Appointment of Expert Director

RS reported that JS was naturally disappointed not to be re-elected as a Member Director but is still very keen to be involved in RWCE. Given her knowledge, expertise and advice in

the area of corporate structures and governance and the role she has played in establishing the new website and managing the membership list, RS circulated a proposal to the Board to consider her appointment as an Expert Director, there being one vacancy.

Her absence from some Board meetings last year was raised, although it was noted that this had already been addressed. Her absence was due to a course she had been attending which has now finished. She had offered to resign but the Board had agreed for her to stay on. During this time she had also still met with RS and AD in her role as Vice Chair. RS referred to the fact that she is willing to stand again demonstrates her commitment to RWCE.

Although not able to attend the meeting DE had also emailed his support for RS's proposal.

SP was concerned that he thought the members did not wish to re-elect her and her appointment as an Expert Director might cause some disappointment.

Following the discussion, Robert Sword (RS), proposed that Julie Stewart (JS) be appointed as an Expert Director to serve a 2-year term as per the Articles of Association. The proposal was seconded by Roy Blenkin (RB).

The Board **AGREED** to the appointment of Julie Stewart (JS) as Expert Director with one abstention (SP). The Board also **AGREED** that JS should be reappointed as Vice-Chair at the next meeting. RS will contact JS to inform her of the Board's decision.

5. Licence and lease update

THIS ITEM IS CONFIDENTIAL TO THE BOARD.

6. Financial update

a) Financial update 2017/2018

The current overall balance is £16,251.44 allocated as below:

- *Wild About the Woods* - The current balance is £7,780.85. A payment of £5,990 was received at the end of April. See item 10 for more information.
- *Stronger Communities* - The current balance is £2,676.70. A payment of £6,000 has been received being the final payment on the grant. See item 10 for more information.
- *Unrestricted funds* - The current balance is £5,793.89.

7. Business Plan Focus Group update

RP/SP updated the Board with the following key points noted:

Big Local bid

- A bid for funding from Big Local for a Forester/Project Manager has not been successful.
- RB had not taken part in the discussion by Big Local but confirmed that the reason for it being turned down was that Big Local's constitution does not allow for them to pay wages.
- Additionally, the person RWCE had in mind, although not mentioned in the bid, had approached RB so Big Local were aware of who it was. Funding is meant to support those not in employment and the person in question was actually working.
- RB reported that the current Chair is standing down.
- RWCE is outside the designated area for Big Local so would only be considered for funding if the project benefited the area covered by Big Local.
- RP/SP/DE will contact Big Local again regarding reapplying.
- RS will contact Mark Walton to see if he can provide any assistance or advice.

RP/SP/DE
RS

Timber sales

- SP has met with SM who advised that firewood is the only viable option and recommends sales via the Stevenson's (York) online auction site.
- SM is talking to Mark Feather regarding what still needs to be done under the Management Plan.
- RWCE needs to decide if the thinning postponed due to the weather should be resurrected – SP is seeking SM advice re this.
- It was noted that the White paper on wood burning stoves raised concerns re the continued use of non-sustainable wood. However, RS believes there is at least a 3 year market for firewood.
- DE has met with Flixton Saw Mill re possibly retaining wood on the sawmill car park.
- RWCE could get smaller groups/contractors to take on smaller sections or could hire firewood processors. It would invite local contractors to bid to carry out the work.
- RWCE needs to be able to fell enough timber to be economically viable. The timber also needs to be extracted to the ride side to enhance the sale value, particularly in small lots.
- SP will speak to SM re a plan of action.

SP

SP

Other

- RP is pursuing alternative avenues of funding.
- RP met with SBC in respect of Throxenby Mere access and possible Section 106 funding. The response was positive.
- Scarborough Archers Club are keen to set up a range at Row Brow to use for Field Archery. RP/SP have met with them and are confident that they are a well-regulated, professional community group. The area proposed is a quiet area of the woods with no public footpaths. Parking would be on Stepney Farm land.
- The above could perhaps link with the proposed Meadows day in September.
- A formal written proposal is required from the Scarborough Archers and they would need to be granted a licence. RP/SP will liaise with the Scarborough Archers Club.

RP/SP

8. To review the proposal to submit an Expression of Interest for a Boardwalk in Forge Valley and supporting infrastructure

RP had circulated the details of the proposed Expression of Interest prior to the meeting. The following points were noted:

- This is the last tranche of EU money. If it is not spent by 2020 it will be withdrawn.
- Submitting an Expression of Interest does not commit RWCE to anything at this stage.
- It will be c6 weeks before the outcome is known. Once it is, if successful, the final bid will be prepared with the help of the LEP.
- NYMNP is not able to take on projects like this and have asked RWCE if they would develop it. NYMNP would be able to support RWCE if successful.
- The project is to install a boardwalk and bridge to maintain and enhance access for all, including those with physical and sensory impairment. RWCE have added in the bridge, car park and path to the NYMNP original plan.
- A Project Manager is included in the costings and funding for this post could perhaps be extended after the end of this project.
- SBC, National Park and Natural England are supportive of RWCE although it is acknowledged that this is a very large amount of capital to apply for.
- The lease would also need to be in place although Jo Ireland from SBC has indicated that it might be possible to have a document of intent if the lease was still not finalised.
- The risk to RWCE cashflow is noted – invoices would only be paid 3 months after RWCE has made payment therefore this could not go ahead unless brokerage can be found.

- An alternative would be to apply for just the bridge and car park which would be c£150k.
- 100% funding is only available to CICs. For the expression of interest, it is sufficient to say that RWCE is working towards becoming a CIC.
- Some comments on the proposal had been received via the Enquiries email. It was agreed that KG would draft a response with input from RP.
- At this stage there is nothing to lose by submitting an Expression of Interest for the full amount of c£670k.

KG

The Board **AGREED** that an Expression of Interest should be submitted. RP will action.

RP

9. **Woodland Management:**

RWCE needs to identify what work still needs to be done, which trees should be left and which removed. MF is happy to advise on this. RS has invited MF to attend a future Board meeting.

10 **Stronger Communities/Wild about the Woods**

WW had circulated his update report. The key points to note are:

- The final payment has been received from Stronger Communities. It is proposed that the bulk of the money still to be spent is used to fund WW as a consultant to pursue grant applications. This is awaiting approval from Stronger Communities.
- WW is waiting for written confirmation from People's Health Trust (PHT) regarding the use of the current underspend.
- WW is also waiting for confirmation from PHT regarding the balance of £1,711 of funds received but not yet spent. This is for WW's time on the project which has not yet been invoiced.

WW

WW

WW

11. **Proposal for a Friends Group**

RS had received a proposal from John Bradley (JB) to set up a new Friends Group and this had been circulated to the Board for their consideration. The following points were noted:

- In effect RWCE is already a Friends Group so it is not clear why a separate organisation is needed.
- A Friends Group would take a lot of organising and there is a danger that it would either just replicate what RWCE is already doing or alternatively could become divisive.
- RWCE is already doing what is stated in the proposal - the woods are already being used by a wide range of community groups with a range of activities. RWCE is also already looking at improving access via repairing footpaths.
- However, it was acknowledged that RWCE needs to be much better at keeping its members informed about the work it has been doing and to publicise its activities more.
- It was agreed that it would be useful to update the noticeboards so that they have the correct contact information for RWCE. RP will send RS photographs of the current boards and RS will get a quote for their renewal.

RP/RS

Following the discussion, the Board **AGREED** that it was unable to support the proposal for a Friends Group. RS will feedback to JB.

RS

12. **Publicity, marketing and events:**

- If the Expression of interest is successful an event with strategic partners would help publicise the work.
- As previously mentioned a joint RWCE/Scarborough Conservation volunteers event is being planned for September.

13 Health and Safety:

It was noted that the Boardwalk is in a dangerous condition however KG confirmed that this was not the responsibility of RWCE. It is a public right of way therefore the responsibility of NYCC and the National Parks authority.

14. Any other business

a) *Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society (SAHS)*– A report on the woods had been previously circulated to Board members. The Society are happy to give a short presentation to the Board. It was agreed that it would be helpful to have a link to the report on our website and that the presentation should be opened up to RWCE members. AD to feedback to SAHS and to liaise with RS re a date in September if SAHS are agreeable to the idea.

AD/RS

b) *Woodland Partners Group Meeting* – 4 July, 2pm at Helmsley. RS normally attends these meetings but is unable to go to the July meeting due to a prior commitment. He will ask them if another RWCE Director (SP/RP/DE) can attend in his place.

RS

c) *Welcome to Yorkshire* – RP is hoping to meet with them in respect of accessibility tourism and to see if they may be able to help with publicity/marketing. He will also ask them about the availability of the recent Tour de Yorkshire footage when it went down Forge Valley. He will report back to the Board once the meeting has taken place.

RP

d) *Board meeting 3 July* - RS is unable to attend the next meeting. RP agreed to chair the start of the meeting until the confirmation of JS as Vice-Chair, as previously agreed. JS would then chair the rest of the meeting.

e) *Barrowcliff Big Local on Ice* – 14th July at Wreyfield Church. RB indicated that tables are available for different organisations to promote themselves. If any of the Directors are able to be there to represent RWCE let RB know.

ALL

15. Date of next meetings

- 3 July 2018
- 11 September 2018
- 16 October 2018
- 20 November 2018

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.