

Board Meeting

26 March 2019

6.00pm Woodend, Scarborough



MINUTES

Present: Robert Sword (RS) – Chair, Dave Evans (DE), Karl Gerhardsen (KG), Stephen Parker (SP), Robert Peacock (RP), Julie Stewart (JS), Mark Vesey (MV)

In attendance

Angela Doherty (AD) - Administrator and Company Secretary; Maria Arnold, Scarborough Conservation Volunteers

RS welcomed Maria Arnold from Scarborough Conservation Volunteers to the meeting as an observer and potential Co-optee. **Action**

1. **Apologies**

Simon Marrington (SM), James Risker (JR), Ian Horton (IH), Andrew Jenkinson (AJ).

2. **Declarations of Interest:** None

3. **Minutes of meeting on 19 February 2019**

The minutes of the meeting on 19 February 2019 were **AGREED** as a true record with one amendment at Item 7(i)b – the date should be 7 February, not 7 March.

a) **Matters Arising not on the Agenda**

(i) *Stronger Communities/Wild About the Woods* – WW has now confirmed to RS that Stronger Communities did not require a written report. WW has provided a verbal report to them which they were happy with. In respect of WATW and the People Health Trust funding, the Board needs to consider how it wishes to use the remaining funding. WW is preparing a report with some suggestions for what the funding could be spent on. WW had indicated that funding of around £2k was still available but this does not tally with the figures previously reported. AD will email WW to confirm the correct figure and ask him to suggest various options for the use of the funding. **WW**
AD

(ii) *Meeting with SBC Councillors on 18 March* – this was attended by 10 Councillors. The briefing was very well received and seemed to generate a lot of good will for the future. The Councillors were impressed by the work done in the last 12 months and were appreciative of the efforts made by RWCE. They were especially keen on the Boardwalk Project. All members of the Council received a copy of the presentation. The next briefing will be in 12 months' time.

(iii) *Conversion to CIC* – to comply with the C.I.C Regulator, all Board members must sign a declaration to confirm the conversion of RWCE to a CIC. All members present signed the declaration. AD will contact those not in attendance to secure their signatures. Once done the relevant paperwork will be submitted to Companies House. **AD**

(iv) *Members/Supporters* – JS confirmed that the members' database was now up to date and that 5 new members had joined since the last meeting. In addition to the members' database there is a separate list of supporters – people who have asked to go on the mailing list to receive information but have opted not to become a member. The number of members and supporters currently stands at 290.

(v) *Year-end accounts* – the signed accounts have been returned to the accountants along with the signed Corporation Tax return.

b) **Confirmation of Confidential items**

The Board agreed that no items on the last minutes were deemed to be confidential to the Board. The minutes will now be posted on the website. **AD**

4. Governance

a) AGM – final arrangements

The following was noted:

- AD circulated the final timetable for the AGM confirming the key deadlines and responsibilities, together with the outline agenda for the meeting.
- After the formal AGM, it was proposed that there are two short presentations – the first from Dave Hutchinson on Biochar (Charcoal) and the second by the newly formed Row Brow Archers. *[Post meeting note – after further consideration, it was felt that two speakers was too much given time restraints. The Row Brow Archers have been invited to speak to the meeting].*
- Only members are eligible to vote at the AGM but both members and supporters can attend - supporters are deemed to be a category of stakeholder.
- SBC representatives will be appointed after the May elections.
- RP will produce a newsletter for the AGM to update members and supporters on current activities.

RP

b) Appointment of Expert Director

Simon Bowes has expressed an interest in joining the Board as an Expert Director in forestry once SM stands down. RS will follow up.

RS

c) Nominated Director for Barrowcliff Big Local

Kerry Lee and Jo Ireland have asked the Big Local group for a volunteer to be the nominated representative. One person has expressed an interest. DE will follow up.

DE

5 Licence and lease update

RS/RP gave the following update:

- RS has been in contact with Carol Rehill to ask what else SBC need from RWCE to be in a position to sign the lease, but to date has not had a response. RS will follow up.
- RS has also chased up this up with Jo Ireland, stressing the importance of having the lease signed before the AGM.
- A red line indication of the Yorkshire Water extraction point is still needed. It is still not clear what right of access there will be. RP will follow up.
- It was stressed again that there must be clarity about who is responsible for what.
- A side letter to the lease will confirm that SBC will be responsible for refuse collection for the first 18 months, at which time the situation will be reviewed. This agreement could be continued or an alternative solution found.
- RS will circulate the current draft lease to the Board. Any comments must be submitted to RS as quickly as possible.
- SP/RP/RS will meet with Natural England regarding the National Nature Reserve Agreement.
- NE have provided a draft agreement which contains details of their objectives. It is a 5 year management plan. RS will circulate to the Board, although it is noted that the draft agreement may change once the meeting has taken place.
- SP/RP are trying to set up a consultation meeting which should take place sometime before 17 April. The consultation process will cover the ongoing management of Forge Valley and how the community would like to take the Nature Reserve forward. A mission statement will be drawn up by the stakeholder group and this will be put to the public for comment.

RS

RP

RS/ALL

RS

RP

6. Financial update

The current overall balance is £11,336.78 allocated as below:

- *Wild About the Woods* - The current balance is £1,380.71. A final payment of £3,594 is due to be paid in two instalments - £2,396 and £1,198. See also 3.(a)(i).
- *Unrestricted funds* - The current balance is £9,956.07. There is more income to come from timber sales.

b) Reappointment of accountants

The Board were happy with the service provided by the accountants, Ashby Berry Coulsons. It was agreed it would be good practice to review the service and consider other providers to ensure that costs remain competitive. This will be done before the end of the year in time for the AGM in 2020. For the coming year the Board **RECOMMENDED** the reappointment of Ashby Berry Coulsons as the Accountant. The recommendation will be taken to the AGM in April.

7. Business Plan Focus Group

(i) Woodland Management

a) Timber felling update

- 862 tons have been extracted to date, mainly softwood.
- Around 20 tons have been extracted by horse logging.
- Around 200 tons are ready for extraction.
- There are still a few areas to be cleared but it is anticipated that work will come to an end this week.
- Taking into account costs and income, the net surplus is estimated to be c£17,000.
- The arrangement with Flixtons Sawmill has worked well.
- There is a lot of brash lying about – this is being chipped but this is very time consuming. It may be better if Thorne Park could collect the brash and then either burn it, or sort it into small logs.
- Some brash can be left as long as it is cleared from areas where the paths are in common use. It is essential that such paths are restored over time.
- Any disruption to the tracks will be put right using a grader and seeds will be planted to help restore the track verges.
- Planning for any future felling operation will take place over the summer where different options will be considered.

SP/DE/RP/RS

b) Joint foot/cycle path – Raincliffe School/Mere update.

- The meeting with Sustrans, SBC, NYMNP, Friends of the Old Railway and Scarborough & Ryedale Cycling CIC was very positive and all are supportive.
- Interest in Section 106 money has now been lodged with NYCC Highways for a footpath/cycle track.

c) Boardwalk Project update

- Fairhurst have been appointed.
- SBC are leading to get Planning Permission and an EA Bespoke Permit approved.
- Target completion date is Summer 2021.
- Tom Stephenson (NYMNP Trust) will provide support in writing the bid, which is likely to be done in June/July. In recognition of this support RWCE has to agree to the NYMNP Trust logo (and those of the other partners, SBC and NYMNP) being included on any publicity material. The Board **AGREED** that the logos could be used in this way.
- Consultation sessions will be arranged with local rural business to try to gain their support for the bid.
- There will be a public consultation event in E&W Ayton as part of the pre planning to enable the community to view and contribute their thoughts and ideas to the Planning Application.
- SP is leading on a session with strategic partners on their goals for the Boardwalk project and also a session on the Woodland Management Plan for Natural England.
- A proposal to change the Seacut into a nature reserve and to remove the Mowthorpe Sluice is causing concern. It is felt that this will create a flood risk in this area. RP has alerted Fairhurst and SBC to this issue and is trying to find out more details about what is being proposed.

RP

d) *Horse logging*

- Extraction using horse logging is now complete.
- It is a very low impact way of extraction and is a good way of engaging with the public however, the costs are much higher than other forms of extraction therefore it is unlikely that it will be done again on this scale.

e) *Partnerships*

- NYMNP Youth Engagement are keen to meet with RWCE to see how their youth workers might be able to do volunteering work for us.
- Aspire-Igen, a back to work organisation, and Kindewood, providers of mental health /wellbeing opportunities are looking for volunteering opportunities. Options are being explored for a possible capital funding bid for facilities (eg shelters/loos) and equipment to support working with these groups.
- Craven College provide Apprenticeship training in Woodland skills. Details of their Countryside Worker Apprenticeship standard were circulated to the Board. This may be eligible for government funding.
- The relationship with Scarborough Conservation Volunteers has been re-established. Moving forward RWCE will work in partnership with them. Some of their volunteers need refresher training in the use of chainsaws. RWCE will consider using some of the surplus from the timber felling to support the cost of their retraining.
- RP is arranging a meeting with woodland users from Yorkshire Coast Sight Support to see how RWCE can accommodate their needs. This will also help support the Boardwalk project bid.
- RP circulated a list of areas where RWCE could work in partnership with other organisations to provide volunteering and activity based experiences, together with the type of work/activity which could be done. The target areas are: Education; Community payback and NYMNP youth volunteers; Businesses and Public bodies Community Engagement; Health; Social enterprises/ voluntary sector.
- RP/DE/SP will follow up on all of the above update the Board at the next meeting.

RP/DE/SP

f) *Other*

- 2 volunteering events have been held so far with more planned. They have proved to be successful in attracting new members/supporters.
- Scarborough College are keen to hold a woodland classroom for their nursery school children – RP will follow up after Easter.
- SP/DE/RP/KG will walk through the woods and compile a list of any repair work which needs to be done, and any work which can be done to improve the woods.
- Some new trees have been planted in Row Brow wood and a significant number of larch trees have also been marked up over the past two weeks. RWCE has not been involved in either of these. DE will contact MF to see if he can provide any information.

RP

SP/DE/RP/KG

DE

8. Row Brow Archery

KG updated the Board on the Row Brow Archery project. The key points noted were:

- Red and white tapes have been put down to mark out pathways. Some pathways have been created by moving brush to the side.
- Some signage is in place and stands for half a dozen targets have been put up.
- 4/5 bridges have been put across ditches and some steps have been put in near the cemetery boundary and some gates have been rehung.
- They are working safely and tidily but there is some concern that the formal licence has not been finalised yet. KG has asked them to put the work on hold until this has been sorted out but they are keen to not lose momentum.
- Row Brow Archers are responsible for ensuring that the necessary planning permissions are in place.
- They have put in an application for a new club name – Row Brow Archers.

- KG outlined the area defined for their use which he will pass on to RP to create a red line map. Once the red line map is ready RP will forward to RS.
- RS stressed the importance of Row Brow Archers not proceeding any further until a licence is approved by SBC and signed by the parties. A plan is also required.

KG/RP

KG/RS

9. Funding

The following was noted in respect of funding:

- WW has confirmed he is happy to meet with the Directors to discuss funding opportunities (particularly in the area of education and training). There is still some of his time which RWCE can have access to, although this may be better used on events.
- RP is exploring health funding opportunities.
- There needs to be an overarching structure in place to pin projects on.
- RP/DE/RS will meet with WW to have a general discussion around funding. RS will arrange.

RS

10. Publicity, marketing and events

The following was noted:

- The website is getting more traffic and news and events are being kept up to date.
- More mailshots have been sent to members and supporters.
- Analysis of engagement with members and supporters enables identification of non-responders who can then be followed up.
- Articles have appeared in the Scarborough Review and Scarborough News .
- There will be an event on 8/9 June – this is the same weekend as the open farm events nationwide as is badged as an open farm/open woodland event. The Row Brow Archers will be taking part.

11. Health and Safety

- Timber felling health and safety improvements have been made when necessary.
- In the absence of a signed lease, SBC remain responsible for any issues in the woods. All RWCE can do is identify any problems and pass these on to SBC to deal with.

12. Any other business

a) RS will write to the Woodland Trust to ask if they are willing to allow Mark Feather to continue to advise/help RWCE.

RS

13. Date of next meetings

- 30 April 2019- Annual General Meeting
- 28 May 2019
- 2 July 2019
- No meeting August
- 10 September 2019
- 15 October 2019
- 19 November 2019

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.