

Board Meeting

19 November 2019

6.00 pm Woodend, Scarborough



MINUTES

Present: Robert Sword (RS –Chair, Dave Evans (DE), Karl Gerhardsen (KG), Cllr Phil Kershaw (PK) Stephen Parker (SP), Robert Peacock (RP), Alex Robinson (AR), Julie Stewart (JS), Cllr Subash Sharma (SS)

In attendance

Angela Doherty (AD) - Administrator and Company Secretary

1. **Apologies:** Ian Horton (IH), James Risker(JR) **Action**

2. **Declarations of Interest:** AR in item 4 – Appointment of Co-optee.

3. **Minutes of meeting on 15 October 2019**

The minutes of the meeting on 15 October 2019 were **AGREED** as a true record.

a) Matters Arising not on the Agenda

(i) *Stronger Communities/Wild About the Woods.*

RS and RP are due to meet with Will Watts on 21 November to discuss help with funding applications and to agree the process and set a date for the Business Plan Review Workshop.

(ii) *Strapline* – it was agreed that the strapline should promote the idea of community enterprise. Action to be carried forward. **JS**

(iii) *RWCE phone number* – The cost of the Woodend phone answering service is significantly higher than had been thought at £75 per month plus VAT and Woodend have also indicated that they are reviewing whether or not they are going to continue to service. It may be that other organisations offer a phone answering service, or the option of RWCE having its own mobile could be reconsidered. AD to ask WW what the volume and frequency of calls to the RWCE number has been over the last 6 months to help inform the Board's decision. **AD**

(iv) *Woodland Trust* – A meeting has been arranged with Sian Atkinson on 10 December. It will be attended by RS and the Business Plan Focus Group.

(v) *Benches* - DE thanked SS for putting him in touch with the relevant contact at SBC. DE now has all the information he needs to take this forward. **DE**

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) *Appointment of Co-optee* [AR left the room for this item]

Alex Robinson (AR) has attended Board meetings as an observer and has also attended volunteer days. He has a strong interest in RWCE and the work that it is doing. His CV had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. RS recommended to the Board that AR be appointed as a Co-optee.

The Board **APPROVED** the appointment of Alex Robinson as a Co-optee to serve until the next AGM in accordance with the Articles of Association.

AR will now complete the necessary paperwork and, once done, AD will confirm his appointment with Companies House. **AR/AD**

b) *Composition of Board*

It was noted that DE, IH and JR are due to come to the end of their term of office as Elected Members at the next AGM. There will need to be a Call for Members and an election at the AGM but all are eligible to stand for re-election should they wish to do so. DE confirmed his intention to put himself forward again. AD to contact IH and JR to ask if they also wish to stand again.

AD

RS and JS will also come to the end of their term of office as Expert Directors in 2020. These are Board appointments and both can be re-appointed if the Board feels their skills and experience are of value to the Board. RS and JS will confirm in January if they wish to be considered for re-appointment.

RS/JS

The Board acknowledged that there were some skills gaps in the areas of accountancy, legal, woodland management and education/training. All to send suggestions to RS for any potential new Board members with these relevant skills.

ALL

The Board meeting in January will include an item on the composition of the Board moving forward. AD to add to the agenda.

AD

5 **National Nature Reserve Agreement (NNRA)**

Natural England asked for a copy of the full lease before they would agree to a meeting. This was sent to them on 6 November. They have acknowledged receipt and have said they will be in touch regarding a meeting. RS will continue to pursue.

RS

RP has also tried to contact NE about their draft vision but has not had a response. It was noted that this would not hold up the bid for funding for the Boardwalk.

6. **Financial update**

a) *Year End Position 2018/2019*

The overall balance at year end (as at 31 October 2019) was £15,861.50 allocated as below:

- *Wild About the Woods* - £1,178.75.
- *Unrestricted funds* - £14,682.75.

The year-end position is significantly higher than the previous financial year when funds stood at £6,516.89.

AD will now contact the accountants to start the process of producing the year end accounts.

AD

b) *Finance update 2019/2020*

The current overall balance is £15,395.11 allocated as below:

- *Wild About the Woods* - The current balance is £1,122.35 - virtual office costs are being allocated to this fund.
- *Unrestricted funds* - The current balance is £14,272.76. £230 has been spent on brash clearance and £30 on photocopying and posting the lease for NE.

8. **Business Plan Focus Group**

(i) **Woodland Management**

The following was noted:

- Insurance liability level has now been agreed at £2million. This is the level that the Woodland Trust use.
- MA now has her insurance in place.
- All certificates/documentation have been received and are being held by DE.
- The work commenced on 31 October 2019.

- It is taking time to move the wood to the sawmill as it is being done via low impact forestry. Ideally it would be better to have a small tractor/trailer with a crane to move the wood but it is still early days and the situation will continue to be monitored and reviewed.
- A track upgrade or upgraded equipment are options to be considered but could only be financed via funding.
- The first load will be moved shortly and a second load of c20 tonnes (all hardwood) is also nearly ready to go.
- DE is in talks with Dave Hutchinson regarding the brash being used for charcoal. This could be a good income stream for RWCE to start in early spring.
- Ad hoc sales of wood are also a potential additional income stream.

ii) Partnership Working

RP had circulated an update on partnership working prior to the Board. The following points were noted:

Scarborough Guiding

Celebration planting date confirmed as 19 September. They would like at least 40 trees (one for each division). The Woodland Trust may be able to help.

Coventry University Scarborough Campus Students' Union

RWCE has now been accepted on to their Volunteering Scheme.

Volunteer day

The event on 19 October was very successful and the turnout was very good. It is hoped to arrange a further day in November/December.

Thrive Alive Charity

They are hoping to meet up with NYMNP Youth Leader to demonstrate their facility in Raincliffe Woods.

Sheffield Hallam University – Geography Department

RP will meet the students at the University on 6 February to explain who RWCE are and what we want to achieve. The students will then finalise their projects with the aim of providing RWCE with evidenced based findings around the geology, geography, archaeology, history and environment of the woods.

Graham School / Scalby School

Working with the NYMNP Youth Education Worker there have been two sessions with Graham School students undertaking litter picking and restoration work. They have worked well and the children responded very positively. A third session will be held this week. It is hoped that similar work can be done with Scalby School. As a result of this work RWCE has been invited to post on the NYMNP website blog.

Scarborough Archaeology and History Society (SAHS)

SAHS would like to undertake further exploratory digs alongside Low Road. It was agreed that a formal mechanism/consent form needs to be in place to manage such requests. Perhaps the NE one could be used as a model, or the one used by Dawnay Estates. RS will draft a consent form for the Board to consider.

RS

RWCE are grateful to SAHS for offering to help in the removal of the invasive plants around Old Man's Mouth car park.

9. Business Plan Review

WW has agreed to facilitate a workshop type meeting. As noted under Matters Arising a meeting has been arranged with WW on 21 November to agree the process and to set a date for the workshop.

10. Boardwalk Project update

THIS ITEM IS CONFIDENTIAL TO THE BOARD.

11. Funding to update

a) Community Business Power to Change Fund

- A bid was submitted a month ago and confirmation has been received that it has got through Phase 1.
- RWCE would need to provide 20% matched funding – this can be over time and it is not capital spend.
- The bid includes the appointment of a Woodland Project Manager for a period of 2 years, a mobile office and some equipment. It must be self-sustaining after 2 years.
- Phase 2 requires more information to be submitted and this will be done by DE/SP/RP tomorrow.
- Following the receipt of this additional information there will be a meeting with an assessor to discuss the bid. If the assessor decides to recommend the bid to go forward, it will be considered by Community Business Fund Board.

DE/SP/RP

b) DEFRA High Tier Countryside Stewardship Scheme

- This will be open for applications in February 2020.
- Applications need to be submitted by May 2020 for funding released in January 2021.
- If successful this funding helps to support the self-sustainability required by the Community Business Fund.

12. Publicity, marketing and events

- Changes have now been made to home page of the website so that news items are on the first part of the landing page. Links to Facebook and emailing links to subscribers is still to be done.
- As mentioned at the last meeting Ed Asquith is keen to arrange a Community Engagement event – this could tie in with the Business Plan Review.
- Ed Asquith is also the editor of a new magazine called TOPIC which covers the Yorkshire area. It would be good to have an article about RWCE in the magazine. SP to contact Ed Asquith to find out if this might be possible.

RP

SP

13. Health and Safety

a) Risk Assessment

- The Board acknowledged that, as RWCE is now the leaseholder, it needed to carry out a risk assessment of the woods in the first instance and set up a system for monitoring and review.
- RP has already done a photo audit of the structures in the woods and this will form the basis of the asset register/risk register.
- It was agreed that this can be printed off and kept with the lease. It can then be updated as required.
- It was proposed that the busiest paths are checked every 6 months and the less busy ones annually and findings are recorded on the asset register as above.

RP

b) Incident Management

- The Board acknowledged that, as RWCE is now the leaseholder, it needed to set up a formal incident management system. There is already an informal ad hoc system where queries are received via email or phone and passed on.
- A more formal mechanism needs to be established for reporting and managing incidents. This will need to include who is responsible for dealing with any incidents which may occur (ie RWCE, SBC, Police)

- SS will speak to SBC Parks Team to see what they have in place to help inform the system to be set up for RWCE.
- This would be part of the remit of the Project Manager (if the funding bid is successful).

SS

14. Any other business

a) RWCE Email address

RWCE currently has 4 email addresses as below:

- Friends@ - not really used.
- Reporting@ - had been set up for reporting health and safety issues but not really used.
- Enquiries@ - for the public to get in touch on all matters from asking about events to reporting incidents.
- Admin @ - this is for internal emails, emails to funders, governance type enquires.

It was agreed to rationalise the addresses as below:

Keep:

- Admin@ - as above. Accessed by JS and AD as now.
- Enquiries@ - the public email address for all enquiries/reporting of incidents. To be accessed by JS, DE, RP and SP.

Remove:

- Friends@
- Reporting@ - to be diverted to Enquiries@ and to be removed from the website.

RP will ask StudioExcel to make the necessary changes as outlined above.

RP

b) Rubbish

- Fly tipping and the state of the bins around the car parks continues to be an issue.
- RP has asked for a meeting with Harry Briggs, SBC to clarify what the schedule of collections is and how RWCE report any issues to SBC. SS will speak to Harry Briggs to see if he can help facilitate a meeting with RP.
- It was noted that the lease states that SBC retain responsibility for rubbish clearance for 18 months.

SS

c) Traffic

- There are concerns about the speed and volume of traffic on Forge Valley Low Road. It is not a main road but is being used as a bypass. There are no simple highway structures/ speed restrictions to slow the traffic down. Damage is being done and the traffic makes the plan for access on foot and by bike harder to implement.
- DE has written to NYCC, the Police and SBC about the issues.
- It was noted that SBC has no influence over any decisions. NYCC Highways have the final say on what is put in place but if the Police say it is dangerous then Highways would take note.

15. Date of next meetings

- 14 January 2020 – Sitwell Library
- 18 February 2020
- 24 March 2020 – Sitwell Library
- 28 April 2020- (Annual General Meeting)
- 26 May 2020
- 30 June 2020
- 8 September 2020
- 13 October 2020
- 17 November 2020

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.

