

## Board Meeting

28 July 2020

6.00 pm Woodend, Scarborough



RAINCLIFFE  
WOOD  
COMMUNITY  
ENTERPRISE

*The meeting was conducted in accordance with Government workplace guidance and all appropriate measures were put in place to ensure as safe a working environment as possible. Additionally a thorough risk assessment was carried out, a copy of which was circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. The layout of the room ensured 2 metre social distancing between attendees, everyone had their own table, no tables were directly opposite each other, hand sanitizer was available at both entrances, the door was open so its surface was not touched by any of the attendees. Jane Lowery, the new General Manager at Woodend, was also on site to ensure that procedures were being followed.*

### MINUTES

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

#### In attendance

Angela Doherty (AD) - Administrator and Company Secretary

1. **Apologies:** Ian Horton (IH), James Risker(JR), Cllr Phil Kershaw (PK), Cllr Subash Sharma (SS)

Action

2. **Declarations of Interest:** None

#### 3. **Minutes**

##### **Minutes of meeting on 30 June 2020**

The minutes of the meeting on 30 June 2020 were **AGREED** as a true record.

##### **(i) Matters Arising not on the Agenda**

a) *Row Brow Archers* – KG reported that the Row Brow Archers are now considering contacting Stepney Hill Farm with a view to siting a cabin.

b) *Litter* – as noted at the last Board meeting RWCE was pleased that SBC have been clearing litter and trying to keep the woods as clear of rubbish as possible. The Board agreed that RS would email Jo Ireland at SBC to ask her to pass on our thanks to the team doing the work.

RS

##### **(ii) Confirmation of Confidential items**

The Board agreed the confidential items on the last minutes. The non-confidential minutes will now be posted on the website.

AD

#### 4. **Governance**

##### **(i) AGM update – 10 August 2020**

A notional date of 10 August 2020 has been set for the AGM. There is no physical meeting but this date gives a deadline by which Members can place their votes and send in any comments they may have. All documents are on the website apart from the Chairman's Report which should be done this week. AD will let JS know when this is ready.

AD

The official notice was emailed to Members on Friday 17 July 2020 and a reminder sent on 26 July 2020. JS will send out a further reminder to Members at the end of this week and a final reminder on 7 August 2020. To date 8 votes which count towards the quorum have been cast. The Board will also chase up their contacts to encourage voting.

JS  
ALL

##### **(ii) Board Meeting Dates 2021**

The proposed meeting dates for 2021 were noted. All meetings taken place at 6pm on Tuesday evenings at Woodend.

## 5. Financial update

### (i) Year to date

The current overall balance is £12,955.70 allocated as below:

- *Wild About the Woods* - The current balance is £715.79 - virtual office costs/room hire costs are being allocated to this fund.
- *Unrestricted funds* - The current balance is £12,239.91

Since the report was circulated, a reminder that the Corporation Tax is due to be paid by 1 August 2020 has been received, although the return itself does not need to be submitted until October 2020. The worse-case scenario figure of £737.01 has been allowed for in the accounts but the final amount due could be less – it is dependent on what HMRC will accept is commercial forestry income. It was agreed that the tax should be paid now to avoid any penalties. RS will then liaise with the accountants on the actual return. If the tax due is less, HMRC will reimburse any overpayment.

RS

### (ii) Locality Membership Renewal

The cost of Locality Membership has increased from £100 to £300. A copy of an email from Locality explaining the increase together with a link to their website had been circulated to the Board to help inform their decision on whether or not to renew the membership for a further year.

It was noted that membership had not been a factor in funding applications so not renewing should not impact on any future funding applications. The Board felt that there were not enough benefits to membership to justify paying the higher cost.

The Board **AGREED** not to renew their Locality Membership. AD will inform Locality.

AD

### (iii) Power to Change COVID-19 Financial Support

At the last Board meeting it was agreed that RP would submit a claim for loss of income to the Power to Change COVID-19 Financial Support scheme. The criteria to apply for the funding is that an organisation should have no more than £10k in the bank and currently RWCE has just over £12k in unrestricted funds (although will reduce to c£11 once the Corporation Tax and various other expenses have been taken into account). It was agreed that it would still be worth putting in an application for the funding. RP to take forward.

RP

## 6. Funding

### (i) Power to Change

The following was noted:

*Community Woodland Manager*

- Following the last Board meeting the job description has been finalised with input from CaVCA. They suggested the salary range of £28 to £32k which is the mid-range of what similar roles are being advertised at. The role has to become self-sustaining over time.
- The job is live on CaVCA's website and has been emailed out to their contacts. It is also being shared via Facebook and LinkedIn. NYMNP have put it on their website and have also circulated it to colleagues.
- DE will contact Tim Birkenshaw at SBC to see if he will circulate the advert and DE will also send it to Will Richardson at the Woodland Trust.
- JS will investigate if there are any other free sites which could be used.
- RP has been in touch with 3 universities specialising in forestry but has not had any response. It was agreed that the advert should be sent to Askham Bryan and Bishop Burton College. JS will ask if her university colleagues have any direct contacts who could help circulate the advert.
- Applications are already coming in so it was agreed that, for now, there was no need to advertise it on any paid sites.

DE

JS

JS

- The deadline for submission of applications is 21 August with a view to interviews taking place in early September.
- Mel Bonney-Kane from CaVCA has offered to sit in the interviews and JS also volunteered to help with the interview process, both shortlisting and interviewing as required. DE will liaise with JS re help needed.

DE

#### *Business Mentor*

- Katherine Wyatt (KW), the Business Mentor, is meeting with DE/RP/SP in the woods on Friday – this should be the final meeting.
- KW's will produce a report based on her findings and this will come to the Board for consideration. The need for a new Business Plan will be part of that report. (see item 10).

#### *Expenditure*

- DE/RP/SP are planning to visit George Agar at Ravenscar to look at what equipment they may be able to supply. RS has used them before and recommended the quality of their service. He also suggested Hardwicks at Brompton as another potential supplier.
- Following further consideration it is now felt that it would be better to have a quad which can pull a small trailer and a small van (the van be second-hand and would be badged with RWCE/PTC logo) rather than a Polaris due, in part, to concerns about the cost of running the Polaris as raised by RS at the last meeting and confirmed by others. It was noted that Thorn Park Farm have a trailer which RWCE can rent.
- An outright purchase of the vehicles would be better as the money would come out of the capital expenditure pot. If they were leased it would have to come out of revenue funding.
- RWCE must get 3 quotes for the purchase of any capital equipment.
- It may be necessary to pay a deposit upfront but it is understood that funds can be drawn down if needed.
- In terms of space it is now felt that it would be better to have a 20ft container purely for storage and then a second 10ft container which would be the office area with an electric supply. There will also be access to a toilet. Thorn Park Farm have already identified the site where they could be located and they would be able to provide a power supply which RWCE would 'rent' from them. CCTV is already in place.
- It was noted that equipment / machinery supply may become difficult with reductions in manufacture in China/ India so it may be best to place an order sooner rather than later.

The Board **AGREED** to an early purchase of equipment if necessary, with the proviso that the quotes are circulated to the Board for approval before any purchases are made.

#### **(ii) Higher Tier Countryside Stewardship Scheme update**

The following was noted:

- The Forestry Commission will be conducting their on-site review on Friday 18 August 2020. RWCE contact James Shawcross will be bringing his manager with him and WR from Woodland Trust will also be there.
- RWCE's application has, in principle, been approved but the final stage still to be done is what will be in the Stewardship. The deadline for the scheme is November so it is possible that RWCE would not receive any money until February or March (it is normally January).
- The base level of funding is £22k per annum.

#### **(iii) Other**

None.

## 7. National Nature Reserve Agreement.

RS feedback to NE the comments from the last Board meeting but is still waiting to receive the amended agreement. This is expected to be sent as soon as Louise Hardwick from NE is back at work.

## 8. Business Plan Focus Group

### (i) Woodland Management Team update

The following was noted:

- Conversations are ongoing with the Forestry Commission about clear felling of larch.
- Negotiations are underway with Andrew Spittlehouse with a view to him starting work again late August/early September. The plan would be for him to fell the larch near Low Road which is high quality and could fetch c£55 per tonne, but further investigation into the logistics is needed before the work goes ahead. The main issue with him last time was the tidying up after felling – this will be more tightly controlled in any new contract.
- It is understood that Sawdon Sawmill are looking to buy larch. DE will follow up.
- It is hoped that the Woodland Management Team will be able to start work again in August, however this is dependent on having a 2 person team available.
- To be effective both members of the team need to be available for 5 days per week, but unfortunately one member has not been. They have been contacted to confirm that they need to be available every day and have been given a deadline by which to respond, otherwise they will be assumed to no longer want the work.
- Action Towards Inclusion(ATI) have a suitable person who could take on the work. He has the appropriate qualifications and ATI will cover the cost of his insurance.
- The Woodland Management Team would report to the new Community Woodland Manger but would continue to be contracted on a freelance/self-employed basis.

DE

### (ii) Partnership Working

The following was noted:

- NYMNP volunteers have been working an area just down from Old Man's Mount car park with DE/RP. 2 wooden structures have fallen into disrepair – one has been stripped out and the path improved to make it walkable. The other needs work but more volunteers will be needed to do this.
- NYMNP volunteers also fixed some broken boards on the Boardwalk.

## 9. Boardwalk Project

THIS ITEM IS CONFIDENTIAL TO THE BOARD.

## 10. Business Plan Review update

The following was noted

- RP now has the flip charts sheets from WW.
- RS has tried to contact Mel Bonney-Kane (MBK) at CaVCA but has not yet been able to speak to her. He has spoken to David Stone, Strategic Development Officer at CaVCA, who said that MBK would contact RS. RS will continue to pursue.
- CaVCA's standard charge is £300 per day plus VAT.
- As noted above a new Business Plan will form part of the Power to Change resilience report and could be funded via the Resilience pot of money (up to £8k). CaVCA already work with Power to Change as part of their Business in the Community Funding work.

RS

## 11. Publicity, marketing and events

Nothing to report.

## 12. Health and Safety

Any health and safety matters were noted in RP's Board update which had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following additional points were noted:

- IH/RP met to discuss the ongoing issues with the mountain bikers creating extensive tracks with deep excavations at the East Ayton end of Forge Valley. They felt that any levelling out would need to wait until September.
- As noted at the last Board meeting RWCE signs are needed. Even though there may be a risk that they could get defaced, it was still important to put them up. Don French Signs would be able to provide appropriate signage.
- A major issue for RWCE is not being able to put a phone number on any signage. One option might be to have a number which connects to a messaging system which then automatically sends an email to the named RWCE contact. One such system is Messagebird and RP is looking into the costs.
- The tree line on Forge Valley Road needs attention to make it safe. Open Reach can provide a cherry picker and have offered to pay for the closure of the road. RWCE's own Woodland Management Team could then cut back the trees. However, Open Reach are very busy at the moment so this may not be able to be done until September. RP will follow up.

RP

RP

## 13. Any other business

a) *NYMNPA Associate Group* - NYMNPA have an Associate Group scheme which organisations can join. It is free and can provide structured training for volunteers in a variety of areas from health and safety to use of equipment. Volunteer opportunities are also circulated to all volunteers so opening up a wide pool of people which RWCE could use to work in the woods. RWCE volunteers would be affiliated to NYMNP.

The Board **AGREED** that RWCE should become an Associate Group of NYMNPA. RP to take forward.

RP

b) *Access Track at Thoxenby Mere* – part of the Higher Tier Stewardship Scheme relates to a track at Throxenby Mere. There is already a track there but it is no longer fit for purpose so RWCE would aim to maintain and improve it. To find out if it needs planning permission a fee of £50 needs to be paid but the Board felt that permission would not be needed in this case. It is understood that it is only needed if a new track is being created but RWCE plans are for the maintenance and improvement of an existing track.

c) *Newsletter* - RP has drafted a newsletter to go on the website. It includes some criticism of NYCC Highways and their plans to widen and make faster the road along Forge Valley and Low Road which has been the site of many accidents. AD to circulate to Board members for any comments before it is published. The Board to feedback directly to RP.

AD  
ALL

d) *Strimmer* – RP has been using his own strimmer for work in the woods but this has now broken. It was agreed that RWCE should have its own equipment for such work. The Board **AGREED** that RP should buy a strimmer for RWCE use. DE offered to store it until the new storage unit has been set up. RP to proceed with the purchase.

RP

## 14. Dates of next meetings 2020

- 8 September 2020
- 13 October 2020
- 17 November 2020

### Dates of meetings 2021

- 12 January 2021
- 16 February 2021
- 23 March 2021
- 27 April 2021- Annual General Meeting (reverted back to usual timing)

- 25 May 2021
- 29 June 2021
- *August meeting to be determined if needed.*
- 7 September 2021
- 12 October 2021
- 16 November 2021

*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.*

