



Board Meeting

13 October 2020

6.00 pm Woodend, Scarborough

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, no tables were directly opposite each other and hand sanitizer was available at both entrances. Masks were worn if attendees left the room via the inner door into the bottom corridor.

MINUTES

Present: Robert Sword (RS)–Chair, Dave Evans (DE), Ian Horton (IH), Stephen Parker (SP), Robert Peacock (RP, until 7pm), Cllr Subash Sharma (SS).

In attendance

Angela Doherty (AD) - Administrator and Company Secretary

Paul Thompson (PT) – Community Woodland Manager

1. **Apologies:** Karl Gerhardsen (KG), Asher Haynes (AH), Cllr Phil Kershaw (PK), Julie Stewart (JS) **Action**

At the start of the meeting the RS informed the Board that Julie Stewart had tendered her resignation from the RWCE Board. The Board wished to record its thanks to JS for her invaluable contribution to RWCE.

AD will make the necessary changes at Companies House and to the bank mandate.

AD

On a practical note, JS was the Vice-Chair of the Board so a replacement needs to be appointed. This will be added to the agenda of the next Board meeting.

AD/SG

JS also managed the Membership Database and had access to the Reporting and Enquiries emails and to the website. It was agreed that the Membership Database could be managed by SG moving forward. AD to let SG know about the Database and to remove any permissions as necessary.

AD

2. **Declarations of Interest:** None

3. **Minutes**

Minutes of meeting on 8 September 2020

The minutes of the meeting on 8 September 2020 were **AGREED** as a true record.

(i) Matters Arising not on the Agenda

a) *RWCE phone* – a phone and relevant IT are being discussed with PT to agree the best option moving forward. **PT**

b) *Signage* – PT will take this forward. **PT**

c) *Forge Valley Trees* – DE has tried to contact Alan Tomlinson but has not yet had a response. SS confirmed that SBC are undertaking an appraisal which should be completed in about 3 weeks. The results of that appraisal will inform the recommendation to the Council of actions to be taken. SS will monitor progress and follow up with Tony Randerson. **SS**

d) *Local Plan* – KG had been unable to attend the meeting but had circulated his proposed response to the Local Plan consultation to the Board for their comments. The following was noted:

- The emphasis is on environment and health and wellbeing.
- RP has drafted an email which he will send to cycling organisations asking them to contribute to the local plan consultation. He is also putting something on the website to encourage people to take part in the consultation.
- The Directors will also encourage their own contacts to put forward their views.
- RP is waiting for NYCC to contact him about engagement in respect of cycling.
- There is a White Paper on planning, currently out to consultation, which is proposing changing the way Section 106 money is used. There will be more emphasis on greater participation at local level so that much of the development work is done as early as possible in the process.
- SS suggested that it would be worthwhile writing to the County Councillors with proposed plans so that they have something to refer to should any funding become available in the future.
- The Board agreed to email their thoughts/comments/suggestions on the proposed response after this meeting.

ALL

ALL

(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) Board Support Update

The following was noted in respect of the handover to Sharon Graves (SG):

Contract

- RS had received the contract from SG which is the same as that in place for AD, namely £14 per hour for 10 hours per month.

The Board **AGREED** the Contract for SG which was duly signed by RS. AD will pass on to SG for her signature.

AD

Handover

- The process to add SG as a signatory on the account was underway. Once SG is set up and has access to the online bank account, AD will be removed from account. The accountants have been informed of the changes.
- SG has access to the Dropbox electronic files and the RWCE admin email.
- AD and SG are scheduled to meet on 28 October to go through everything in detail.
- SG will be the main contact for the November Board meeting but AD will still attend.
- SG needs to be formally appointed as the Company Secretary to replace AD.

The Board **APPROVED** the appointment of Sharon Graves as the Company Secretary. AD to make the necessary changes at Companies House.

AD

(ii) Confirmation Statement – AD confirmed that the Confirmation Statement had been filed at Companies House.

(iii) Potential New Board Member

THIS ITEM IS CONFIDENTIAL TO THE BOARD.

5. Financial update

(i) Year to date

The current overall balance is £73,798.68 allocated as below (note the figures for Power to Change have been updated since the report was circulated to the Board):

- *Wild About the Woods* - The current balance is £569.39 - virtual office costs/room hire costs are being allocated to this fund.
- *Unrestricted funds* - The current balance is £9,471.29. Spend of note is the addition of Employer Liability insurance (£108.24); costs for tree felling (£400) and crushed stone for the cabin base (£364.20).
- *Power to Change* – The current balance is £63,758. The new container has been bought at a cost of £4,242 and is expected on site on Friday of this week.

It was agreed that the cost of the crushed stone should be reallocated to Power to Change. AD to amend the spreadsheet.

AD

It was also noted that there is wood awaiting collection which will generate some income.

6. Funding

(i) Power to Change PT left the room for this item

a) Community Woodland Manager

The Board were pleased to note the appointment of Paul Thompson as the new Community Woodland Manager with a start date of 2 November 2020. RS/DE outlined the terms and conditions of employment contained in the employment contract which had also been discussed with PT.

The Board **AGREED** to the terms and conditions outlined and the contract was duly signed by RS, and by PT on his return to the meeting. AD will send a copy of the contract to PT after the meeting. The contract will be retained by the Administrator.

AD

PT would like to continue with his current pension provider – AD to check with the Payroll Providers (see below) if this is possible and how this impacts on auto-enrolment.

AD

PT re-joined the meeting.

b) HR providers

Quotes had been received from Alcumus and Peninsula for HR services and these were circulated prior to the meeting. DE had also spoken to CaVCA who advised that free advice may be available from ACAS or from Yorkshire Community Trust. However, it was felt that this would be reactive and would not provide the pro-active service which RWCE needed, including an appropriate employee handbook with up to date HR policies.

Alcumus offered a better price for a two year contract paid annually and RS has also worked with them before and had been pleased with the service they had been able to provide. The finer details of the service they could provide still needed to be confirmed. RS to ring Alcumus to discuss the detail of their proposal and inform the Board of the outcome of the discussion.

RS

The Board **AGREED, in principle**, to the appointment of Alcumus as the HR provider for RWCE on a two year contract at a cost of £1217.70 per annum, with the proviso that, following the conversation with RS, he is satisfied that they are able to offer the service required.

AD to email Alcumus to inform them of the outcome stressing that it is an in principle agreement. AD will also inform Peninsula that they have been unsuccessful on this occasion.

AD

c) *Payroll providers*

Quotes for payroll services were received from Lloyd Dowson, Ashby Berry Coulsons, Fortus (previously Winn & Co) and Edward Milnes Accountancy. The quotes were emailed to RS, RP, DE and SP for their consideration and come to the Board with a recommendation to use Ashby Berry Coulsons.

There is little to choose from a cost point of view therefore it seemed sensible to use the current accountants for this service.

The Board **AGREED** to the appointment of Ashby Berry Coulsons as the payroll providers for RWCE.

AD will contact them to inform them of the outcomes and confirm next steps. AD will also inform the other providers that they have been unsuccessful on this occasion.

AD

d) *Other*

The following was noted:

- DE is trying to get a quote for insurance for the Quad to be purchased with the PTC money. So far, he has been unable to find anyone who will insure a standalone quad. All insurers said they would insure it if RWCE had more than one vehicle. Dialogue is still ongoing with RWCE's current insurers Zurich and it is hoped that they will be able to provide a quote.
- Insurance may be needed to cover small tools carried in the van (although it is unlikely that they would be left in the van). DE to follow up.
- PT is looking into options for the purchase of a secondhand van. The Board agreed that this should be no more than 2/3 years old. He is aware of a van which may become available for RWCE to buy although it is possibly too big for what is needed (it can seat 9 people plus there is space for tools). IH may also know someone with a pick-up for sale. PT to liaise with DE/RP and IH and keep the Board informed.

DE

PT

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

RP gave the following update:

- The application was still being processed.
- Some areas have been reclassified meaning there is less capital for shrub control, but the changes are minor.
- The funding is £100k revenue over 5 years and £31k capital which must be spent in the first two years (eg for shrub control, drainage, deer pens, squirrel control).
- RWCE does not need to provide any match funding.
- The one main issue outstanding is the drainage across the main track where HTCSS are insisting that RWCE get planning permission. RP is clarifying if this will hold things up or if everything else can go ahead. It was noted that PT has experience in this area so will be able to help with the application. It was also noted that Councils have been getting stricter in granting planning for such work.

(iii) **Other.**

None.

7. **National Nature Reserve Agreement.**

As noted at the last Board meeting, RS had received the final draft of the Agreement which he shared with RP. Both feel that it is now at a point where RWCE can sign it.

The Board **AGREED** that the National Nature Reserve Agreement be accepted and this was duly signed by RS. AD will post to National Nature England for them to counter sign.

AD

8. Business Plan Focus Group

(i) *Woodland Management Team update*

The following was noted:

- Flixtons have confirmed that they do not wish to purchase the larch however Sawdon are still interested and the estimated net income is £7k.
- FnB Haulage, who were taking the wood for weighing, have closed down.
- Andrew Spittlehouse has stated that he can fell, arrange haulage and find buyers for the wood. RWCE would pay him a flat rate of £25 per tonne.
- Selling prices are estimated between £56 per tonne and £65 per tonne for softwood and £40 per foot for chipwood. It is estimated that there are c200 tonnes available.
- Estimated income is c£5k.
- There will be c25%-30% thinning but this will be offset by new planting.
- RS suggested it would be worth speaking to Will Richardson for his advice.

SP/DE

(ii) *Partnership Working*

Nothing to report.

9. Boardwalk Project

The following was noted in respect of the Boardwalk Project

- A bid for Green Recovery funding was unsuccessful – the feedback from the funders was that the outcomes were not enough to justify the amount of funding requested. One of the issues was there was a very limited amount of space to try to put across all the benefits in terms of job creation opportunities so it perhaps did not convey the full picture.
- PT is reviewing the Boardwalk project and will come back to the Board with his thoughts/ideas.
- RS has still not heard back from Sirius Minerals. He will follow up.

PT
RS

10. Business Plan Review update

RS reported that he had not heard any more from CaVCA following the last Board meeting. He is aware that MBK has spoken to Katherine Wyatt about the Resilience Review but the Review itself has still not been received nor funding confirmed. RS will contact MBK again.

RS

11. Publicity, marketing and events

Nothing to report.

12. Health and Safety

a) *Storm Damage*

RP reported that, following the storms two weeks ago, there are a number of broken branches and trees across pathways. These are healthy trees brought down by the power of the storm. They are causing an obstruction but are not deemed to be unsafe on the whole. The one of most concern is a tree down across the top track which will be dealt with by the Woodland Management Team.

b) *Traffic*

It was noted that there had now been 7 crashes at the Ironbridge layby carpark, including one which destroyed the fence. Luckily no-one was hurt in any of these incidences however, that means that they are not logged by the Police as accidents so, as far as they are concerned, there is no record of this being a hot spot for accidents.

13. Any other business

a) *Climate Emergency Centre*

SP reported that a Climate Emergency Centre is going to be set up in Scarborough. They are currently looking for suitable premises. Once set up it could be place where RWCE is

able to have information for visitors. At this stage they are asking if RWCE will send a letter of support to them.

The Board **AGREED** that RWCE will send a letter of support to the Climate Emergency Centre group to be signed by RS as the Chair. SP/RS to liaise re the wording.

RS/SP

b) *Unitary Authority*

SS confirmed that the letter to trigger the start of the process has now been received.

4. Dates of next meetings

2020

- 17 November 2020

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.