

## **MINUTES**

**Present:** Robert Sword (RS) – Chair, Robert Peacock (RP), Cllr Subash Sharma (SS), Asher Haynes (AH), Cllr Phil Kershaw (PK),

### **In attendance**

Sharon Graves (SG) - Administrator and Company Secretary  
Paul Thompson (PT) – Community Woodland Manager

### **Action**

1. **Apologies:** Julia Clark (JC), Dave Evans (DE), Ian Horton (IH), Stephen Parker (SP)
2. **Declarations of Interest:** None
3. **Minutes**

#### **Minutes of meeting on 6 July 2021**

The minutes of the meeting on 6 July 2021 were **AGREED** as a true record.

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

None.

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

The Board agreed that there were no confidential items. The full minutes will now be posted on the website.

#### **4. *Governance***

##### **(i) *Company Secretary/Admin***

Increased volume of work and agreement to update of hours from 10 to 14 hours per month. The Board **APPROVED** the updated hours.

##### **(i) *Community Woodland Manager – Pay Committee Recommendation***

Following the presentation of a personal development and performance review (3/11/21), and in recognition of PT's hard work carried out over the last year the Focus Group recommended an annual salary increase.

The Board **APPROVED** the annual salary increase.

#### **5. *Financial update***

##### **(i) *Financial Statements***

SG reported as follows:

The current overall balance is £40,896.95 as at 31 October 2021:

- *Wild About the Woods* - The closing balance is £29.39 - virtual office costs/room hire costs are being allocated to this fund, and once deposited will be closed from the current account/unrestricted funds.
- *Unrestricted funds* - The closing balance is £20,967.23. Spend of note - £6,376.95 – Forestry Contracting, £1,461.24 – HR annual cost, £1,500.00, Tree safety work along Forge Valley, £1,017.23 – Kickstart salary costs.

- *Power to Change* – The closing balance is £17,660.33. Third payment received of £15,000. Spend of note includes salary expenditure and annual insurance of motor fleet.
- *Power to Change Business Plan and Comms* – £2,240. Spend of note includes second invoice of £3,600 for Business Plan.

*Outstanding Invoice* – Stephen Tate at Imaginative Productions. Monies still to be received £350. SG to chase

**(ii) CapEx and new equipment update**

PT reported as follows:

- Heating for the office - See 7(iv) below.

**6. Funding**

**(i) Fundraising update**

The following was noted:

- PT secured a £1,786 grant from North York Moors National Park Authority to support new car park interpretation boards
- PT secured a small amount of PPE donations from Husqvarna
- The decision on the Community Renewal Fund bid (joint bid through Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and York & North Yorks LEP) for £35k to employ an engagement consultant until March 2022 has been delayed by Government.
- A submission £65k bid to North York Moors National Park Authority's 'Farming in Protected Landscapes' fund to employ an Outreach Officer on a fixed-term 18 month contract to revive woodland heritage crafts and traditional woodland management techniques.
- Two Ridings Foundation and Humber Coast & Vale offer match funding of £5k towards bids.
- PT meeting with York & North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

**7. Community Woodland Manager/Activities**

PT report was discussed and the following was noted:

**(i) Woodland Management update**

- RWCE office procured and installed in early August
- Recruited and inducted Jordan McKenzie as a new Conservation Ranger staff member on a 6 month fixed-term contract through the Kickstart Scheme. Contract finishes end of February.
- Tree safety inspections carried out along all Zone 1 PRoW
- Significant tree safety work carried out along Seavegate highway during September.
- PT has marked up compartments, and created detailed maps and Contractor Packs ready for arrival of harvesting contractor in November.
- Middle Track repairs carried out, plus vegetation management at car park entrances and along rights of way, and INNS control (Himalayan Balsam) along watercourses.
- PT met with consultants from Hill Holt Wood re. visitor centre scoping work
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**(ii) High Tier Countryside Stewardship Scheme Update**

- Achieved 1240 volunteer hours in 12 months, of which only 297 volunteer hours (i.e. 24%) were spent delivering contractual obligations (CS Higher Tier). Which means 76% of this time is spent carrying out basic site maintenance with no financial return for RWCE, but good community spirit.

**(iii) Community Engagement Update**

- The 'Woodland Wellbeing Walks' series was brought to a close at the end of July due to limited staff time to deliver these sessions
- In September commissioned 'The Yorkshire Map Maker' to begin work on the art print of Raincliffe and Forge Valley Woods as a retail product/income stream.
- In September SP organised and delivered an event 'Scarborough's Carbon History' demonstrating the ancient practice of charcoal making at the Showground.
- PT delivered external presentation to Scarborough Field Naturalists Society in October generating a small donation towards RWCE.
- Further public litter pick events delivered independently at Raincliffe Wood by 'Keep Scarborough Tidy' who now organise monthly events at the site.
- Yay Coffee brought their catering concession to Raincliffe Gate car park which attracted large numbers of visitors in autumn in the run up to Halloween.
- The Scarborough Archeological and Historical Society dig in June 2021 identified bronze-age settlement just north-east of Sawmill car park.

**(iv) Infrastructure/Resources update**

- Heating in the office was discussed. Generator currently used to power up the office to include lighting, heating, IT equipment. Discussion of installing log burner or electrical installation. PT to get quotes for installing electricity. RS suggested contacting Nigel Leadley of NDL electrics.

PT

**(v) Car Park Signage**

- PT initiated the design work for the car park signage project, to improve 'Share with Care' and 'Leave No Trace' messaging and provide informative maps to visitors. First Draft was presented to the meeting. RS questioned the "call 101" advice on the proposed sign, but it was agreed to leave it as is.

**(vi) Focus Group Terms of Reference**

- No further progress and to be moved to Governance and discussed at next meeting.

RP/DE

**(vii) Engagement**

**a) Visitor Centre Concept Design and Feasibility**

JC applied for a grant through the Plunkett Foundation and monies received to be used for 3 days for a consultant to do a feasibility study. 3 days not enough for a full financial feasibility study and HHW has produced a Visual Concept to assist with future bidding. Location for a community hub was identified next to the River Derwent as the land is within the existing lease. This maybe not the ideal location. Suggested to approach SBC with a preliminary discussion on what RWCE are planning. RS is meeting a colleague at SBC on another matter

RS

and will make an initial enquiry for other sites out with the existing lease area but which might be added to the lease, if suitable.

**a) Mountain Bike Trail Building**

PT presented a report in respect of positively engaging the mountain bike community. No short term solution and RWCE has to look at the bigger picture in terms of H&S and public liability. In the first instance, clear signage needs to be adopted as to where cyclists can go, ie. bridleways. AH will look at case studies and liaise with PT. RS expressed concern about Public Liability.

**AH/PT**

**(viii) Generating income with limited resources**

- To be discussed at the next Board Meeting.
- Need to look at sub-groups – marketing, website refresh etc.
- RS discussed the need to co-opt new directors with relevant experience

**RS**

PT to identify what skill sets are required

**PT**

**8. Property Issues**

**(i) Throxenby Mere Boundary**

RS has spoken with SBC and needs to tie up loose ends with Peter Rogers. Will report back to the Board.

**RS**

**(ii) Boardwalk**

SBC have submitted a bid to remove northern section.

**9. Business Plan Review update**

The following was noted:

- Draft plan initially prepared by CAVCA.
- RS along with Focus Group, PT and JC input have now prepared a final draft and is subject to a few minor changes and will be circulated to Board Members, SBC and can be used to supporting funding bids.

**RS**

The Board **AGREED** subject to the changes that the Business Plan be adopted for the next five years.

**10. Publicity, marketing and PR**

**(i) Social Media Update**

Communications channel	November	January	February	March	April	June	July	August	September	October
Press release	2		1			1	4		1	
Facebook (followers)	493	585	642	688	719	792	817		841	864
Instagram (followers)	69	82	112	141	160	181	186		196	206

**(ii) Newsletter**

Sent out at the end of September to capture activity taking place throughout summer.

**(iii) RWCE Website refresh**

RP agreed to contact the website designer to review and recommend updates and changes.

**RP**

**11. Health and Safety**

**(i) Forge Valley Property Damage**

Nothing to report.

**(ii) Health & Safety Update**

**a) Forge Valley Bridge Project**

PT reported on the risk to the bridge at Old Man's Mouth car park in Forge Valley, which is the only river crossing over the Derwent to the main access point to RWCE. Four large ash trees are leaning over the bridge and are affected by ash dieback. RS suggested as a short term measure of initially cutting the back "stems" of the ivy to kill it. PT to obtain quotes for tree removal. (RS to recommend a contractor).

**PT**

**RS**

**b) Managing ash dieback**

To commence programme of felling dangerous ash trees along Zone 1 public rights of way this winter which will require a significant amount of staff and volunteer resource. This may require additional financial support from other stakeholders such as Natural England or SBC.

**PT**

The following was also noted:

- Received incident report via third party of a small tree coming down onto a moving vehicle at Hazel Head resulting in a smashed windscreen. No further details on claim.
- Tree safety work in Forge Valley – Thanks to a 5 week road closure of Seavegate highway by NYCC Highways, we were able to carry out a significant amount of felling of diseased and dead ash trees along the highway. This produced 13.4 tonnes of hardwood which was sold to offset some of our costs to employ professional arborists to climb and dismantle three very large, dead and dangerous trees with significant branches directly above the highway.
- Tree safety inspections – PT trained up five volunteers in basic tree safety inspections to support our 2021 surveys of Zone 1 public rights of way network.

**(iii) Dangerous Tree Log**

Nothing to report.

**(iv) Car Park**

Nothing to report.

**12. Any Other Business**

The following was noted:

- PT proposes selling firewood at Scarborough Sparkle Market on 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> November. Need a volunteer for 28<sup>th</sup>. Also, tombola and request for gifts. SG to send email to board members. Also, Selling firewood at CAVCA on 17<sup>th</sup> December
- PT requested to purchase a "pay-as-you-go" phone to receive incoming calls only in respect of a contact phone number for the car park signs.

**SG**

This purchase of a PAYG phone was **APPROVED** by the Board.

**PT**

### 13. Dates of next meetings

Dates for 2022 meetings as follows:

11 January 2022	23 August 2022
8 March 2022	18 October 2022
3 May 2022 (AGM)	13 December 2022
28 June 2022	

*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.*