

MINUTES

Present: Robert Peacock – Chair (RP), Dave Evans (DE), Stephen Parker (SP), Terry Smithson (TS), Robert Weatherley (RW), Cllr Heather Phillips (HP)

In attendance

Jennifer Hobson (JH) – Finance Administrator

1.	Apologies	Action
	<p>Apologies: Martha Cattell (MC), Lottie MacFarlane (LM), Cllr David Jeffels (DJ)</p> <p>RP welcomed HP to the meeting and confirmed that Cllr David Jeffels had also been assigned as one of the two representatives of North Yorkshire Council.</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of interest:</p> <p>It was acknowledged that RW would be required to leave the meeting room during agenda item 6.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes</p>	
(i)	<p>Minutes of meeting on 13 June 2023</p> <p>The minutes were AGREED as a true record.</p>	
(ii)	<p>Matters Arising not on the Agenda: None</p>	
(iii)	<p>Confirmation of Confidential items</p> <p>The Board agreed that there were no items on the agenda classed as confidential. The full minutes will now be posted on the website.</p>	
4.	<p>Financial update</p>	
(i)	<p>Financial Statement – period ending July 23</p> <p>A range of financial reports were presented to the board. No queries were raised. The current overall balance is £154,997.66 as at 31/07/23:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Unrestricted funds</i> – £58,116.10 • <i>Branching Out (Sirius)</i> - £242.00 • <i>FIPL (Working Woodland Heritage)</i> – (£4,542.79) It was noted that this fund would be claimed retrospectively and so it was expected to be a minus figure. • <i>Hey Smile Foundation</i> - £523.26 • <i>National Lottery Platinum Jubilee (SWW)</i> - £23,797.07 • <i>Helping Rivers Thrive (Yorkshire Water)</i> - £2,450.02 • <i>Locality Budget</i> - £900.56 • <i>Locality Budget 2022</i> - £399.55 • <i>Natural England</i> - £8,473.00 • <i>Woodsmith SED Programme</i> – £15,070.17 • <i>Yorkshire in Business</i> - £1,116.00 • <i>Positive Biodiversity Outcomes</i> - £48,452.72 • <i>Petty Cash</i> - £311.56 	
(ii)	<p>Capital Purchase</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>	
5.	<p>Governance</p>	
(i)	<p>Policy update</p> <p>In light of the recent change of Directors, RP will circulate the list of policies and ask each Director to take one or two on to review and update as necessary.</p>	RP
(ii)	<p>Board Directors</p> <p>It was reported that the Board was still looking for suitable Directors, preferably with an accountancy and legal background. Anglo American had advised that they may have some suitable candidates.</p>	ALL

6.	HR	
(i)	Staffing update	
	<p>RW was asked to leave the room whilst the HR discussion took place. DE reported that RW was nearing the end of his 6-month temporary replacement post. DE was pleased with how RW had taken to the role and proposed that RW be offered the role on a permanent basis with a salary increase to £30K per annum. DE acknowledged that the job description required some amendments to reflect the changes to the original role. HP asked if RW had been offered a pension. It was confirmed that RW was subject to Auto Enrolment rules surrounding pensions but had so far opted out. It was agreed by all that DE would amend the job description and subsequently offer RW the permanent role with a salary of £30K per annum.</p> <p>DE reported that PT had managed to bring in around £9K of income from wood sales which had helped to extend PT's role for another 6 months. It was reported that PT had taken a voluntary break over the summer months to conduct some other work. This was seen as beneficial to both parties given the time of year. PT would resume his role after summer.</p> <p>RW was invited back into the room.</p> <p>SP had undertaken GA's review and was pleased with her progress. GA was undertaking a lot of useful training and was working well.</p> <p>RW reported that CR's role in supporting RW and GA was working very well and CR's Mindfulness Course was looking promising as an income stream. CR is looking after the social media accounts and is doing a great job.</p> <p>RP reminded the board that there were still some outstanding hours of marketing consultancy work owed to the company from some previous funding which RW, GA and CR could utilise. RP to pass details on to RW.</p> <p>RW reported that he had a volunteer who was showing a keen interest in becoming a permanent volunteer and asked if there was any training budget available for her. It was agreed that an initial training budget of £600 would be made available for this individual.</p> <p>It was again noted that the Directors are aware that more funding will be necessary to allow continuity of the existing staffing arrangements.</p>	DE/RW
	HP left the meeting at this point due to other commitments.	
7.	Project Updates	
(i)	Working Woodland Heritage FiPL/Hey Smile/Woodsmith SED Programme	
	<p>RW reported that there were only a few months left now on the FiPL project and everything was on target. It had served its purpose as a project to identify what events/classes worked and what didn't. RW is contacting all local festivals in the hope of being able to take workshops there, so far there had been a positive interest.</p> <p>The Woodsmith SED Programme is going well and means the tree safety work is being kept on top of. It was reported that whilst there was no formal project reporting requirement, RP and RW would look at providing some reporting on the project.</p>	
(ii)	Scarborough's Wonderful Woodlands	
	This project is going well, no issues to report.	
(iii)	Yorkshire in Business/Bio Vale funds	
	<p>RP confirmed that Faith Young is still working on website updates and newsletters. This was being paid for by the Yorkshire in Business Fund.</p> <p>Bio Vale are funding a video for the website to try to convey how Forge Valley came to be from the Ice Age onwards. This work is still ongoing. It was noted that some audio element would be required. Various suggestions were put forward and these would be looked into.</p>	

(iv)	AAF Positive Biodiversity Outcome	
	<p>TS has brought the project forward with meetings with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust who would be completing a large chunk of the work. An agreement is now in place between RWCE and YWT.</p> <p>There was still some work to be done on the RWCE's side of the project.</p> <p>RP reported that RWCE had the MyForest mapping software which can record locations and species. TS confirmed that he asked for any data being supplied to RWCE be in a format which could feed into this software. RW and his team now had access to this software.</p> <p>Engaging with the community is one of the targets of this project, and RP reported that the University of York had some interested students who he was hoping to arrange a meeting with which would be a good start on satisfying this target.</p> <p>RW reported that some sound recording equipment had now been installed which would hopefully provide some useful data.</p>	TS
(v)	Northern section of Boardwalk Forge Valley	
	The NYNP volunteers were planning to start this work in September to replace the northern section of the boardwalk. A site visit would be undertaken before the work is completed.	
8.	Health & Safety	
(i)	Fire Risk Planning update	
	RW is still working on this.	RW
(ii)	Forge Valley & Raincliffe Tree Safety Works	
	<p>Natural England had been unable to get the NNR Reserve Manager who is considered an expert on ash dieback to visit. RP to meet NE Ranger responsible for Forge Valley NNR this Friday after the meeting last Friday had been cancelled by NE.</p> <p>The issues with tree safety are ongoing and in hand. It was noted that if RWCE were to undertake the largescale work we would need to pay for someone to support Paul with this work.</p>	RP
(iii)	Windblow Old Farmhouse, Low Road	
	RW reported that there had been complaints from the owner of Old Farmhouse about debris blowing onto his land and about the overhanging trees over his land. It was reported that RW had done all he could to remove the debris and would continue to monitor the situation. The owner of the property was quite entitled to cut back the overhanging trees as any neighbouring property is, so RWCE would not be undertaking this work. The board felt that they had been very reasonable with their response. They had rectified the broken fence and had done a fair amount of clearing. RW will monitor the situation.	
9.	NNR Management Plan	
(i)	Project Update	
	TS confirmed that he had taken this on as a commission. He would send his first draft out to all board members for their initial comment.	TS
10.	Timber Harvest 2023/24	
	RP reported that due to the weather and subsequent ground conditions it was highly unlikely there would be any contractor income this year but that the hope was for more the following year, so this was likely to affect the cashflow over the next 12 months.	
11.	CSXCarbon/Y & NY LEP	
	It was reported that CSX Carbon are now looking at RWCE's maps. Y & NY LEP were holding an event in September specifically for community woodlands. RP & RW to attend to see what they may be able to offer.	RP
12.	Cloud account access issues	

	It was reported that an existing DropBox account renewal had being paid for another 12 months, so a suitable solution using DropBox would try to be established. JH agreed to work on this on a voluntary basis.	JH
13.	Mountain Bike Tracks	
	RW reported that RWCE did not have the resources available to tackle this issue. RW is reviewing planning permissions for the tracks. The outcome may open up the chance of funding. It may also force action to close routes if planning was required and refused. RW was also looking into getting a community group together to take on the responsibility for the tracks.	RW
14.	Summer Holidays – Managing Anti-Social Behaviour/Risks	
	RW is monitoring this issue over the summer by doing evening and weekend patrols, but there had already been one incident involving the Police. The Board supported taking a firm position over No camping / BBQ / Fires.	RW
15.	Comms & Engagement	
(i)	Scarborough Field Naturalists	
	RP had met with the Scarborough Field Naturalists to look at the mapping software together.	
(ii)	Anglo American	
	There had been a very positive meeting with Anglo American.	RP
(iii)	North Yorkshire Highways/North York Moors National Park	
	RP had circulated an email to all Board members from the CEO NYMNP. The Board supported RWCE CIC in taking on the development of this partnership which meets our priorities around wider public engagement, cycling and walking, health and wellbeing and environmental improvements.	
(iv)	Woodland Partnership	
	RP had attended a meeting. There is not enough money available to tackle the ash dieback problem. RP reported on 2 projects which would be useful to keep up with, the Outdoor Partnership and the Destination Management Plan.	
16.	Property/Lease	
(i)	Land by Throxenby Mere	
	This is on hold at present.	RP
(ii)	NYC/NYMNPA/Derwent Anglers lease discussions	
	RP is waiting for the new Director to start, then he can have discussions and get the lease agreed.	RP
(iii)	Thorn Park Farm Lease agreement	
	No further update.	
(iv)	Office accommodation	
	It was reported that the Anglo American funding included a sum of money for some more suitable accommodation. RW was continuing to investigate this.	RW
(v)	Row Brow Archers	
	RP reported that this group currently pay RWCE £50 per year and they have around 30 members. It was proposed that this amount be increased to £100 for up to 50 members (over that to be reviewed as and when). Also, a profit share of 25% would be proposed on any of their event income. RP would put this to them and report back.	RP
17.	Meeting Dates for 2024	
	Proposed frequency for 2024 meetings to be the third Tuesday of the month in Jan, Mar, May, AGM June, July, September, November.	

18.	Any Other Business No further items were raised.	
19.	Dates of next meetings, all at 6pm unless otherwise stated, in the Conference Room	
	Dates for 2023 meetings as follows: Tues 03 October 2023 Tues 05 December 2023	

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.

