

## **MINUTES**

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

### **In attendance**

Jennifer Hobson (JH) – Finance Administrator

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| <b>1.</b> | <b>Apologies</b>   | <b>Action</b> |
|           | <b>Apologies:</b> Lottie MacFarlane (LM), Cllr David Jeffels (DJ)  |               |
| <b>2.</b> | <b>Declarations of interest:</b> None  |               |
| <b>3.</b> | <b>Minutes</b>   |               |
| (i)       | <b>Minutes of meeting on 03 October 2023</b><br>The minutes were AGREED as a true record.  |               |
| (ii)      | <b>Matters Arising not on the Agenda:</b> None   |               |
| (iii)     | <b>Confirmation of Confidential items</b>  |               |
|           | The Board agreed that there were no items on the agenda classed as confidential. The full minutes will now be posted on the website.   |               |
| <b>4.</b> | <b>Financial update</b>  |               |
| (i)       | <b>Financial Statement – period ending October 23 (Year End)</b>   |               |
|           | <p>A range of financial reports were presented to the board. No queries were raised. It was acknowledged that the accounts were becoming easier to understand now that all the information was in QuickBooks. It was requested that the Year End information be submitted to the accountants promptly this year so that the final accounts could be processed closer to the year-end than in previous years.</p> <p>The current overall balance is £138,294.76 as at 31/10/23:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Unrestricted funds</i> – £59,389.90</li> <li>• <i>Branching Out (Sirius)</i> - £242.00</li> <li>• <i>FIPL (Working Woodland Heritage)</i> – (£11,570.65)</li> <li>• <i>Hey Smile Foundation</i> - £223.26</li> <li>• <i>National Lottery Platinum Jubilee (SWW)</i> - £17,907.52</li> <li>• <i>Helping Rivers Thrive (Yorkshire Water)</i> - £2,450.02</li> <li>• <i>Locality Budget</i> - £900.56</li> <li>• <i>Locality Budget 2022</i> - £399.55</li> <li>• <i>Natural England</i> - £8,473.00</li> <li>• <i>Woodsmith SED Programme</i> – £12,349.12</li> <li>• <i>Yorkshire in Business</i> - £876.00</li> <li>• <i>Positive Biodiversity Outcomes</i> - £46,225.22</li> <li>• <i>Petty Cash</i> - £424.71</li> <li>• <i>PayPal</i> - £4.55</li> </ul> | <b>JH</b>     |
| (ii)      | <b>Capital Purchase</b>  |               |
|           | Nothing to report.   |               |
| <b>5.</b> | <b>Governance</b>  |               |
| (i)       | <b>Policy update</b>   |               |
|           | RW has updated and presented an updated Health & Safety Policy which was agreed and signed by RP. All Risk Assessments have been reviewed.   |               |
| (ii)      | <b>Board Directors</b>   |               |
|           | It was reported that the Board continued to look for suitable Directors.   | <b>ALL</b>    |

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| <b>6.</b>    | <b>HR</b>  |                    |
| <b>(i)</b>   | <b>Staffing update</b>   |                    |
|              | <p>It was confirmed that Paul Taylor had resigned at the end of October leaving a vacant Forester role. Having received previously a CV from an interested person, the Management Committee had reviewed the CV and had a preliminary interview with the candidate. At least one reference had been obtained which was glowing. It was agreed that the position would not be advertised further and that the candidate interviewed would begin on a temporary contract on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. DE would produce the necessary contract in line with advise from FSB and the previous contract for the role.</p> <p>It was confirmed that RW was now on a permanent Woodland Manager contract. GA's contract is due to run until May 2024 after which this role would need to be reviewed in the absence of any further funding.</p> <p>CR was still doing a great job on a temporary contract.</p> | <b>DE</b>          |
| <b>7.</b>    | <b>Project Updates</b>   |                    |
| <b>(i)</b>   | <b>Working Woodland Heritage FiPL/Hey Smile/Woodsmith SED Programme</b>  |                    |
|              | The FiPL project had now ended. RW to complete the end of project report and claim the final payment due.  | <b>RW</b>          |
| <b>(ii)</b>  | <b>Scarborough's Wonderful Woodlands</b>   |                    |
|              | This project is going well, no issues to report.   |                    |
| <b>(iii)</b> | <b>Yorkshire in Business/Bio Vale funds</b>  |                    |
|              | RP has circulated a graphics clip to a few of the directors and is awaiting comments before finalising.  | <b>RP</b>          |
| <b>(iv)</b>  | <b>AAF Positive Biodiversity Outcome/NNR Management Plan</b>   |                    |
|              | The draft management plan is now with Natural England and awaiting a response from them. TW has just completed the first 6 monthly report.   | <b>TS/RP/DE/SP</b> |
| <b>(v)</b>   | <b>Northern section of Boardwalk Forge Valley</b>  |                    |
|              | The NYNP volunteers have completed approx.140 metres of the boardwalk but further progress is expected to be slow. It was noted that the volunteers are aware that the old boardwalk must be removed.  |                    |
| <b>8.</b>    | <b>Property/Lease</b>  |                    |
| <b>(i)</b>   | <b>Land by Throxenby Mere</b>  |                    |
|              | No further update at this time.  |                    |
| <b>(ii)</b>  | <b>NYC/NYMPA/Derwent Anglers lease discussions</b>   |                    |
|              | RP has not had the opportunity to take further as yet.   | <b>RP</b>          |
| <b>(iii)</b> | <b>Thorn Park Farm Lease Agreement</b>   |                    |
|              | No invoice has yet been received but it was requested that an amount of £300 per month be accrued within the accounts for the lease from 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2023.  | <b>JH</b>          |
| <b>(iv)</b>  | <b>Office accommodation</b>  |                    |
|              | RW has tidied up the existing office and will now rearrange the desks to make it more suitable, but it is hoped that this will suffice for now.  | <b>RW</b>          |
| <b>(v)</b>   | <b>Row Brow Archers</b>  |                    |
|              | <p>It was reported that there was some ill feeling between the Row Brow Archers, Stepney Hill Eco Project and the landowner. It was acknowledged that the aims of the Stepney Hill Eco Project aligned well with those of RWCE and RWCE would like to support this project with a view to gaining positive publicity. As the Row Brow Archers lease is due for renewal, it was agreed to write to them to ask that they find a way to move forward in a positive manner and that they provide their insurance documents and operational plan to RWCE.</p> <p>RP will write to both Row Brow Archers and Stepney Hill Eco Project.</p>  | <b>RP</b>          |
| <b>9.</b>    | <b>Health &amp; Safety</b>   |                    |
| <b>(i)</b>   | <b>Fire Risk Planning update</b>   |                    |
|              | RW confirmed that a new fire risk planning report has been completed and has been set to the fire service.   | <b>RW</b>          |
| <b>(ii)</b>  | <b>Forge Valley &amp; Raincliffe Tree Safety Works</b>   |                    |

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|              | The cost for Euroforest have gone up considerably which it was agreed by all was now too prohibitive for RWCE to go ahead with the proposed work. It was agreed that RWCE would be happy to pay for the survey report from Euroforest in order to plan an alternative way forward based on urgency and prioritising Forge Valley. RWCE will also use the survey to seek alternative quotes. RWCE will base future actions on the survey once they've seen it. It was suggested that it may be worth seeking help from the Woodland Trust.  | <b>RP</b>    |
| <b>10.</b>   | <b>Timber Harvest 2023/24</b>  |              |
| <b>(i)</b>   | <b>2024/25</b>   |              |
|              | It was discussed and agreed that given the weather and ground conditions, it wouldn't be wise to have a contractor on site this year as they are likely to cause more harm than good. It is anticipated that the new Forester an RW will be able to some work themselves to generate some roadside sales, and whilst this work would be slower with lower sales, it would at least be lower impact on the site. The question was raised about the need for RWCE to hit their extraction rates, which RW agreed to speak with Paul Thompson about and report back. It was agreed by all to postpone the Timber Harvest until September 2024.  | <b>RW</b>    |
| <b>(ii)</b>  | <b>New 10 year licence and Higher Tier Stewardship 2025-2034</b>   |              |
|              | It was reported that the felling licence for the next year needs to be sorted soon as well as a 10 year plan which would allow increased stewardship funding. It was noted that funding is available for help with devising a plan for this which RW will apply for.   | <b>RW</b>    |
| <b>11.</b>   | <b>CSXCarbon/Y &amp; NY LEP</b>  |              |
|              | A breakdown of costs was circulated, with the total cost being £5950 +VAT. RP had asked Natural England if they would be willing to contribute but they declined. It was therefore agreed that RWCE do not wish to proceed with this work. RP to respond.  | <b>RP</b>    |
| <b>12.</b>   | <b>Cloud account access issues</b>   |              |
|              | JH and DE confirmed that the Dropbox sharing method seemed to be working so JH will now share the link with RW and GA and will make sure all documents are combined before sharing further so we don't end up with duplicated information.   | <b>JH</b>    |
| <b>13.</b>   | <b>Mountain Bike Tracks</b>  |              |
|              | It was agreed that this agenda item can be removed for now.  |              |
| <b>14.</b>   | <b>Managing Anti-Social Behaviour/Risks</b>  |              |
|              | It was agreed that this agenda item can be removed for now.  |              |
| <b>15.</b>   | <b>Comms &amp; Engagement</b>  |              |
| <b>(ii)</b>  | <b>Anglo American</b>  |              |
|              | RP has updated Anglo American about the change of staff.   |              |
| <b>(iii)</b> | <b>North Yorkshire Highways/North York Moors National Park</b>   |              |
|              | It was reported that at a meeting with National Parks, they had been most complimentary about the work of RWCE and agreed to support us.<br>RP asked HP if she would help raise the profile of RWCE at Northallerton. HP advised that there was an Eco Champion who she would talk to as well as suggesting that this would be a good topic for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. HP agreed to report back in due course.<br>North York Moors National Park feel it would be invaluable to get some feedback from the public about what they use the woods for and what they feel is good or bad. It was discussed that perhaps RWCE could hold an event to publicise the work of RWCE – perhaps one for stakeholders/partner organisations and one for the public. It was agreed that a continuous program for getting feedback would be desirable and National Parks agreed to help with this. SP agreed to investigate this. | <b>HP/SP</b> |
| <b>(iv)</b>  | <b>Woodland Partnership</b>  |              |

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|             | It was reported that the meeting due to be held on 6 <sup>th</sup> December had now being postponed until 18 <sup>th</sup> January. RP will attend if possible.   | <b>RP</b>  |
| <b>(iv)</b> | <b>Eastgate Solar Farm</b>  |            |
|             | RWCE have been approached by this organisation having being identified as being eligible to apply for one of their grants of up to £4k. It was confirmed that multiple bids could be submitted. It was agreed that RWCE would apply for a grant to help with training around health and wellbeing to support Gillian and Claire with their events. It was agreed that RWCE would submit a second bid for help with training for the new forester role and the Woodland Management team in general. RW to submit the bids. | <b>RW</b>  |
| <b>(v)</b>  | <b>Heritage Lottery</b>   |            |
|             | Heritage Lottery have asked RWCE to submit areas of focus that could be applied for. RP asked if everyone could contribute to that.   | <b>ALL</b> |
| <b>16.</b>  | <b>Meeting Dates for 2024</b>   |            |
|             | Confirmed dates for 2024 are Tues 16 January, Tues 19 March, Tues 21 May, Tues 18 June (AGM), Tues 16 July, Tues 17 September, Tues 19 November   |            |
| <b>17.</b>  | <b>Any Other Business</b><br>No further items were raised.  |            |
| <b>18.</b>  | <b>Date of next meeting, 6pm unless otherwise stated, in the Conference Room</b>  |            |
|             | Dates for 2023 meetings as follows:<br>Tues 16 January 2024   |            |

*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.*