



**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ACRE
MINUTES OF
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

10am on Wednesday 5th December 2018

PRESENT:

Gareth Lugar Mawson (Chair)
Richard Hollingum (Director)
Bernard Lock (Director)

Ken Christy (Director)
David Scudamore (Director)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Elaine O'Leary (Chief Executive)
Sarah Clarke (Centre Co-ordinator)
Catherine Lomax (Daventry District Council Observer)
Jessica Gooding (Rural Wellbeing Fieldworker)
Frances Harris (Community Facilities Advisor)

James Davidson (Site Caretaker)
Suzy Sanders (external minute taker)

1. APOLOGIES:

Fabienne Fraser-Allen (Director)
Hugh Fenton (CVS Observer)
Kay Giles (Rural Wellbeing Fieldworker)

Cameron Waldron (Director)
Rebecca Breakwell (Rural Officer)

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

To be raised if relevant during the meeting.

3. FROM THE RURAL TO THE TOWN – AN UPDATE

Following the first 'Bringing the rural to the town' workshop which took place on Wednesday 26th September 2018 RH delivered an update which shared the though process and developments on this project (this was discussed in more detail at the Board Only meeting later in the day).

Workshop attendees included Richard Hollingum, David Scudamore, Ken Christy, Frances Harris, Elaine O'Leary and Rachel Boyd (Director, Delapre Abbey Preservation Trust).

There were four main options for the site that came out of the first workshop; these were set-out by Richard in his discussion paper of October 2018, of which copies had been sent to all trustees.

The proposals are to develop the site as:

1. Heritage/rural centre and destination
2. Wedding Centre – a one stop shop for all things 'wedding'
3. Community Green Space
4. Multi Arts and Conference Venue

Key points to be addressed include:

1. Car parking – Ladybridge Drive has been identified as an option to explore
2. Site security
3. Acquiring additional land – It was noted that Northampton Borough Council has recently offered land to Parishes at a reduced price
4. Links and relationships with local community groups

Other points discussed included the need for 100% approval from the Trustees, funding and the adoption of the proposed Mission Statement.

GLM is to write to Rachel Boyd (Director, Delapre Abbey Preservation Trust) thanking her for her contribution and involvement with the project so far.

Action GLM

4. BEST VILLAGE COMPETITION

In RB's absence on an external presentation, EOL delivered this update. Following meetings with CPRE, funding of £4,000 per annum has been agreed for 2019 and 2020, at least. The Service Level Agreements are currently being drafted. The involvement of CPRE is expected to increase the reach of the competition and encourage greater participation in it.

For 2019, the competition will continue in the same way as the existing Best Village Competition, however, it is hoped that from 2020 it will comprise of new award categories and be more inclusive.

The judging panel will remain the same, with the addition of CRPE judges.

EOL highlighted the work carried out to make the application process simpler and more appealing.

Letters inviting villages to take part, together with the revised application form, will be sent out in December, with follow up communications planned for January 2019.

EOL raised the possibility of leveraging the Northampton Chamber of Commerce membership to advertise for sponsorship and support from local Horticultural or Agricultural businesses.

DS mentioned that the Wildlife Trust run a Village Churchyard Competition and suggested that Matt Johnson and Matt Jackson would be good contacts. RB is currently managing the administration of the competition, Libby Hart and Nigel Searle will be supporting going forward.

FH suggested that she encourage villages in east Northamptonshire to take part as in the past participation has historically been low in this area.

Action FH

EOL to circulate the new award application form to the Board.

Action EOL

Confirmation is required on when the next Judges meeting is planned.

Action RB

5. GDPR UPDATE

EOL and FH met recently to review progress and advised that broadly speaking most of the changes have been done and implemented.

The Data Sharing Agreement is still to be finalised. In addition, an agreement needs drawing up for the Rural Wellbeing Service as personal information along with some sensitive data is shared with third parties such as Northants Carers. GLM agreed to support FH with this.

Action GLM / FH

No other issues or areas of concern.

6. CURRENT BIDS TO FUNDERS

Homes England – government funding to encourage affordable housing

In conjunction with Craig Phelps (ex director of Northamptonshire Rural Housing Association), a bid was submitted to fund Craig (part time) for one year to work on getting three projects ready to apply for phase two of funding. This bid was rejected by Homes England on the basis that only Local Authorities can apply for staff costs. EOL stated that the wording was very ambiguous and that having spoken to several Local Authority Planning Departments, they confirmed they wouldn't be applying but would be willing to support any community group who wanted to develop a community led housing project. EOL is seeking support to reapply and the possibility of an Agency Agreement with these Local Authorities was discussed.

EOL will continue with this bid and write to Richard Quallington at National ACRE to seek support.

Action EOL

Big Lottery – Building Connections Fund (to reduce isolation and loneliness)

EOL explained that the bid was rejected and that it wouldn't be progressing. £190m worth of projects were submitted for funding and from this only £9m of funding was granted.

Community Fridges and Northamptonshire Heritage

Sue Davies from East Northants Council is working on a bid in conjunction with Mallows (who run the Food & Drink Awards in Northamptonshire). The project has come off the back of a similar initiative led by Jamie Oliver and its purpose is to encourage communities to share and swap local produce via a community fridge and at the same time celebrate the produce of Northamptonshire and its history and traditions.

Mallows did a similar bid on the celebrating of local food but it was rejected as the application was not made by a Charity, so work is underway to submit a combined application to the Heritage Lottery. EOL encouraged all attendees to share their favourite local foods.

Big Lottery - Continuation of the Rural Wellbeing Service

EOL is meeting with Oliver (Savage), Lottery Funding Officer W/C 10th December to discuss ideas and gauge his interest and support for a continuation of the project. Oliver has advised that the next funding panel is set to take place on 15th January 2019 and if successful approval could be given as early as May or June.

Surveys are being sent out and shared with villages to gain feedback to support the application. EOL is to share surveys with the Board.

Action EOL

7. STAFF REPORTS

The staff reports circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting were discussed.

EOL explained that, as of the end of November, 68 weddings had taken place in 2018 with one additional still to go ahead on Saturday 8th December 2018. Meaning that targets have been achieved for 2018 and that things are 'well on track' for 2019 with the first wedding of 2019 will take place on 5th March. The total income from weddings was £96,700 and £18k from catering which was £6k more than expected.

EOL and the Board congratulated SC and thanked her for all her hard work this year.

FH shared an update on Village Halls of which there are an estimated 200 in the county 96 of which are on our books. The next Networking Event for Village Halls is taking place in January which is open to non-members and members alike. Last year approximately 30 people attended which resulted in several new members.

The Good Neighbour scheme continues to grow and a steady flow of new enquiries are being received. The SNC Interactive Map is now live and Neighbourhood Planning is underway in several areas. SNC are delighted with the map, which was produced by Rebecca Breakwell and there has been enquiries from other councils about something similar in their area. EOL acknowledged the fantastic work that's being carried out by the team, which has resulted in more referrals and organisations wishing to work with NACRE.

KC suggested that recent 'success stories' are added to the NACRE website in due course. KG is to be trained on website updates by EOL. KC also passed his thanks to all staff for their ongoing commitment.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None raised.

9. SUGGESTED DATES FOR 2019 MEETINGS

The next meeting will take place in March 2019. A Doodle Poll is to be circulated to identify a mutually convenient date for all attendees. KC noted that Board Meetings should take priority over any external meetings.

Meeting closed at 11.10am