



BOARD OF DIRECTORS And Observers

Minutes of Board Meeting

21st September 2016

PRESENT:

David Powell (Director)
George Hook (Director)

Ken Christy (Director)
Hugh Walmsley (Director)

Bernard Lock (Director)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Elaine O'Leary (Manager)

Linda Hook (Rural Wellbeing Fieldworker)

Sarah Clarke (Centre Co-ordinator)

James Davidson (Caretaker)

Dawn Howard (Rural Wellbeing Fieldworker)

Frances Harris (Community Facilities Advisor)

Catherine Lomax (DDC & NCALC)

1. APOLOGIES:

Gareth Lugar-Mawson (Chair)

KC chaired the meeting in GLM's absence. KC welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Board members and Observers introduced themselves to DH.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

BL, GH & EOL declared an interest in the Hunsbury Hill Centre Limited.

GH declared an interest in the Rural Wellbeing Project as he is married to Linda Hook, our Rural Wellbeing Fieldworker.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

a) Acceptance of Minutes:

The minutes of the Board Meeting held on 15th June 2016 were approved as a true and accurate record. KC approved and DP seconded.

Approved

b) Matters Arising (not included on the agenda):

Performance against budget; EOL explained that she had not yet met with GH regarding this but that she had some information to share with them at the Board only meeting.

Workplace Pensions; EOL stated that the general view of the staff is to choose the Peoples' Pension scheme.

Wedding Fayre; SC stated that the next wedding fayre is on Sunday 25th September between 12pm and 3pm.

Best Village Competition; DP asked that an agenda item be added to discuss the future support of the Best Village Competition. It was agreed that this would be added after the staff update.

4. MANAGER'S SIX WEEKLY REPORT

EOL presented report covering the new Rural Wellbeing Fieldworker – Dawn Howard, Defra funding 2016-2017, full time Rural Officer recruitment, an update on projects and prospective projects, the 2016 AGM and an update on accounts situation for NACRE and HHC Ltd.

Action EOL/SC

DEFRA Funding 2016-2017; EOL explained that the funding has been approved and Northamptonshire ACRES will receive just over £50,000 this year to deliver against Defra's 3 aims of:

- Local strategic support to rural communities, enabling them to take action

- Sharing learning on sustainable funding models
- Providing access to local intelligence

Defra also requires ACRE and the individual RCCs to engage with strategic stakeholders and local partnerships to support community led activity and develop solutions to rural challenges, which include the following 8 key programme priorities (although RCCs are not restricted to these):

- Broadband, digital skills and digital inclusion
- Mobile infrastructure and services
- Rural services
- Rural transport
- Community energy
- Affordable housing
- Neighbourhood planning
- Rural community buildings

DEFRA would like to see the network transform itself and become sustainable over the next few years, during this time the funding will be reduced each year if it continues.

Rural Officer post; EOL explained that Rebecca Breakwell has accepted the full time Rural Officer position and will be starting with us on Monday 17th October 2016. The post will initially be funded through the DEFRA funding but the aim is for the post to become self-sustaining.

Annual General Meeting 2016; A discussion took place regarding speakers / presentations for the AGM and the following options are to be explored;

Richard Quallington, ACRE's interim Chief Executive, a Good Neighbour, Moulton's Parish Clerk re Good Neighbour scheme, an Olive Scheme presentation and a NACRE services presentation.

Action EOL

Membership on Northamptonshire ACRE; HW asked if the membership status had been reviewed and whether we could offer free membership and charge for services.

EOL explained that we do charge for services at the moment and members receive a discount on some services. This is to be included in the AGM presentation.

Olive scheme; DP stated that it needs to be made clearer that you can use an Olive through wifi signal as this may mean that people with no mobile signal will consider purchasing an Olive.

Action SC

Smart meters project; DH attended the training and will be training the rest of the staff on Wednesday 28th September.

DP and KC stated that you cannot have a meter fitted if you have poor mobile phone signal. DH agreed that there are several factors that may stop people being able to have smart meters fitted.

BL asked if the meters are fitted indoors or outdoors. DH explained that it would depend on where your current meter is as the new one would be attached to the old one and then you would have a display, plugged into the mains, inside your house.

Good Neighbours; EOL stated that the purpose of the Good Neighbour scheme is early prevention, to help stop people going into emergency care.

EOL explained that she is currently applying for funding to the Aviva Community Fund. Applications have to be in by 11th October. Voting opens on 21st October when members of the public get to vote on their favourite projects. **Voting closes on 18th November.** Aviva then announces the finalists with the winners being chosen from these by a panel of judges and announced on 10th January 2017.

It was suggested that we ask Moulton's Parish Clerk to speak at the AGM to encourage other villages to get involved with the Good Neighbour scheme.

Action EOL

5. HHC EVENTS UPDATE

See Staff Update - Sarah Clarke.

6. STAFF UPDATE

Frances Harris –

FH confirmed that we'd held the playground inspection training event on 10th September at Potterspurty Sports and Social Club. She explained that she jointly organised it with Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association. It made a small profit and the feedback from delegates was good. It was oversubscribed so we think there is a need for more playground safety training and we are talking to OFPA about holding another session, probably in the spring of next year.

Because of the success of the playground inspection training, FH is considering organising PAT (Portable Appliance Testing) Training. She will be contacting a PAT training company (with whom she did some "taster" training earlier in the year) about this. From the number of enquiries we received on the subject that PAT is a concern for many hall committees.

Village hall enquiries - It has been a much busier summer than last year, when enquiries reduced in number because most halls don't hold any committee meetings during the summer holiday period. FH is currently having a number of difficult problems, of which at least two are halls who have had governance issues over a good many years.

BL asked if FH had sufficient time to complete her work.

FH explained that, so far, since her hours increased to 15 hours per week (from 1st September 2016) the amount of time has been sufficient.

FH's new working hours are; Tuesday to Thursday, 9.30am to 2.30pm.

Linda Hook & Dawn Howard –

LH welcomed DH as the new Rural Wellbeing Fieldworker.

LH explained that there have been several success stories over the last few months and that the project appears to be 'snow balling' and shows a real need for co-ordination in the villages. LH stated that the first year was a learning curve and that this year they have been able to implement the changes necessary for the project to become as successful as it has.

KC asked about the contract with SNVB for the hire of the RIC. EOL explained that we have a 4 year contract with a 3 month cancellation policy.

LH stated that SNVB are very supportive and added that the bus is available for other groups to hire.

LH explained that because we were able to obtain funding for 4 years we are able to work on the sustainability of the project and collect data that may help us to secure further funding.

James Davidson – JD gave a description of the maintenance carried out recently including the keg store wall repair and he also talked about work that is planned for the coming weeks including the repair of the Low Barn guttering.

BL asked if the water pipe behind the high barn had been repaired to stop it freezing in the winter. EOL explained that this has been scheduled for October and to save money we have hired a digger and James will be digging the trench for them to put the pipe underground.

Sarah Clarke – SC confirmed that we have 82 confirmed weddings for 2016 with 13 left to do before the end of December.

SC also explained that;

- Comments from couples and guests this year have been very positive including a comment on Sunday stating that it was the best wedding they had ever been to.
- Next year is looking quiet and is set to be a similar number to 2013 but 2018 seems to be very positive so far (11 confirmed so far, the average number booked 2 years in advance is 8 and the most we have taken 2 years in advance so far is 14).
- We have a wedding fayre on Sunday 25th September between 12pm and 3pm and there has been a lot of interest. If the weather holds out it looks like it will be another busy day for us.

- We continue to update the literature and the website when we can, we hope to some work on the website over the winter period.
- We have a new promotional banner, this will be used at wedding fayres and Elaine will be taking it to meetings etc where applicable.
- Corporates should start to increase now after the school holidays, we have just taken a booking from Fairfields school for 26 dates between now and June 2017.

KC thanked the staff for their hard work.

7. FUTURE SUPPORT OF THE BEST VILLAGE COMPETITION

DP explained that at the feedback meeting it became clear that the competition is under treat. David Scudamore and Barron Walton both expressed an interest in giving up the work that they currently do within the competition during the next year or so. DP asked whether it would be feasible for NACRE to provide administrative support to the competition and take over Barron's current role. DP explained that the Chair of the competition should be a NACRE Board member.

EOL stated that it would be possible if we were to recruit a new part time administrator for NACRE that they could take on this role.

HW stated that this should be a paid role as it is too much work for a volunteer.

DP asked SC to attend the BVC meeting on Wednesday 28th September at 10am in the Low Barn, SC agreed.

The Board asked DP to put a proposal together for the next Board meeting.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

DP asked whether we could put a more realistic timeframe on agendas in future.

FUTURE MEETINGS:

The next Board meeting is the AGM on 16 November 2016. This will be an evening meeting starting at 6.30pm for 7pm in the High Barn.