Minutes for Trustees' Meeting, 25th October 2017

Held at 47 Lydes Road, 7:45-9:35 pm

Attendees: Dave Munday; Ken Timms (Chair); Linda Hirschorn; Maggie Jo St John

Apologies: Bob Tilley (Vice-chair), Ian Caldwell (Treasurer), Mike Goodfellow-Smith (Vice-chair)

1 The Draft Minutes of last Trustees' Meeting version 1.1, 26-07-2017 were accepted as a true record and become the **Minutes of Trustees' Meeting, 26th July 2017**

Matters Arising not on Agenda/actions to be completed:

Dave to investigate the volunteer management training scheme. Dave had not had time to investigate the scheme; he will do so and report back to the next Trustee meeting. He will also investigate and report back on Forest School training, as this may be more useful, depending on the outcome of the Strategy and Training reviews.

Mike to talk to Paul about the training he wishes to have and pass on. Mike was not in attendance to report.

Develop a training policy for members and volunteers. Dave and Ken to report to Trustee meeting on 17th January 2018, though the training policy will depend ultimately on the Strategy Review.

Asset Management. Ian was not present to report on his contact with Paul, Asset Manager, labelling items and compiling records. Maggie Jo reported that equipment stored at her house had all been recently labelled by Ian.

2 Governance Review of Trustee Board

2.1 Principles, preferences and implications for safe use of power and hand tools

Following discussions before and during the meeting, the following principles were agreed:

i in order to minimise our carbon emissions and to maximise opportunities for training and engagement, hand-tools will be used wherever possible;

ii on occasion it may be necessary to use power-tools, such as strimmers, which are covered by our insurance;

iii even more occasionally when power tools or machinery not covered by our insurance are required (e.g. chainsaw, excavator), a qualified professional will be hired.

2.2 Health and Safety

Ken had carried out a risk assessment for the working parties of Station Adopters at Malvern Link. He accessed the risk-assessment form that accompanied the Health and Safety Policy document accessed and adapted by Mike, from the Health and Safety Executive web-site. The Policy had been adopted by the Trustees.

As Risk Manager, Mike had pointed out in an email that the risk assessment form was not the one recognised by the Trustees: he felt that the new form was a better alternative, but it needed to be formally adopted. He was also concerned that Ken's risk-management plan went against the adopted Health and Safety Policy [vis., "At the start of each project working party, the main risks of the activity will be explained and precautions detailed. Risks associated with specific equipment and locations will also be explained"]. He added that he had attached the accepted and the new risk-assessment forms to his email.

2.2.1 Adoption of new risk assessment form

Maggie Jo pointed out that Mike had only attached the accepted risk-assessment form with his email: she had contacted him earlier to get the new form. On first impressions, she felt that each form had their merits. Neither Dave nor Linda had seen the new assessment: it was not possible therefore to proceed with this item, which would be put on the Agenda for the next Trustee meeting.

2.2.2 Matter arising for H&S policy from Malvern Link risk assessments: starting the discussion.

A full discussion of this topic will only be possible once Trustees have seen the new format risk-assessment and its suggested risk-management variation.

Pending this discussion, Ken will continue with the current policy of providing a full risk-assessment presentation at the beginning of each work-party.

3 Governance Review of Projects

3.1 Abundance

Linda and Maggie Jo had decided to include a £2 donation on top of costs, for each six bottles of apple juice. They were also planning to juice and bottle it to order, rather than to use up the crop: they only recently disposed of the last bottles from last year.

They were both concerned that they had got little support from across MCF generally, and Trustees in particular; the pickers were predominantly volunteers they had recruited. The Malvern Link Station and new Townsend projects were being prioritised over picking during its more limited season.

It was agreed that more systematic co-ordination of support to projects will be necessary for summer/autumn 2018.

3.2 Guided Tree Walks

There had been no updated report from Mike. It appeared that Mike had recently emailed all Trustees to complain about the lack of support he had been getting from MCF on this project, though Ken had not received it.

Maggie Jo queried whether we have too many projects on the go, which is leading to splintering and lack of effectiveness.

Ken and Dave each recalled Mike saying that he wanted to be left to run this project, and that he would recruit volunteers from amongst MCF members and wider networks. This didn't seem to have been successful. Dave had since volunteered to help Mike, but his offer had not been taken up yet.

Recruitment and retention of volunteers and members is also crucial.

3.3 Malvern Link Station

A major risk to the project has been the uncertainty of the level of hazard posed by the damaged and apparently rotting limb on the beech tree in the woodland area. After 5 months of getting no response from the local LM manager, Ken had escalated the issue to the regional manager, getting a response in 24 hours, and an on-site meeting in 2 days time with the Property Manager and a tree surgeon to assess the situation.

3.4 Prospect Community Woodland

The Prospect Meeting minutes had been received. A large number of 'desirables' had been identified, as well as the essential work to increase access. A remaining budget of £245 had been identified for planting. The additional expenditures will be subject to the annual plan and agreed budget for 2018-19.

3.5 Townsend Community Woodland

Dave reported no issues. Bringing the Old Glade back into management is proceeding. Beck Baker, Community and Conservation Officer, Malvern Hills Trust will be attending this Friday's working party to discuss management, and co-ordinate our joint presentation of the Woodland Wander through Townsend on November 5th.

Dave raised the issue, and was supported by Maggie Jo, regarding the gathering local opposition to the planning application submitted by the Three Counties Showground. They wish to build 50 holiday lodges on Langdale Wood, which is across the road from and is owned by the Showground. A meeting has been called for October 21st, to coordinate opposition. As a recognised charity, we could submit an application to list the wood as an asset of community value on behalf of the opposition group, as well as oppose the planning application. Ken wanted to investigate the implications of both for our charitable status before formally committing MCF to any role. It was agreed Dave and Maggie Jo would attend the meeting on the 21st as individuals, and could describe our projects and aims at appropriate moments.

4 Treasurer's report Ian (7 minutes)

Ian was not present to be able to talk to his report. Trustees present wanted to record their appreciation of the reports Ian produces for Trustee meetings, for their clarity and timeliness.

5 Resources

5.1 Volunteers/members

5.1.1 Time-based qualification for membership

This item had first been raised following the Strategy Meeting in May 2016. The proposal was that some volunteers could be given membership (voting rights) if their 'subscription' were via an agreed amount of work they provide to MCF. Since membership has been set at a minimal level, and there was

no-one who might be considered for this at present, it was agreed to treat each case on its merit, should any arise.

5.1.2 Increasing volunteer/membership numbers

Earlier items had highlighted our need to increase our volunteer and member numbers. Dave and Maggie Jo saw the Langdale Wood group as potential members. After attending several Volunteer Forums, Ken believes it is necessary to radically change our offer to volunteers, including how we organise our approach to work-parties and the work that needs doing across the projects. Initial discussions quickly identified that we needed some dedicated time to look at options.

Action: Ken to organise a time and venue at the beginning of February 2018.

5.2 Fund-raising

5.2.1 Sponsorship, corporate membership – principles – put forward to next meeting

6 Initiatives and Proposals

6.1 St Annes Wood development – where does it fit?

After discussions with the owner, Dave and Ken have come up with proposals for the Wood to be aimed at encouraging younger children, and particularly their parents [propelled by pester power] to become interested in this woodland, and to develop materials to provide them with opportunities to learn about woodland, its inhabitants, and woodland crafts. It is hoped to recruit volunteers to support making the woodland into an attractive proposition from the Audley Ellerslie retirement village. As a project, it is giving us an opportunity to work with a woodland owner, to explore ways of building involvement from young families, and use a particular recruitment strategy to involve volunteers.

Next meeting: **17th January 2018 (back up date, 24th January 2018)**