

Malvern Hills Trust
Finance Administration and Resources Committee
Manor House, Grange Road, Malvern WR14 3EY
Thursday 11 May 2017 6.00pm

Present: Mr D Bryer, Mr M Cordey, Mr M Davies, Mr S Freeman, Professor J Raine, Ms S Rouse.

In attendance: Chief Executive Officer, Secretary to the Board, Finance and Administration Manager, Financial Assistant, Dr S Braim, Mr C Rouse, Mr T Yapp.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence

R Bartholomew, C Penn, J O'Donnell, R Hall-Jones, D Street, P Watson.

2. Chair's announcements

The Chair had attended the audit planning meeting and the audit would start on 15 May 2017. There were 2 new admin volunteers who Board members would meet when they came into the office.

3. Declarations of interest

None relating to items on the agenda.

4. Matters arising from the last meeting not otherwise on the agenda

There were none.

5. To agree wording of the Trustees' Annual Report for year ending 31.3.2017

The following points were made:

The Finance and Administration Manager was asked to mention the contribution made by Ralph Madden and recording his death.

Page 3: Prof Raine's title should be deleted – it was included where no one else's was.

The adoption of the Business Plan should be listed in the key achievements.

Plans for future periods: Fund-raising opportunities will be pursued as outlined in the Business Plan.

Set out a summary of how many staff are employed under a separate heading (page 3) and cross reference to accounts.

The Finance and Administration Manager said that the risk management section might be updated when the Risk Register was reviewed. She explained that the statutory accounts could not go onto the web site until they were approved, but the Management Accounts were available to the public.

6. Purchase of Warden's van

The CEO went through the paper (and reported that the registration number of the van was wrongly set out in the paper – it should have been VN06LZF).

On the proposal of Mr Freeman, seconded by Prof Raine, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the expenditure of £13,500 for the purchase of a new Ford Transit Connect van.

The staff were appraising a Kubota ATV, which was on loan. It would not be a suitable substitute for a van, but it was useful for accessing more remote areas.

7. Disposal of Equipment

The CEO went through the paper. Two points of clarification were raised: when disposing of an item, one bid must be from an independent person (i.e. not bids from 2 staff members) and the value should be the “estimated market value” (to be increased to £1,000). It was suggested that the CEO should ensure that there was a clear paperwork trail to establish that the transaction was at arm’s length. There was a discussion about whether a trustee could bid. Any such transaction would have to be disclosed in the accounts and there was a risk that the trustee would be gaining a benefit. It was agreed that the CEO should manage the situation, were it to arise.

On the proposal of Mr Freeman, seconded by Mr Cordey, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to recommend to the Board that the Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual be amended with the following section.

Disposal of Capital items

Disposal of capital items with an estimated market value under £1000 is an operational matter for the CEO to deal with.

The preferred method for disposals shall be by inviting sealed bids from a shortlist of known machinery dealers and/or outside bodies. Staff may enter bids. Minimum of 2 bids (One of which must be from someone who is not a member of staff) must be received for an item to be released for sale.

In the event that any item does not receive more than one bid through the above process, then the CEO shall be at liberty to dispose of items by any other method.

The CEO to decide if minimum disposal price should be set and shall reserve the right to withhold an item from sale if he does not think offers received have achieved fair value.

8. Reports – for information

8.1 Draft Management Accounts to year end 31.3.2017

The Finance and Administration Manager went through the paper. There was a small surplus of £2,755 before transfers.

The budget had included a transfer of interest from the Parliamentary Fund of £30,000. As MHT had done relatively well, the Finance and Administration Manager suggested transferring only the interest earned on the investments in this financial year - £11,927.

Mr Cordey asked whether any of the restricted funds could be used to fund the Charity Commission Scheme. The Secretary to the Board said that this could not

be done through the Scheme. There was a separate process for seeking permission to unrestrict funds, but this was intended to be used in cases where the reason for the fund no longer existed.

The CEO said that there had been no analysis to date of the impact of the change in car parking charges since 1 April. It did appear that changing the car park machine at British Camp to one where the registration number had to be entered seemed to have resulted in an increase in takings. The figures would be analysed once more data was available.

8.2 Investment Performance

The Finance and Administration Manager had received the end of year report and prepared a summary, which was handed out to Committee members. If any member wanted a copy of the full report (or to receive Brewin Dolphin's quarterly reports) she would be happy to arrange that. The Chair of FA & R, the CEO and the Finance and Administration Manager had quarterly meetings with Ian Burrows. Ian Burrows would be attending the June Board meeting.

8.3 Related Party Transaction Forms

The Finance and Administration Manager reminded everyone that these needed to be returned. Three were outstanding.

8.4 Update on fundraising

The CEO went through the paper. He highlighted the new regulatory body, the Fundraising Regulator, and the General Data Protection Regulations which would come into force in 2018. One of the areas which he and the Conservation Manager would be focusing on in the short term was funding for major specific projects, in particular, securing the commons. Large scale bids could be very time consuming.

Ms Rouse commented how successful the Community and Conservation Officer's talk to the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust had been. Follow up from such events was important. The CEO asked Committee members to remember to tell people that MHT was a charity, to raise awareness.

8.5 Review of capital projects

The CEO went through the report. There had been a meeting of the St Ann's Well Committee just prior to the FA & R meeting. The Planning Department had raised 13 issues and he was in the process of getting those resolved. He hoped that work would start in mid-July and time was now tight. It had been agreed to appoint a contractor, and sign a contract, subject to grant of planning permission. There was a risk that the project would have to be put back if planning permission was not forthcoming within a matter of weeks.

David Bryer left the meeting. The meeting therefore became inquorate but the following reports were made informally to the remaining attendees.

8.6 CEO's report – exercise of delegated authority

The CEO intended to use his delegated power to authorise a contract which would go over budget (line painting in the British Camp car park). The budget figure was £2,000 and the contract would cost £2,750.

8.7 Report on cost of rebranding exercise

This had been covered in the Management Accounts. The public response to the rebrand had generally been favourable. There had been a couple of negative Emails and a few comments across the counter.

8.8 St Ann's Well Refurbishment

Already covered.

8.9 Update on pension review

The Finance and Administration Manager went through the paper. Since the paper was written she had had a conversation with Mark Forrester (*Finance Manager, Pensions, Treasury Management and Capital at WCC*). It was clear that he did not understand the status of MHT. She would prepare a summary for Mr Forrester so that he could draft a paper to report to the pension fund trustees on the level of risk associated with the MHT's outstanding pension liability.

9. Urgent Business

There was none.

The meeting closed at 7.56pm