

12 September 2019

Malvern Hills Trust

Ordinary Meeting of the Board

Council Chamber, Avenue Road, Malvern.

Thursday 12 September 2019 7.00 pm

Present: Mr D Baldwin, Mr R Bartholomew, Dr S Braim, Mr M Cordey, Mr M Davies (Chair), Dr P Forster, Mr A Golightly, Mr R Hall-Jones, Mr D Hawkins, Mrs L Hodgson, Mr C Penn, Prof J Raine, Mrs G Rees, Mr C Rouse, Ms S Rouse, Ms H Stace, Mr T Yapp.

In attendance: CEO, Conservation Manager, Finance and Administration Manager, Secretary to the Board, Mr I Burrows, 6 members of the public, Mr R Hale.

No attendance: Mrs Cumming, Mr J O'Donnell.

Mr Davies welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence

Mr Bryer, Mr S Freeman, Mr J Michael, Mrs C O'Donnell, Mr D Street, Mr Watson.

2. Chair's announcements

- a) Malvern TIC had confirmed that they would no longer sell residents car park passes. They sold about 5,000 passes per year.
- b) The Board elections would take place on 31 October 2019.
- c) Board members intending to stand for re-election should note that the period for receipt of nominations was 26 September to 4 October 2019.
- d) There would be a briefing for potential candidates on 16 September at Manor House.
- e) The public consultation on the Charity Commission Scheme would close on 13th October (11th October for paper submissions).

3. Declarations of interest

There were none.

4. Public Questions

See Schedule to the minutes.

5. Report from Brewin Dolphin

Mr Burrows went through his report.

Prof Raine asked about the effect of having an ethical investment policy. Mr Burrows said this depended on the detail of the policy. Cutting out a wide range of possible investments might have an impact on returns. Mr Burrows offered to do a screening against suggested criteria to assess the effect of a change of policy. He already selected investments to avoid anything which might embarrass MHT. There was Charity Commission guidance (CC14) on investment criteria. Brewin Dolphin research had indicated that about 53 % of charities had an ethical policy. Mr Cordey said the question of an ethical investment policy was considered when the policies were drafted. The Board **NOTED** the report. Mr Burrows left the meeting.

6. To confirm the Minutes of the Board meetings held on 13.06.2019, 04.07.2019 and 12.08.2019

On the proposal of Ms Rouse, seconded by Mr Cordey, it was **RESOLVED** (with 1 abstention) to approve the minutes of the meetings held on 13 June, 4 July and 12 August 2019.

7. Matters arising

Stowe Lane: The CEO had received a letter from Mr Lloyd's agent making proposals as between the users of Stowe Lane about funding of future repairs. The Board had proposed that the applicant should agree to a deed of easement setting out responsibility for future maintenance. This was not what was being proposed.

8. Staffing Committee

8.1 On the proposal of Mrs Rees, seconded by Dr Forster, it was **RESOLVED** by the committee members present to confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2019.

8.2 Matters arising

Dr Forster confirmed there were no notifiable accidents in the period concerned. MHT were working to ensure any "near misses" were also recorded. He highlighted the key issues which had been discussed. The substantive item on the agenda was key person insurance. The Committee had agreed that the cost of the insurance as quoted outweighed the potential benefit, but had asked for more information on the cost of a lower level of cover.

Another topic was Gullett Quarry. The Committee had suggested that Board members should visit and hear from staff about how they dealt with incidents.

8.3 Adoption of minutes

On the proposal of Mr Baldwin, seconded by Dr Forster, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt the minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2019.

9. Land Management Committee

9.1 Mrs Hodgson declared an interest in the item relating to the bus shelter on Poolbrook Common, as she was providing funding in her capacity as County Councillor.

On the proposal of Dr Braim, seconded by Mrs Rees, it was **RESOLVED** by the committee members present to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2019.

9.2 Matters arising

Mrs Rees went through the minutes. The CEO said that the Town Council had selected a slightly different model of bus shelter to the one originally shown on the Board papers but it fulfilled the Board's specification. The work on the Belvedere Shelter had been finished today.

9.3 Adoption of minutes

On the proposal of Mr Yapp, seconded by Dr Braim, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2019 and to make the following resolution:

Tree Safety Policy

That the Board adopt the revised Tree Safety Policy

10. Governance Committee

10.1 On the proposal of Mr Penn, seconded by Dr Braim, it was **RESOLVED** by the committee members present to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2019.

10.2 Matters arising

Mr Penn went through the minutes and the key proposals, as he had chaired the meeting. He thanked Dr Forster and the Working Group for the work they had done in preparing the paper on reputation management.

10.3 Adoption of recommendations and the minutes

On the proposal of Mr Penn, seconded by Ms Stace it was **RESOLVED** (with one vote against) to adopt the minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2019 and to make the following resolutions:

Standing Orders

That the Board adopt the revised Standing Orders and the Disciplinary Committee Terms of Reference (subject to a 3 month trial of the arrangements for public speaking at meetings).

Code of Conduct

That the Board adopt the revised Code of Conduct.

Mr Hale left the meeting.

11. Finance Administration and Resources Committee

11.1 On the proposal of Mr Davies, seconded by Mr Cordey, it was **RESOLVED** by the committee members present to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 August 2019.

11.2 Matters arising

Mr Davies went through the matters discussed at the meeting. There had been no issues raised by the Auditors and the Committee had thanked the team from Bishop Fleming and the finance team at MHT for achieving a clean audit report.

11.3 Adoption of recommendations and the minutes

On the proposal of Mr Davies, seconded by Mr Cordey it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt the minutes of the meeting held on 8 August 2019 and to make the following resolutions:

Amendment to the Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual

That the Manual be amended to increase the capitalisation limit to £500.

Stewardship Scheme transitional arrangements

That MHT

- a) Apply for 2 new Countryside Stewardship Schemes
- b) Temporarily extend the existing grazing licenses
- c) Fund the extensions from the HLS and Single Payment / Basic Payment Schemes reserves as out lined in the paper at 90 % current payment rate.

12. To sign letter of Representation addressed to Bishop Fleming

On the proposal of Ms Rouse, seconded by Mr Cordey, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Chair should sign the Letter of Representation addressed to Bishop Fleming.

13. To approve Schedule of Risk

The Schedule had been circulated. The CEO said that there had been 2 minor updates made since it was discussed at the Finance, Administration and Resources Committee meeting in August. On the proposal of Mr Davies, seconded by Mrs Hodgson, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Schedule of Risk.

14. Charity Commission Scheme

The consultation started on the 2 September 2019. One Drop-in Session had been held at Callow End. The Secretary to the Board thanked the Community and Conservation Officer and the Administrative Assistant for their hard work in preparing the visual materials. Any points raised at the sessions would be logged as part of the outcomes from the consultation. The CEO said that it was also planned to run some Focus Groups.

Mr Davies reported that the consultation process was within budget. The Secretary to the Board had requested legal advice on whether her plans to publicise the proposed changes to the rights holders under the Acts were adequate.

15. Urgent Business

The CEO said that approval was required for additional funding for the new water supplies to the land purchased at Castlemorton. Expenditure had been approved for one parcel but not the other. A new resolution was proposed to cover both water connections.

On the proposal of Mr Davies, seconded by Mrs Rees, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve expenditure of £6,526 to be taken from Parliamentary Fund to cover the cost of water supply to the 2 parcels of land at Castlemorton.

16. Information

Written reports had been circulated in relation to the activities of the bodies listed below.

16.1	Malvern Spa Association	No meeting
16.2	AONB Joint Advisory Committee	No meeting
16.3	Wildlife Panel	Written report circulated
16.4	Recreation Advisory Panel	No meeting
16.5	4Cs	Written report circulated

Mr Rouse queried the accuracy of one element of the minutes and the Secretary to the Board said that she would check the recording.

16.6 Management Report

Mr Davies asked if MHT would publicise the fact that the Belvedere Shelter had been renovated thanks to a legacy received. The CEO said that a plaque recognising the generous gift of Mr Izzard would be put up on the building.

Mr Hall-Jones asked if anything would be done to protect the trees along Townsend Way, close to the retail park, from crown lifting which appeared to have been carried out by a third party. The CEO had spoken to the manager about this at the time when works had been carried out to the car park. He agreed to re-inspect.

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17. Items for future consideration)

There were none. Mr Davies thanked all the trustees for their hard work over the past 4 years, and wished the trustees well who would not be continuing on the Board after November 2019.

18. Next meeting

14 November 2019 7pm Council Chamber.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Schedule - Public Question

Ian Wells on behalf of Save our Malvern Skylarks Group.

We are really encouraged to see that North and Table Hills have been left ungrazed so far this year in what looks like a trial to encourage skylarks and other wildlife. Is this the aim and how will this welcome development proceed? Will the area be left ungrazed over winter to make sure there will be plenty of grass tall enough for skylarks (that's 20cms+), at the start of their breeding season in March? If not how will it be managed this year and next? Finally will the Trust be taking up the offer we have made of assisting eg, with monitoring the outcomes of such a trial?

The CEO responded:

The conservation grazing regime has continued unchanged to deliver multiple benefits. It is not more lenient than before. We target the grazing to deliver the objectives of the approved Land Management Plan which includes objective 17 for ground nesting birds. The hills named in the question are scheduled for grazing in the coming 2 months in order to comply with the requirements for the SSSI for acid grassland. The Trust undertakes its own monitoring but uses the annual Breeding Birds Survey data from volunteers and that helps inform both us and our partners at Natural England on future grazing regimes.