

## LETCWORTH GARDEN CITY HERITAGE FOUNDATION

(Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.

Registered Society includes a Community Benefit Society)

### PARTS I AND II MINUTES OF THE 316<sup>th</sup> BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING HELD ON 11<sup>th</sup> JULY 2023 AT ONE GARDEN CITY, BROADWAY, LETCWORTH GARDEN CITY, SG6 3BF

<b>Present:</b>	GARETH HAWKINS (Chair)	<b>GH</b>
	CHRIS PATTISON (Vice-Chair)	<b>CP</b>
	AMANDA EGBE	<b>AE</b>
	JOANNA DEW	<b>JD</b>
	JOHN COLING	<b>JC</b>
	JOHN HILLSON	<b>JH</b>
	MICHAEL COLLINS	<b>MIC</b>
	SIMON FRANKLIN	<b>SF</b>
	TERRY HONE – HCC Nominated Trustee	<b>TH</b>
	IAN MANTLE – NHC Nominated Trustee	<b>IM</b>
<b>In attendance:</b>	Graham Fisher (Chief Executive)	<b>GF</b>
	Mark Coles (Executive Director – Property)	<b>MAC</b>
	Matt Peak (Executive Director – Finance)	<b>MP</b>
	Stuart Sapsford (Executive Director – Communities, Culture and Heritage)	<b>SS</b>
	Jo Walker (Governance Support Executive)	<b>JW</b>
	Mary Loxley (Fundraising Manager)	<b>ML</b>
	Kris Karslake (Sustainability Manager)	<b>KK</b>
	Simon Green (Systems and IT Manager)	<b>SG</b>

#### **APOLOGIES, MEMBERSHIP & QUORUM**

The Chairman reported that notice of the Meeting had been given in accordance with the Rules of the Foundation and that a quorum was present.

Apologies received from David Ames, Lucy Gravatt, Kevin Jones and Roger McIntyre-Brown

#### **MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record.

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

#### **INTRODUCTION TO MARY LOXLEY**

The Trustees welcomed Mary and congratulated her on the grants received so far.

#### Points to Note

- 30 years of arts, heritage, education and social welfare development experience.
- £300,000 grant submissions made, more to submit before early Autumn. £100,000 grants received (so far).
- Rejections have given limited feedback.
- Seize opportunities as they are presented.
- Fundraising is bid writing. Development is developing relationships and narratives.
- Some challenges
  - HF aren't a charity

- Income is too high for some grants funders
- Explaining charitable status and high income gives HF a disadvantage
- Letchworth's national significance is not championed enough
- Separate charitable activity could help with fundraising.
- To date, mainly fundraising for arts and heritage
- Strategy is the watchword and the strategic plan should include a view around long term sustainable funding for particular areas.
- Without strategy we could become reactive rather than opportunistic.
- The get a larger funding it's a bit of a middle-ground 'scattergun' approach and developing relationships. There are some funders where it appears [you] have to get turned down first and then reapply.

The Chair thanked Mary for the informative session.

**PAPERS TO NOTE**

**Grants Committee**

Grant Applicant	Amount Awarded	Charitable Object
Headway Herts – to assist in the set up of a group for 20-25 people in LGC who are living with an acquired brain injury.	£5,000	4
First Garden City Homes – Activity Day at St. Thomas church hall	£742	2
Carers in Hertfordshire – to assist with the set up of a caring hub in LGC, which has the highest number of carers in Hertfordshire.	£5,000	4
Khalsa Football Academy – to assist with celebrations for 35 years of the Academy.	£6,102	4
All Saints Church, Willian – to assist with the creation of a community space within the church.	£7,500	2
Total of grants awarded by the Grants Committee to date in 2023 <b>£83,102</b>		

**Risk and Internal Audit Committee Minutes**

The paper was noted

**HAC Minutes and Summary**

Norton Way South	Single storey rear extension and dormer to rear	Approved in Principle
Wilbury Road	PV Array to front roofline	Refused
Baldock Road	Ground floor rear extension following removal of conservatory	Approved in Principle
Wilbury Road	Two rooflights	Approved
Pasture Road	Replacement roof, front two and rear single storey extension including external cladding and replacement windows	Refused
Phoenix Drive	Dormer windows to front and rear roof slopes	Refused
The Quadrant	Insertion of vented ridge tiles to rooflines	Agreed to discuss

Total Residential Applications and Pre-Application Submissions:

MAY 2023		Running Total	Board	HAC	AMC	Independent Inspector
Residential Applications	79	372	0	4	2	1
Pre-application Advice	7	67	-	-	-	-
Running Totals	86	439	0	21	5	1

Total Residential Applications – Annual Comparison:

	No. of Applications	Board/HAC	AMC	Independent Inspector
01/01/2021-31/12/2021	837	48	9	3
01/01/2022-31/12/2022	854	41	13	1

**The Trustees NOTED the contents of the Papers**

**SUSTAINABILITY POLICY – SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER**

The paper is taken as read

Points to note

- It's proposed to introduce a policy and procedure on sustainability to the HF.
- Why? A number of questions were raised on this at the recent town meeting and HF need to do more.
- The public are now aware we're doing something about sustainability.
- The policy has commitments, not a specific action or target.
  - Delivering value back to our community through our assets.
  - Renewable energy funding.
  - Renewable heat funding.
  - Work together effectively, our ability as an educator and influencer.
  - Sell the reason for the design guides – restrictions on front garden paving, sustainability, biodiversity and water run off.
  - Continually improving.
  - Commitment to continuing improvement.
- There's a holding statement for a mission and vision.
- It works with, for example, the arts and culture strategy and how we can integrate sustainable thinking within that funding.
- An enabling policy rather than a set of barriers.
- Support and influence others to make decisions.
- We do have KPI's at the moment, EPC's for example
- The proposal is to approve those commitments in principle and the goal is to finalise and button down the wording with the exec-team before publication.

Discussion Points

- Low carbon emissions – a more rounded approach to low carbon within the document.
- Climate emergency – already declared in this region – probably sits outside of this document.
- Renewable energy, or sourcing energy, sits within a more strategic or KPI list rather than this policy.

- The policy is very high level but it could be inserted. The use of PV panels has come to [us] and will come back again, should [we] have a commitment to low carbon energy for [our] own use with all the land [we] have? There's a challenge within [our] policy. The visual aspect of PV's on roofs, goes against our policy.
- Being fully aligned to more action, more action means more money.
- PV's on houses come up all the time. [We] have to balance between retaining the original character of the original properties and allowing subtle change to take place. This is something for the Board.
- Uncomfortable declaring a climate emergency, it means extra funding and displacing funding. [We] should have a policy which allows [us] to take these into consideration.
- The terminology of the policy is important. Are [we] innovators or pioneers or is it just best practice?
- Are [we] doing the statutory minimum or proactively trying to innovate?
- The workshops showed that with the type of organisation HF is, it's important to demonstrate [we] have a recognition and a responsibility. [We're] already doing lots of things.
- The policy demonstrates where [we] are, but it's not going to give a date to be net zero carbon, as it may not be achievable.
- Once the policy and commitments are agreed, a strategy for delivery will be formulated.
- Care should be taken to ensure that, when [we] commit to low carbon electricity, the tenants are made aware, should it be more expensive.
- HF have been using low carbon electricity in some multi-let buildings and the tenants are all on board with it.
- This is something [we] should be telling people [we're] doing.
- Care should be taken with putting dates into the public domain, as a precaution.

**The Trustees AGREED the policy with enhancement concerning low carbon energy sourcing.**

#### **SPIRELLA SWITCH UPGRADE – SYSTEMS AND IT MANAGER**

**The Trustees AGREED the reallocation of funds for the Switch Upgrade to Spirella**

#### **CEO's REPORT**

The paper is taken as read

#### Points to Note

- Governor/Trustee links have been updated and require approval.
- GDPR advisor has recommended that all meetings papers are shared through SharePoint and not to personal email or hard copies for security purposes.
- Should papers be downloaded, printed or forwarded, using SharePoint would allow these activities to be tracked.

#### Discussion Points

- Not using this method for traceability of documents is a risk, regardless of the security of some personal email addresses.
- Meeting papers security also raised as a point of concern by the R&IAC, and the same advice was given.
- Concern shown on the security of commercially sensitive data as well as personal data.
- A breach occurring after the advice has been discounted would be painful for the HF.
- This is consistent with other organisations.
- Shared systems are used in a lot of other organisations.

- GDPR is too big a risk to not do this.

**The Trustees APPROVED the updated Governor/Trustees links.**

**The Trustee APPROVED the trial of SharePoint on the proviso that training is given.**

Other Points to Note

- Director of Regeneration has been appointed – Kerry Kyriacou, starting on 1<sup>st</sup> August. Kerry will work on the strategy development for disposals, regeneration, industry growth, industrial regeneration. As well as sciences, diversification and areas of co-working.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – COMMUNITIES, CULTURE and HERITAGE**

The paper is taken as read

Points to Note

- Standalone Farm is recovering well.
- £40k secured with ‘Resilience Together’ partners for play equipment.
- Scouts event had over 400 children, parents and carers walking on the Greenway.
- Awards received for the farm, cinema and gallery.
- Cinema is still struggling, although event cinema and concession sales doing well.
- The loyalty programme is being researched prior to implementation.
- £98k received from the national lottery fund is for an 18 month programme.
- £140k agreed as controllable costs, this will overrun by £15k and approval is sought for the overspend.

**The Trustees AGREED to the overspend of £15k for controllable costs.**

Further Points to Note

- Letchworth Open is now live.
- Third year of running, there are over 400 submissions already.
- We now have 98 volunteers, excluding our 30 governors.
- A review will be conducted now that this has been going for a year.
- [We] now have volunteer information on Assemble and data will be compiled from there.
- Safeguarding policy has been reviewed and approval is requested for adoption.
- The updates include training, particularly of volunteers.
- Safeguarding data to be reported to the Board

**The Trustees AGREED to adopt the updated Safeguarding policy.**

Discussion Points

- Requests for the Open Air Museum visit the Grange.
- It was noted that the museum wasn’t as prominent at the Willian Fair.

Further Points to Note

- There’s a survey to be completed by the partners of the Culture Committee asking for detail on their contribution to enable an aggregate position to be prepared on what [we’ve] done as a town.
- A ‘call to action’ with measurables will be prepared for the Board once the data has been collected.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – FINANCE**

The paper is taken as read

Management Accounts

- Accounts up to the end of May.
- Paper is for noting with one discussion point.
- Voids, rent collection and cash remain within the tolerances agreed with the Board for 2023.
- Voids report an increase from 9.7% across 2022 to 11.3% after five months of 2023.
- The trigger to review the 2023 budget is set at 12.6%.
- Rent collection remains strong, with 95% of rent due from the March 23 quarter raise collected within 90 days.
- Significantly down on [our] expectations for the year.
- A high level overview, need to ask ourselves 'can we afford to spend all the budget'

**The Trustees NOTED the Management Accounts for May 2023**

**BUDGET SETTING APPROACH 2023**

The paper is taken as read

Points to Note

- The paper sets out the approach
- A negative free cash flow of £2m is expected for 2024.
- Likely to pair up things [we'd] like to do when we receive the cash to do it.
- Strategically aligned to the direction of the organisation.

**The Trustees AGREED the approach to budget setting for 2024 set out in the Budget Paper.**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – PROPERTY**

The paper is taken as read

Disposal 38-40 Eastcheap with flats above.

Points to Note

- Former long ground lease reverted to rack-rented in 2008 with 2 flats above a shop, which is currently vacant.
- With the expenditure required to re-let, recommendation is disposal.
- We have a motivated party interested in owning this property.

**The Trustees AGREED to the disposal of 38-40 Eastcheap, with one abstention.**

Points to note

- Heads of Terms (HoT) are nearing agreement for the first floor Spirella 2 with the nursery. These have taken 2 years to agree
- Heads of Terms are nearing agreement for the old Grammar School.
- There's within the lease the option to buy after 5 years.
- Once the HoT have been agreed they will fit out with a view to having pupils in by September 2024.
- We will retain the right for external decorations and recoup the cost from the government.
- HoT are nearing agreement for a disposal on Works Road with a lease to buy deal over two years.
- It's their risk as they have to invest a lot of money in the property.

**The Trustees thanked MAC for the update**


**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Feedback from the Garden City Meeting

- JC – the animation presentation was quite difficult to follow. It may have been better to include some numbers that could be processed more easily. Otherwise, the team dealt really well with questions.
- GF – there were a few comments about the lack of Trustees (there were 7 in attendance). Feedback on the animation was good. There was positive feedback from those that spoke to us afterwards and understood HF.
- GH – received a number of emails from residents thanking [us].
- SF – the demographic was restricted. [I've] raised as a question if it's accessible for all parts of the town (location). A number of questions relating to gas for LG1. Should have the option, including hydrogen. [I] will come back to it. It can't not be a no-pipes strategy.

**NEXT MEETING 19<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023.**

**There being no further business the meeting was closed AT 20:35**

Signed ...  .....

Dated ...19<sup>th</sup> September 2023.....