

**Minutes of the
FINANCIAL & REGULATORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST**

Monday 17th February 2020

14.00 at the Ashdown Forest Centre

Committee members present: Mr AG Reid (Chairman), Mr J Spicer (Vice Chairman), Cllr J Barnes, Cllr P Roundell, Cllr F Whetstone, Mr C Smith

Also present: Mrs L Meehan (Finance Officer), Mrs K Dirs (Clerk), Mr R Voden (Chief Executive)

Minutes taken by K Meade

There were no members of the public present

		Action
01/20	Apologies Cllr R.Stogdon, Cllr S Tidy, Mr N Mawdsley and Ms S McAll	
02/20	Declarations of interest by Members of a Personal or Prejudicial Nature None	
03/20	Matters arising <u>03.01/20 Verbal update on resolutions from the previous Finance & Regulatory meeting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Executive Committee were due to chase the RPA payment timing – ACTION Still outstanding • Cllr Tidy (ST) undertook the action of discussing with East Sussex County Council a possible bridging loan as a contingency solution in case of delayed RPA payment. It is understood that this was received favourably, but ST will report back at the next meeting. 	Exec
04/20	Governance <u>04.01/20 The Ashdown Forest Foundation</u> The Finance Officer gave a verbal update. The Committee was advised that the donation from Chris Cowdrey's event has been received; gift aid is being processed; a second Trustee has resigned, leaving four Trustees in place; a website is being developed for the charity to increase its profile and fundraise; an accounting firm with charity experience has been approached. The current bank balance for the charity is £32,000. The Chairman recommended that the Finance Officer should oversee the charity administration until more formal arrangements are in place. The Chief Executive will inform the Board of his fundraising strategy at a pre-Board meeting on March 16 th 2020. Concerns were raised regarding the lack of progress in establishing a vision and target for the charity.	LM RV
05/20	Finance <u>05.01/20 Finance Report Q3 2019/20 with commentary FR 01/20 & FR 02/20</u> The budget currently forecasts a deficit of a £30K to year-end. <u>05.02/20 To review the updated cash flow forecast for 2019/20</u>	

	<p>The cash flow forecast was tabled at the meeting. The forecast is based on receipt of the RPA payment at the end of June. The Chief Executive expressed that he was unconcerned by the figures showing a worst-case scenario.</p> <p>Concern was expressed about the suggestion of utilising the Government Redundancy Service if needed. The Chief Executive advised that this would be considered as part of his review of the financial reserves.</p> <p>A concern was raised that the cash flow situation appears to be worsening; the Finance Officer clarified that a number of income streams are being brought forward to improve cash flow and that the same would occur next year, therefore improving the cash flow situation. It was noted that the income and expenditure for a number of projects are not currently included in the forecast.</p>	
06/20	<p><u>Income Generation</u> <u>06.01/20</u> Income Generation update FR 03/20 The paper had been withdrawn as Income Generation is being re-prioritised as part of the funding strategy. The Finance Officer updated the Committee on the projects underway: memorial wall, car park donations and sponsored walk.</p>	
07/20	<p><u>Licences, Permits, Rates and Wayleaves</u> <i>verbal update</i> The Clerk gave a verbal update on riding permits, event licences and wayleaves.</p>	
08/20	<p><u>Forest Amenity</u> <u>08.01/20</u> Ashdown Forest Cricket Club The Committee was advised of negotiations currently taking place regarding the future use of Ashdown Forest Cricket Club <u>08.02/20</u> Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club – Rent Review The Chief Executive advised the Committee of the progress of the rent review.</p>	
09/20	<p><u>Breach of Bye-law issues</u> <u>09.01/20</u> Woodlands encroachment (Ashdown Place) The Committee was advised of the action being taken.</p>	
10/20	<p><u>Employment & Staffing Arrangements (including HR)</u> <u>10.01/20</u> Staffing Matters (standing item) – CONFIDENTIAL SESSION: Verbal update</p>	
11/20	<p><u>Policy and Procedures</u> <u>11.01/20</u> To recommend General Risk Management Plan for Board approval FR04/20 Approved subject to inclusion of reference to the firearms policy. <u>11.02/20</u> To recommend Finance Risk Management Plan for Board approval FR05/20 Approved <u>11.03/20</u> To recommend Standing Orders for Board approval FR 06/20 The Chief Executive will review and propose amendments to Board members at the March Board meeting. <u>11.04/20</u> To recommend Financial Regulations for Board approval FR 07/20 The Chief Executive will review and propose amendments to Board members at the</p>	<p>RV</p> <p>RV</p>

	<p>March Board meeting. <u>11.05/20</u> Firearms Policy – to note amendments FR 08/20 Amendments noted and approved</p>	
12/20	<p>Health and Safety (standing item): Verbal update The Clerk advised the Committee of a vehicle insurance claim</p>	
13/20	<p>Data breaches (standing item) The Committee were advised of a potential breach. All procedures were followed, and actions recorded appropriately.</p>	
14/20	<p>Any Urgent Item of which the Clerk has notice in order to pass to the elected Chairman The Clerk advised the Committee that Mark Infield and Chris de Mestre had been nominated for the forthcoming Commoner Conservator election. There was a vote of thanks for John Francis who is stepping down as a Conservator.</p>	

The meeting closed at 16:10