

**OUTWOODS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
17TH OCTOBER 2018**

PRESENT: Councillors Fryer (Chair), Campsall, Parsons, Poland and Tillotson
PB, RE, GM, CN and JN.

Julie Attard – National Forest
Nita Rao – ArtSpace Loughborough

Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces
Senior Green Spaces Officer
Democratic Services Officer (NC)

APOLOGIES: Councillors K. Harris, Jukes, Morgan and Tony Thory (ArtSpace)

1. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

Disclosures of personal interests were made as follows:

- (i) by PB who farmed land adjacent to the Outwoods.
- (ii) by RE whose wife was a member of Artspace Loughborough.
- (iii) by JN who lived on land adjacent to the Outwoods.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th July 2018 were agreed.

3. SCULPTURE TRAIL 2019

Proposals for the Sculpture Trail 2019 event by ArtSpace Loughborough was submitted (item 4 on the agenda).

Councillor Poland arrived at the meeting.

Nita Rao from ArtSpace Loughborough attended the meeting to present the information and explained that:

- (i) ArtSpace would be contacting the National Forest in November to apply for funding which it was hoped would be successful.
- (ii) the final details regarding the time scales, the location of the sculptures and the trail could be decided at a time nearer to the event or during the residency. It could be beneficial for some events to take place in the Easter Holidays.
- (iii) ArtSpace would be ensuring that the 10 artists to be commissioned to produce work for the sculpture trail would produce work that was sympathetic to the site and the overall event.
- (iv) the decision regarding funding and the final arrangements for the event would be known by the Committee's meeting in January 2019.

Trustees commented that the event was well attended last year and it would be advisable for stewards to be present in the car park for this year's event to ensure cars were parked in a manner which utilised the available space efficiently.

Officers stated that other car parks, for example Nanpantan Sports Ground and Moat Road could be made available for visitors during the event and that the extended timescales of the 2019 event would relieve the pressure of cars seen in previous years.

AGREED

1. that the report be noted and the proposals for holding the Sculpture Trail in 2019 as outlined in Appendix A be approved in principle;
2. that as further details regarding the proposals set out by ArtSpace Loughborough become available, the details are forwarded to the Committee;
3. that the finalised proposals for Sculpture Trail 2019 be presented at the next meeting of the Committee in January 2019.

4. CHARNWOOD FOREST LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP BID

A presentation regarding the recently awarded lottery funded grant was provided (item 5 on the agenda). The Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces explained that the first stage of the Bid had been approved, and Julie Attard had been appointed to develop the proposals into a final bid which, if accepted, would go into the delivery phase of the project.

Julie Attard from the National Forest attended the meeting and gave a project overview. During the presentation she drew the Committee's attention to the three themes, the unique geology and fossil heritage of the Forest and her aspiration to understand how the Trustees would like to see the Outwoods developed as money in the bid had been specifically set aside for this purpose.

In response to comments by Trustees, Julie Attard stated that:

- (i) it was possible that the National Citizens Service scheme could be utilised for volunteers to support local engagement needs in the project.
- (ii) the path alongside Woodhouse Lane would be a properly engineered and surfaced path but the connections to the path that crossed fields would be sensitively surfaced to respect the environment.

Councillor Campsall left the meeting.

- (iii) David Attenborough would be contacted to see if he would support the project, considering his historical connection with the area.
- (iv) a gap analysis of pathways would be completed to determine the locations of current permissive and public footpaths and where short pathways could be created to link these paths across the landscape. The analysis would be completed sensitively to ensure that allowing public access across landscapes

did not negatively impact its biodiversity. Natural England and the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust would be consulted.

- (v) it could be possible to create an east-west path across the Forest and routes between villages, but it was unlikely that a circular walk, like for example the 'Leicestershire Round' could be created.
- (vi) some roads in the area could also benefit from speed restrictions.

Trustees commented that better footpaths would encourage more cyclists if sympathetically managed, and that the biodiversity of the area would require sensitive handling to get the balance right with increasing public access. The Committee appreciated and welcomed the presentation.

AGREED

1. that the presentation be circulated to the Committee;
2. that the Sub Committee meet with Julie Attard for a two hour workshop to discuss proposals and that the full Committee be also invited to attend if it wishes;
3. that the outcome of the Sub Committee meeting be circulated to the full Committee;

Councillor Parsons left the meeting.

5. ESIF FUNDING BID PROPOSALS

A presentation regarding the European Strategic Infrastructure Fund bid was provided (item 6 on the agenda).

The Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces stated that £140K had been offered by ESIF to install a natural play area and events space of 60m². The Council had 12 months to use the funding, the contractors had been selected and it was anticipated that work would finish in Spring 2019. The restrictions on the funding meant that the events space could not be used to generate revenue but event holders could charge to cover their costs. As the septic tank was being moved to the edge of the carpark, this would require planning alongside the work.

In response to queries by the Committee, the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces noted that planning permission was not required, the time period to use the funds extended until December 2019 and that there were no concerns regarding obtaining the money after Brexit as the Council had already received the funds.

Trustees commented that the natural style chosen for the play area had been successful in other locations and that a double slide should be installed to help smaller children use it with their parents.

AGREED that the presentation be circulated to the Committee and that the information provided be noted.

6. OFFICER UPDATE REPORT

A report of the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces was submitted (item 7 on the agenda) updating the Committee in respect of the following:

- (a) Edible Forest – it was noted that the event had been well attended but there had been issues with litter.

AGREED that the Evaluation report be circulated to members of the Committee once available.

- (b) Outwoods Management Plan – comments had been received from one trustee; trustees were encouraged to feedback further comments.
- (c) Byelaws Update - work on the byelaws had stalled due to other work commitments.
- (d) Interpretation Boards – these were anticipated to be installed by the end of October.

AGREED that the report of the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces be noted.

9. FINANCE UPDATE

An update regarding finance issues for the 2018/19 year was submitted (item 8 on the agenda).

The Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces noted that the finances were on track, that the overspend on consultants fees was being covered by other budgets and that costs had been fixed at the start of the year. In response to queries by the Committee he stated that:

- (i) the minus figures stated in the report represented income to the Council.
- (ii) the Council had not originally planned to remind the public to renew their parking season tickets but understood the Committee's concern about how this could be perceived. It could be challenging to provide direct debit services for the low number of people who had registered for season tickets.
- (iii) the information regarding season tickets was not currently displayed where tickers were purchased in the car park.
- (iii) there had been some enforcement of non-payers in the carpark but it did not seem to be a big issue. The rangers were monitoring the carpark to check cars were paying the charge on an informal basis and informing the Council if they spotted non-payers.

AGREED

- 1. that reminders be sent to car parking season ticket holders regarding the annual renewal of their passes by end October 2018;

2. that information regarding how to obtain a parking season ticket be displayed by the ticket machines.

10. ACTIVITIES AND OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT AT THE OUTWOODS SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

An update regarding activities and operational management at the Outwoods was submitted (item 9 on the agenda).

The Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces presented the report as a slide show to highlight the pictures included in the report. In response to queries by the Committee he and the Senior Green Spaces Officer stated:

- (i) there appeared to be no lasting damage to the trees after the long period of waterlogging due to the reported water leak earlier in the year. The rangers were monitoring the trees.
- (ii) some trees had been removed as a precaution before the high winds last week. The public had been advised not to go into the woods during these high winds as they had reached above 45mph. Detailed tree surveys of the primary network paths were regularly performed to identify risk and to safeguard the public. If there was an incident the Council, as the land owner would be responsible, however all reasonable precautions were being taken.
- (iii) the removal of rhododendron would allow other species to generate and also enabled the unique geology of the site to become visible.
- (iv) it had been challenging to engage a specialist to arrange a Fungi walk but it as was getting late in the season it would be better arranged for next year.

AGREED that the report of the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces be noted.

10. A.O.B

Trustees commented that having presentations as part of the meeting was welcome and that it would be beneficial for future meetings if the presentations could be circulated after each meeting.

ADDENDUM - DECISIONS WHEREBY A VOTE WAS TAKEN

At the meeting of the Committee held on 6th September 2017 it was agreed that when the Committee voted by a show of hands on decisions made by the Committee that this information was documented as an addendum to the minutes (minute 2.2 refers).

Item 3 – SCULPTURE TRAIL 2019

It was proposed that the Outwoods Management Committee gives, in principle, its approval to hold the Sculpture Trail event as outlined in Appendix A.

10 voted in favour
None voted against or abstained

The proposal was carried.

AGREED

1. that the report be noted and the proposals for holding the Sculpture Trail in 2019 as outlined in Appendix A be approved in principle;