

EAST GRINSTEAD MEMORIAL ESTATE LTD

Registered Charity No. 305211 Company No. 468425

MINUTES

DIRECTORS MEETING 04/2022

8pm, Tuesday 11th October 2022

Chequer Mead, De La Warr Road,

East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 3BS

1. Present:

- 1.1. Directors: Lloyd Richards, Chris Nunn, Lynn Graysmark, Ann Hacke, Matt Rew, Christopher Russell.
- 1.2. Guests: Mike Funnell, Phil Martin, Kara Mondair
 - 1.2.1. LR introduced Phil Martin, a member who was attending to learn more about the Directors Meetings

2. Apologies for Absence:

- 2.1. Directors: Christian Williams, Melvin Phillips, Mike Barlow,
- 2.2. Guests: Sandy Clark

3. Minutes of the AGM, 5th July 2022

- 3.1. The draft Minutes were approved and would be e-signed by LR and posted to the archive and uploaded to our website
- 3.2. Matters arising from the AGM: The Secretary reported that the two Special Resolutions agreed at the AGM had been approved by the Charity Commission and recorded at Companies House

4. Minutes of the previous Directors Meeting 03/2022, 5th July 2022

- 4.1. Subject to correcting a typo, the draft Minutes were approved and would be e-signed by LR and posted to the archive and uploaded to our web site after any necessary redaction.
- 4.2. Matters arising from the 03/2022 Meeting: The Secretary reported that no progress had been made developing our suite of policies, but this would be addressed before the next meeting

5. MSDC

- 5.1. Since our last meeting, there had been 2 Steering Meetings (23rd August & 16th September), and a meeting on the 6th October when we had an opportunity to give detailed feedback on the draft English Woodlands Plan (DEWP). It was noted that this draft only covered the paths and trees in Ashplats Wood.
- 5.2. Progress has been made with the Holtye Track with MSDC committing to widen it to 3.5m before this Christmas.
- 5.3. MSDC had been receptive to our comments on the DEWP but had no answers about how it would be financed or resourced. Additionally nobody had an answer on how this might dovetail with existing plans covering the wider estate and facilities such as the ponds, within the wood.
- 5.4. CN reported on a conversation with Natural England (NE) who explained that they had no power to police a SANG and that this role lay with MSDC as the "competent authority". MSDC are therefore both "judge and jury". NE subsequently rang MSDC who then told us they were rather cross that we'd spoken to NE. We believe though that rattling MSDC's cage like this will help increase pressure on them to perform.
- 5.5. After discussion, the Board concluded that it seemed unlikely that MSDC were going to deliver a workable and deliverable plan for the Estate in the foreseeable future and

prevarication, procrastination and frustration would continue to prevail. Consequently it was unanimously agreed that we should go to the next stage with solicitors Blandy & Blandy, and commission them to “*evaluate our options and develop a strategy going forward*” at a cost estimated to be between £4.4 - £5.6k in their letter of 26th August, ref KVJ/PQL1/1

- 5.6. During discussions with MSDC we were informed that no (significant) financial decisions could now be made before the local elections next May. We were shocked to learn of this which could well lead to further paralysis. It was also hard to understand how the recent £700k grant from MSDC for the SANG on the Turner’s Hill Road aligned with this policy.
- 5.7. In recent weeks we have been pushing MSDC for more comprehensive information about the SANG funds. Most of this is available but they claim that they cannot give us information on interest earned on the fund, despite the fact that they committed to this in the lease. This information is fundamental for reassurance about the future financial viability of the SANG, and we will continue to push for it.
- 5.8. The DEWP had included (Page 34 & map 4) some information on the classification of the rides (paths) and how they would be maintained. A detailed examination of this showed many flaws and contradictions and made no reference to the circular SANG route, nor how PROW maintenance would be coordinated with WSCC. A different approach had been suggested to MSDC and a response is awaited.
- 5.9. A walkabout with MSDC is scheduled for 20th Oct and LR invited suggestions on the “top 10” issues that we should try and bottom out with them

6. Board Development

- 6.1. A prospective new Director has been approached.

7. Governance

- 7.1. Our earlier survey had revealed low scores on “Equality, Diversity & Inclusion”. LR asked for 2 volunteers to examine this issue with a view to seeing how we could improve

8. Grants and Donations

- 8.1. EG Bonfire Committee had indirectly approached us for a grant to assist with publicity this winter. The Board concluded that whilst we would welcome a request from them in our 2023 annual round of grants, we declined to assist at this time.
- 8.2. Agreed to send RBL Poppy Appeal a £200 donation as usual.

9. Finances & Insurance

- 9.1. Ann Hacke had distributed a summary before the meeting. Costs were under control and investment income was up on last year. The value of our investments had fallen but in the longer term it seems very likely that they will spring back.

10. Membership

- 10.1. CN reported that since the last meeting, a neighbour in Fulmar Drive had joined and consequently our membership had increased to 52.
- 10.2. LR will be preparing a newsletter to members which is due to be sent out on 1st December.

11. Property

- 11.1. Nothing to report

12. Neighbours

- 12.1. One (or maybe more) neighbours had been seemingly wrongly accused and threatened by MSDC for fly tipping and unauthorised clearance. We have asked MSDC to be less aggressive in future.

13. Website & Publicity

- 13.1. Sandy Clark & Kara Mondair had tabled an excellent plan to enhance our website and increase our Facebook profile which Board members warmly welcomed.
- 13.2. The plan prompted comments though that whilst we do need to attend to our public image, we need to be clear what our role is alongside MSDC. It was suggested that we could “put the icing on the cake” on various projects, but perhaps shouldn’t undertake

projects (e.g. improving signage) which are their responsibility. CN reminded all that grants may be readily available for projects nominally led by us, rather than MSDC.

13.3. It was hoped that CN/MB would be able to get together with SC/KM on 2nd Nov to discuss further.

14. Any other business

14.1. Remembrance Sunday: LG coordinating. LR/MR to lay wreaths.

14.2. Companies House have now informed us that to expunge the earlier Articles from their record which were not approved by the Charity Commission, we would need a court order. It was agreed that we would not pursue this avenue.


15. Dates of Subsequent Meetings

15.1. 17th Jan 2023 (NB NOT the 10th Jan as earlier suggested)

15.2. 28th March 2023

15.3. 11th July 2023 (AGM + Directors Meeting)

15.4. 10th October 2023

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 't.l. [unclear]', located in the lower-left quadrant of the page.