Nottingham Open Spaces Forum Minutes of AGM 17th December 2020

Via Zoom

Present: June Perry, Julia White, Sarah Manton, Graham Piearce, Martin Willis, Brian Grocock, Alex Staniforth, Tom Huggon, Rob Kirkwood, Amanda Tindale, Sam White, Ben Standing, James Dymond, Cherry Underwood, Nicola Hinton, Eddie Curry

Apologies: Marion Staniforth.

2019/2020 Annual report & accounts

Circulated prior to meeting and available at <http://nosf.org.uk/member-resources.html>

No questions raised.

MW moved to accept as accurate record, BS seconded, carried unanimously

Election of Trustees:

Existing trustees – Cherry Underwood, Tom Huggon, Rob Kirkwood, Sarah Manton, Ben Standing, Ros Yousof, Martin Willis.

Re-election proposed by BG, seconded AS, carried unanimously

Recently co-opted trustees – Julia White, Josh Osoro Pickering.

Election proposed by MW, seconded TH, carried unanimously.

Tree planting:

SM described pleasing increase of partnership working over the last year.

<https://www.facebook.com/SherwoodPeoplesForest/> project continues.

Castle Oaks project well underway, funded by Castle Trust to enable planting of 80 oaks in conjunction with City primary schools.

Tiny Forests planned for Woodthorpe Grange (Hockley Hustle sponsored Holt) & Highwood. Mass plantings undertaken by NCC in partnership with NOSF/Notts Tree Planters & others at King George V fields in Aspley & Harvey Haddon stadium (on site of long-gone Haddon Wood).

Further planting planned inc. 5000 whips provided by NTU

Notts Tree Planters own project on Eco Farm at Scriveton & working in partnership with Soroptimists.

NCC now signed up to WT Tree Charter during recent ceremony on the Forest.

Sherwood Forest Trust project launching encouraging (primarily) students to collect & grow on Sherwood Trees for planting elsewhere.

Initial meeting NCC/NOSF & Tree Council aim to initiate Tree Warden network during 2021

Future Parks Accelerator programme:

Programme now extended to May 2022

NOSF continuing to contribute to work on volunteering & FoGs developing framework to support volunteer & Friends Group activities. This also intended to enable insurance for FoGs.

Intended to create volunteer manager & co-ordinator posts for remainder of project

Other work strands inc investigating potential for commercial activity at destination sites, completion of Covid affected consultation and green space quality audit work to form basis of future strategy.

Green Social prescribing:

CU/RK/JW leading NOSF involvement in bid for funding for pilot project led by NCC to increase levels of green social prescribing with local focus and engagement with existing community green space groups. Strong bid made and decision expected imminently. To form key part of next Forum meeting when bid results published.

NCC:

TH acknowledged recent APSE award to City Parks Teams and applauded considerable work from Public Realm staff in maintaining access to and condition of green spaces during difficult year. Those present demonstrated their appreciation.

Midlands Parks Forum (MPF):

RK, as NOSF rep, summarised recent activity & highlighted importance of opportunity to network between professional & voluntary sectors.

Parks Advisory Group:

EC described this new group which aims to bring together a wide range of bodies from the greenspace sector to ensure more cohesive messaging, enhanced training & development & wider appreciation of the importance of the sector.

APPG (All party parliamentary group) on Parks:

Newly established following dissolution of Parks Action Group, chaired by Lilian Greenwood, to examine parks funding & identify a sustainable future. Will inform the 2021 spending review.

EC & TH stressed need to engage with APPG, TH also emphasised the ever more pressing need for parks to be made a statutory responsibility.

Agreed that NOSF Board should meet early in 2021 & agree early engagement with APPG as well as other Nottingham MPs & the Nottingham Labour Group. Also need to meet with new NCC CEO, particularly in light of budget pressures as below.

Parks Development update:

JD – some delay to programme but playground refurbishments carried out on Gabrielle Close & Woodthorpe Grange Park. Installation of gym (32nd in the city) also at WG Park.

FCC (formerly WREN) bid successful for Forster Street Playground.

Consultation to begin on new playground for Amesbury Circus & bid due for Coppice Park spring 2021.

Victoria Embankment Memorial Gardens 2n stage bid due may for full restoration & activity programme, consultation to start in new year.

Parks Team staffing:

Retirement of Peter Broad (new landscape architect, Helen, in post) & John Simpson (James Tilford taking over on Colwick Park. Other recent and forthcoming leavers – Steve Clarke, Leonie Brown, Alan Schofield and Flis Atkin noted that half the Parks development team & half+ of the Biodiversity Team posts will be vacant & absolute vacancy freeze in place plus concerns over wider budgetary pressures. This with capital of £1m S106 funds available & limited capacity to deliver.

AOB:

JD agreed to JP request for use of camera to investigate possible badger activity in Arboretum.