

Minutes of the 42nd meeting of the Board of the Aire Rivers Trust on 11/04/2018 at the St. Hugh's Centre, Baildon.

In Attendance:

G Roberts (Chair)
J Whaley (Secretary)
K Sunderland
D Brazendale
W Robinson

R Hellowell (observer)
N Milsom (Staff)

Apologies were received from B Edwards, M Penny, B Lerner, D Vine and R Kipling (EA).

1. Minutes of the meeting of 21/02/2018

The minutes were agreed as a fair record of proceedings. There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere in the agenda.

2. Chair's Report

DNAire

GR updated members of the progress on the tender for an Activity Plan (£15K) to be issued mid-April and thanked Kate Meadows for her valuable input. He indicated that other tenders for IT support and marketing were envisaged in the near future.

GR also advised that the EA are close to having the tender for fish passes ready for issue.

GR summarised SW's work to date on the Kirkstall Abbey Engagement session (in conjunction with Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust) and a range of other venues for the coming months.

GR introduced the Community Consultation Questionnaire which would be a key document in taking forward the DNAire project and asked members to complete and generally publicise same.

Rivers Trust Spring Conference

GR had attended the above in which growing a Rivers Trust had been the prime focus.

JW asked if any useful suggestions had arisen re the long-standing problems of core costs for an organisation seeking to expand and professionalise but it

appeared that reluctance to meet this perennial issue was still a negative factor.

ACCP

GR advised members that there was nothing new to report but consideration was being given to the use of remaining balances.

GR informed the Board that funding for 2018/9 had not been confirmed to date but that there was no reason to assume that no funding would be available. ACCP was of the view that the best use of funds might be to recruit a part-time person to deliver the needs of the Partnership (with ART possibly acting as employer).

JW offered the view that an employment approach would benefit from a funding commitment over more than one year. ART had already committed reserves elsewhere and could not fund a share of any overspending.

Water Environment Grant (WEG)

GR had advised members by email that any role for ART as a lead applicant was potentially vitiated by the need to pre-fund 3 months cash flow under the WEG rules.

The Middle Aire Tributaries Project continued to be developed with YWT leading and RT and WTT as partners and this project could be a WEG candidate with perhaps some other funding to support aspects of the project which would not qualify under WEG. The deadline for applications was mid-May with a lot of competition expected.

JW expressed the hope that ART might be able to act in a capacity that allowed some payment for voluntary time where savings were possible as against external professional services.

KS felt that a project to remove the weir by the Systagenix site in Gargrave might be carried out by ART with Systagenix support. JW agreed that this might allow ART scope for some income as lead but that the current application deadline was too short to work up a bid in this round.

3. Friends of Bradford's Becks

BL had circulated a summary of FoBB activities 2017/8 compiled for the purposes of a report to the Environment and Waste Management O and S Committee.

4. Bradford Stewardship

In BL's absence, NM summarised his work to date.

Two matters emerged in relation to the budget for Bradford Stewardship compiled by BL and agreed in principle with KS and JW

Firstly, KS and JW emphasised that it was essential from the outset that all third party expenditure was agreed in detail to ensure value for money and that (informal) records should be kept by NM identifying cost and commitments against each budget heading to ensure no overall overspending.

More specifically KS was keen to ensure that work carried out by RSC should be targeted at tasks which were not suitable for volunteer input.

5. Invasive Species

DV had advised members by email that treatment work for Giant Hogweed on the Upper Aire was due to start in the next week or so.

6. Environment Agency Report

No report in RK's absence.

7. Finance

JW spoke to his finance report and again made reference to the status of the various fund balances which were now calculated directly from and presented through the new accounting system.

JW confirmed that the Barclays Bank Mandate had been adjusted to allow direct to bank payments while retaining a second authority for every payment.

JW informed the Board that NEST pension arrangements had been put in place through the payroll company as agreed with both employees.

JW confirmed that the new insurance arrangements now embraced a suitable level of cover for Public Liability, Employer's Liability and ART property.

8. Website

Nothing to report.

9. Trustee Recruitment

GR advised members that Anne Healey had indicated an interest in joining the Board and suggested that the next step should be attending as an observer. The Board welcomed the suggestion

GR had emailed the text of an advert for new Board members and it was agreed with any necessary minor amendments.

10. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is on Wednesday 30th May 2018 at St Hugh's Centre, Baidon.