

Friends of Pittville

Minutes of the Trustees' Meeting, Tuesday 13 December 2016, at 17.30, at the Municipal Offices

Present

Judie Hodsdon (chair), Chris Archibald, Fiona Clarke, Gloria Jones, Eileen Lockwood, Sandy Marshall, David Richards, Hilary Simpson, Henry Williams

Representatives of other bodies: Dennis Parsons

Abbreviations: CBC = Cheltenham Borough Council; GA = Gloucestershire Archaeology; VCS = Voluntary and Community Sector

1. Welcome and Apologies

JH welcomed Philippa Howell as an observer with a view to being appointed as a trustee. Philippa introduced herself to those present. Apologies were received from 'representatives of other bodies', Desmond Fitzgerald and Adam Lillywhite. Henry Williams and Eileen Lockwood arrived later, due to traffic holdups.

2. Minutes of the last meeting, 1 November 2016

FC had circulated the Minutes and they are on the website. The minutes were accepted.

3. Matters arising

3.1 refer para 3.1 **Civic Award plaque:** JH reported that a concrete plinth will cost almost as much as a stone one, so it was agreed to fix the plaque to the wall between Pittville Lawn and Ellenborough House on Clarence Road. The property owner(s) have given permission, with the request that any damage in the process be made good. HW will affix it at a position agreed by those planning to work at the Gates during the green space volunteers' working party on 15 December.

3.2 refer para 3.2 **Drop-Ins:** FC reported that eight people had been at the November Drop In and they were keen that they continue. It costs nothing, so it was agreed to continue at the Sudeley Arms.

3.3 refer para 13 **Christmas cards:** FC reported that almost £60 worth had been ordered but we still have not covered the initial cost. The shortfall is £23.25. The cards will be offered again in 2017. (Since the meeting, GJ has offered to take over the cards – thank you!)

3.4 refer para 14 **West side heritage information board:** FC has chased CBC but no action yet. It was agreed not to raise at this meeting again until the job is completed.

4. Finance/Budget for 2016/17

JH has sent the annual report and accounts to the Charity Commission in plenty of time and updated the trustee list as of today. She plans to move some money from the community account to the active saver account, even though interest is low. The income since end

September is almost £2000. She noted that some of the fundraising expenses are not actually expenses but income that has been handed over to another body, e.g. East India Café Sunday lunch. She wants the regular activities, e.g. the quarterly newsletter printing, related postage, volunteers' meeting and admin costs to be covered by the membership fee. In the budget, the fundraising income target is set at £3000 which should be achieved through the forthcoming plant sale, Albemarle Gate car parking fees collected during The Festival in March, another garden party, the bird seed dispenser income and the proposed Quiz Night.

GJ noted that there had been no complaints about raising the fee to £7.50 and £10.00 for this year, but that raising it again, too soon, might not be advisable.

HW arrived at this point and was welcomed to his first meeting as an appointed trustee. JH noted that he had been a committee member from 2010 to 2012 and his help on the Pittville Gates restoration project had been invaluable.

5. Past events

5.1 Sunday lunch at East India Café, 20 November: this had been very enjoyable with 22 guests. John Simpson (Pittville History Works) had written a new entertainment, and the restaurant owners had presented FOP with a cheque for £175 (10% from this lunch and from members who had dined there since the scheme was introduced). Some new members had attended.

6. Pittville History Works

HS distributed a hard copy of 12 December update which is e-mailed to 75 subscribers. She noted that other groups were starting similar projects as people, having done their family histories, were moving onto researching the houses in which they live. The team's next meeting is in January.

7. Forthcoming events

7.1 Quiz Night, Monday 30 January 2017: FOP member Amanda Slayton-Joslin has agreed a date and made the arrangements for the event and an invitation has just gone via Mail Chimp to members on e-mail. Others will be advised via the January newsletter. **Action: SM**

7.2 Cheltenham Horticultural Society Spring Show, Sunday 2 April 2017: FOP member Rob Rimell has agreed to co-ordinate FOP's participation. Helpers will be needed on the day.

7.3 FOP Plant Sale, Saturday 6 May 2017: CA will begin on this after Christmas. More detail needs to be in the January newsletter. **Action: CA and SM**

7.4 HW suggested another **family day** near the new play area in the summer such as held in 2010-2012. JH thought we need to check what The Cheltenham Trust is planning as they seem to be organising such events. FOP will also hold another garden party in the summer so it might be too much to take on in 2017. **Action: JH**

Eileen Lockwood arrived at this point and was introduced to HW and PH.

9. Green Flag and Green Heritage Site Accreditation Desk Assessment Feedback

CA reported that this had finally arrived and most of it is quite good. There is quite a bit in the Recommendations which will be incorporated in the annual submission, due in 31 January 2017. The assessment in 2017 will be by 'mystery shopper'; it is not a full inspection as in 2016. One third of the assessment is for the documentation and two thirds for the site inspection. The most important recommendation is to move more of the completion dates into the second five years of the ten year plan. FOP comes out of it well, as a strong friends group. And having all the key CBC staff on hand on inspection day went down well. A lot of effort went into this and it was worth it.

10. Green Space Volunteers

CA has now taken over from FC and he thanked her for the handover. 22-25 volunteers are there regularly. We now have to translate some of the plans into specific projects for those who like to work on a project.

CA had gone through the Green Flag feedback with CBC and it was suggested to have a monthly newsletter for volunteers, especially as some people don't want to listen to the information before starting work. The newsletter would also put the work into context. The first one is three pages but it is more likely to be less than a page each month, sent after the second working party. The rockery project will be resuscitated and a team assembled. Building the storage for the tools in the Boathouse is ongoing.

10. Upper Lake and Pittville Pump Room project

JH reported that following meetings with CBC staff there is a good idea of the areas to be tackled (round the lake including the rockeries, the long border on the east and the area around the Pump Room including the gateways). The first step will be to commission a heritage landscape architect to come up with options and outline costs. CBC are writing a brief for this study and investigating how much it is likely to cost. Only when we have the results of the study will we know the costs and whether we can proceed with all or parts of it.

JH asked if trustees wished FOP to proceed with working with CBC and raising funds potentially to go towards the study (involving effort, if not money, at this stage).

The following questions/comments were made: how can we get accurate costings if we don't know what we want; it still feels nebulous; is it a FOP project or a CBC project; the park has been underfunded for 40 years so correcting this will be serious money; having a landscape architect produced 'landscape restoration plan' will enable us to get grants; we need to see a written project initiation document before agreeing to anything; compared to Pittville Gates and the play area, the project does not sound specific enough for successful fund raising; it needs a title which will catch people's attention; we need 'before and after' pictures; images of how the area was at different periods.

JH responded that no FOP money could be committed, even for the architectural study, before we have all the relevant information, and the trustees will be asked to approve any expenditure. The study should produce the information needed for fundraising applications. Any project would be a joint one with CBC, run on the same lines as the Gates project. However it will be useful to continue gathering information and images, e.g. Council minutes for any information, e.g. on the rockeries. HS said she would need a project brief to raise it at

the January Pittville History Works meeting. JH will produce a short description of the proposed project.

Action: JH and HS

Gloucestershire Archaeology (GA) has offered to help with the investigation of the steps in front of the Pump Room which are marked on the 1855 map. They were there until the bandstand was erected in front of the building (before being moved to the west side). GA will supervise a dig, probably during a Thursday working party.

11. January 2017 newsletter and distribution

SM reported that there was plenty of material with GF/GHSA and the Cheltenham Civic Society/Friends of the Wilson Tercentenary Dinner, and Adrian Barlow's AGM talk, once they are written.

Action: CA, FC, SM

GJ asked if a membership renewal could be included for those who have not yet renewed. This was agreed.

Action: GJ

12. Any other business

12.1 Pump Room gates: GJ asked what time the gates were closed as she had been asked by a member of the public, as there is no notice. The gates are not supposed to be locked but someone has taken it upon themselves to do so. CBC will ask them not to.

12.2 'Thank you coffee' for green space volunteers: DR was very appreciative of the father and daughter who had bought coffee for the volunteers raking up leaves near Central Cross Café on 1 December. Nine volunteers were working there.

12.3 Cheltenham VCS Forum: JH had attended this morning's meeting from 10am – 12pm at the Community Resource Centre in Grove Street. <http://www.grcc.org.uk/our-work-parent/vcs-support-cheltenham>

The main item was the CBC budget, presented by Cllr Rowena Hay. It is still to be approved by the Cabinet so the information is not final. However, the Community Pride fund is built into the budget. CA thought this might be suitable for the schools' online resources pack. See Appendix 1 Minutes 1 November 2016.

13. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 18 January 2017 at 18.15. Note new day of the week and new starting time.

The meeting closed at 19.10.