

Minutes of The Oldway Mansion and Grounds Steering Group (Working Party)

13 February 2023

-: Present :-

Councillor Darren Cowell, Councillor Chris Lewis, Councillor Swithin Long, Councillor Cat Johns and Councillor David Thomas (substitution for Lynn Sykes)

(Also in attendance: Jo Jones, Iris Butler, Tim Eley, Louise Gilson, Colleen Moon, Lorraine Stewart, Kathy Hughes, Mary Jenkins, Emma Falconer, Alan Denby, Sue Saunders, Peter Welsby, David Blanchard and Katherine Findlay)

347. Minutes of the last meeting

All agreed that the minutes of the last meeting held on 10 October 2022 were an accurate record of the meeting.

348. Matters Arising

Covered in the agenda.

349. Budget statement

LS displayed the budget statement on the screen to show current position.

350. Report on progress against the resilience project purposes

A meeting on 20 Feb is being held with stakeholders to explain the engagement process and the timescales.

CL raised about no update being given to the Working Party as to why trust was disbanded. KF provided an update and advised that the trustees of Oldway Trust took the decision to wind up the trust. The consultancy team are working very closely with the Friends of Oldway and the Gardens Group. A long conversation was held over the Trust and how it was disbanded. KF & DC both confirmed that there was no direction from Torbay Council to disband the trust. The trust took the decision to do so and the press release was issued directly by the trustees. Once the direction for Oldway is confirmed, then future options can be considered. Now that the consultancy team are in place, they will be looking at the governance review for Oldway.

IB raised that she believes a newsletter should be created to be sent out electronically and by post for those who do not have access to the internet that live

within Paignton and have a keen interest in Oldway. She does not believe that a lot of the residents have signed up for Paignton Projects newsletter. EF commented that it does take time to build up a good database for the newsletters but for the Paignton Projects newsletters which does include Oldway updates has around 3000 subscribers. EF did advise that she may be able to send to a nominated person, a copy of any Oldway updates only that are being issued via the Paignton Projects Newsletters, which can be printed to be distributed if required. EF also advised that she has been working with KF on wording for the key messages for Oldway which will be printed and placed on the Heras fencing as a visual update for those walking through the grounds. This would also give an opportunity for those who do not know about the Paignton Project newsletters to sign up.

KH advised that she prints a copy of the newsletter to be displayed in the tearooms and TE advised that he prints out newsletters to be issued out to those interested. KF asked that any information that is being sent out, is discussed with EF to ensure that the correct messages are issued out and all parties are saying the same message. ACTION – KH & TE

CL asked if any updates can be updated to the Working Party prior to any press releases being issued out to ensure that the Working Party and members are fully briefed for any questions by residents. DC commented that reports that KF drafts for the Oldway Resilience Project Board which meets monthly, can be issued out to the Working Party for their information. ACTION – LS to distribute as and when received from KF

351. Update on East Tower and associated buildings

DB provided an update on the east tower which was recently surveyed by the structural engineer and some recommendations of works required have been suggested. There are now conversations being held with the planning team, Heritage England and the consultation team to ensure that the correct process for the works is followed correctly and to maintain health & safety of the surrounding area and residents.

KF updated that there have been some funds allocated from the resilience project for the conservation management specialists to review the TDA plans for the east tower and to ensure that it is managed carefully to preserve the tower.

EF updated the Working Party that a statement will be issued on this as a press release tomorrow and asked that all parties use this statement as an update when being asked questions.

352. Friends of Oldway Group update - to include a financial statement

KH provided an update on financial information for the tearooms. This financial year, there has been some equipment purchased to replace items that were donated. The rooms turnover was approximately £76,000 with a current balance of around £20k.

KH updated that the tearooms has now been set up as a CIC separate to the Friends of Oldway. Discussions have been held with Torbay Council with regards to the lease which will now be under the new CIC.

The tearooms are now open one night a week and there are some various groups that attend including care leavers, Torbay Youth Trust. One day a week, there is a young girl on work experience from new local school, Preston Bridge, and would like to continue this with other students from this new school.

The tearooms are continuing to host pupils completing their Duke of Edinburgh award schemes.

KH updated that the chained gate which is currently in position is helping to reduce antisocial behaviour happening outside the tearooms during the hours it is closed.

KH asked about the possibility of hosting an event for the Coronation and would like if so, to work in conjunction with the Gardens group. EF advised that she is aware that from the National Programme, that the Monday is focusing on volunteering groups so could do something along this route. There are processes for events which would need to be followed through Torbay Council Events Team and EF suggested KH look at the Coronation website and also Torbay Council events webpage. TE agreed that he would like to discuss the idea of working together on an event. ACTION – KH & TE

KH advised that in agreement with Torbay Council, the tearooms are funding fixing the issues with the roof in the tearooms.

353. Oldway Gardens Group Update - to include a financial statement

TE provided the update for the Gardens Group. As at the end of January, the volunteer hours are now totalling over 20,000 hours. There are around 60 active volunteers working in the group. TE updated that the group has an excellent working relationship with SWISCo team who work in the area. There has been a lot of work recently carried out on the rockery, grotto and pond areas.

There are still issues with dog fouling and the number of dog waste bags that are discarded in the grounds.

The financial position is that there is currently £20,000 in the bank account. All of the money that is raised by the gardens group, is put back into the projects being carried out in the gardens.

PW advised that the gardens group has now planted 10,000 bulbs within the gardens and the benches within the grounds are also renovated.

CM updated that she will be leaving the Working Party soon and there will be a new representative from the Civic Society attending. DC thanked CM for attending the meetings and invited her to still attend should she wish too as a member of the public.