

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Trustee Board of the Gilstrap and William Edward Knight Charities** broadcast from Castle House, Great North Road, Newark NG24 1BY on Friday, 2 October 2020 at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs I Brown, Councillor R Crowe, Councillor Mrs R Crowe, Councillor Mrs G Dawn, Councillor K Girling, Councillor L Goff, Councillor D Lloyd and Councillor M Skinner

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor M Cope

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Keith Girling proposed and Councillor Mathew Skinner seconded that Councillor Mrs Rita Crowe be appointed as Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Gilstrap and W.E. Knight Charities.

AGREED (by 3 votes for with 1 abstention) that Councillor Mrs R Crowe be appointed as Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Gilstrap and W.E. Knight Charities.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None

3 DECLARATION OF INTENTION TO RECORD THE MEETING

The Chairman advised those present that the meeting was being livestreamed by the Council on social media.

4 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 OCTOBER 2019

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2019 be approved as a correct record.

5 GUIDANCE ON THE COUNCIL'S ROLE AS CORPORATE TRUSTEE AND MEMBERS OF THE TRUSTEES BOARD

The Trustees considered a report presented by the Clerk to the Board which sought to provide them with guidance on the role and duties when acting on the Board of Trustees on behalf of the Council as Corporate Trustee.

The report set out the background to the establishment and set-up of the current Board of Trustees and the powers and duties when acting in that capacity. Specific key duties were listed in paragraph 3.3 of the report.

In considering the report a Trustee noted that there were a number of newly appointed Trustees, suggesting that an informal meeting or training session be held to clearly set out the objectives of the Charity as defined in the Trust Schemes, adding that this would lead to more informed decision making.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the contents of the report be noted; and
- (b) a training session be arranged for the Trustees to meet with the Clerk to the Board in order to fully explore the Trust Schemes that applied to the charities, in particular the objectives and purposes of the Trusts. Such training to also include details of the finances of each Scheme.

## 6 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Trustees considered the report presented by the Assistant Business Manager – Financial Services which set out the financial performance figures for the W.E. Knight Trust and the Gilstrap Endowment Fund for the financial year ended 31 March 2020.

The report set out that the W.E. Knight charity had no active functions and that monies were retained within the Charity's account until such time as the Trustees chose to disburse it. It was noted that the Gilstrap charity received an annual income of £43,826.92 for the lease of the Gilstrap building.

AGREED (unanimously) that the financial performances for the year ended 31 March 2020 be noted.

## 7 NEWARK R&M CRICKET CLUB PROJECT

The Trustees considered the report presented by the Clerk to the Board of Trustees which sought to provide an update on progress made by Newark R&M Cricket Club in respect of their ground development project and to consider a request for additional funding.

The report set out the background to the awarding of funding to the cricket club and provided details of the now complete Phase 1. It was noted that the provision of new changing rooms formed Phase 2 of the project and that these had been designed in accordance with the technical requirements of the ECB. It was reported that the planning application for the changing rooms had been unsuccessful as it did not meet accessibility requirements. In order to overcome the issue the Club were proposing to amend the design to include the installation of a lift on the front external stairs with the internal access to both sides of the building being reconfigured, the cost of which was an additional £13,134. It was noted that there remained unallocated funds of £38,956.65 in the W.E. Knight accounts.

In considering the report a Trustee queried whether the cricket club had been offered an alternative location which was not at risk from flooding. In response it was reported that the ground level was being raised to mitigate this risk. The location was in the ownership of the cricket club and unless the mitigation works were undertaken the ECB would not approve the development.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the update regarding the Newark R&M Cricket Club project be noted; and
- (b) the request for further funding towards the installation of a lift for the changing room building be approved.

## 8 APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT FUNDING

The Trustees considered the report presented by the Clerk to the Board of Trustees in relation to two applications made to the Gilstrap Charity for grant funding. These were from: the Newark Book Festival; and the Newark Civic Trust (NCT). Paragraph 2 of the report set out the current approved criteria for funding with details of the applications being provided in paragraph 3. Redacted copies of the application forms were attached as appendices to the report.

### Newark Book Festival

In considering the application the Trustees expressed concern in relation to the amount of funding being sought. The Trustees suggested that the overheads of the organisation should have been reduced and that the application, originally made in March 2020, had not been fully revised. The Trustees commented that they looked to support organisations which were able to sustain themselves and would have wanted to have sight of more than one year's financial accounts.

It was suggested that the application be deferred pending submission of additional information.

### Newark Civic Trust

In considering the application the Trustees were advised that the production of the town trails had been adapted in light of the pandemic with some of the information having been made available online as well as in the usual paper leaflet format.

The Trustees were supportive of the town trails, suggesting that consideration should be given to the production of a booklet rather than individual leaflets. A nominal charge could be made in the region of £0.50 to help towards the funding of the booklet. The Trustees also suggested that the trails be promoted on the Visit Newark website and that Newark Civic Trust (NCT) be thanked for their efforts.

The Trustees discussed whether it would be appropriate for NCT to combine some of their less popular trails and whether the Woodwork Department at Newark College could be approached to make some leaflet display boards for placing in strategic locations in the area. It was noted that this could result in a more frequent print run of the leaflets but that it was hoped that the information therein would not need to be changed for 2 to 3 years. Discussions in relation to advertising were also held as this would help towards the cost of the printing.

It was also noted that the NCT's Civil War Trail and the National Civil War Centre did not complement each other and that consideration could be given to aligning the information provided by the two bodies.

In summary, the Trustees agreed that they would support the application for funding in the sum of £2,500 if the NCT considered the following suggestions:

- i) combine some of the less popular trails to reduce the number of leaflets printed, thereby reducing costs and that consideration be given to the production of a booklet, to include advertising space to create an income;
- ii) that an online presence for the town trails information be introduced; and
- iii) that a partnership be entered into with Newark College to build leaflet display boards for the town trail leaflets.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the determination of the Newark Book Club application for funding be deferred pending receipt of additional financial information; and
- (b) the Newark Civic Trust's application for funding in the sum of £2,500 be approved subject to consideration of the following suggestions:
  - i) combine some of the less popular trails to reduce the number of leaflets printed, thereby reducing costs and that consideration be given to the production of a booklet, to include advertising space to create an income;
  - ii) that an online presence for the town trails information be introduced; and
  - iii) that a partnership be entered into with Newark College to build leaflet display boards for the town trail leaflets.

Should the Newark Civic Trust not be in agreement to the above suggestions, the sum of £1,918.00 be approved.

## 9 LAND OFF CEDAR AVENUE/LINCOLN ROAD, NEWARK - UPDATE REPORT

The Trustees considered the report presented by the Clerk to the Board of Trustees in relation to the future options for the land owned by the Gilstrap Charity at Cedar Avenue, Newark. The report set out the background as to the use of the land as a non-designated public open space and the siting of a multi-use games area. Details of the two unauthorised encampments by travellers and the associated costs to secure their removal were provided and that this had resulted in the decision to sell the land for development. Following an informal tender process an offer was received from Nottingham Community Housing Association but subsequently withdrawn after they failed to gain planning permission. Paragraph 4 of the report set out 3 alternative options for the land as: re-advertise the land for disposal on the open market; retain the land as Charity property with its use as amenity field and public open space; and dispose of the land to a public body or other organisation to retain as an amenity field and public open space. An alternate proposal had been received from the Winthorpe Estate Residents Group which was to develop the site into a 'Children's Wood and Wildlife Meadow'.

A Trustee suggested that consideration of the report be deferred until the previously agreed training had taken place. He also expressed concern in relation to receiving the proposal from the Winthorpe Residents Group as the members thereof were currently anonymous. He suggested that the Group should reflect on their anonymity.

A further Trustee was in agreement with the deferral stating that the terms of the Gilstrap Charity were wide and that the training would provide the Trustees with a better understanding. He stated that the asset was costing more to maintain than previously. He noted that the Council were currently undertaking an assessment of the district's green and open spaces and suggested that any decision on the future use of the land should await the outcome of that, adding that if it was to remain an open space then he would wish to see it sold to an organisation who were able to maintain it accordingly. He further noted that some of the suggestions of the Winthorpe Residents Group were exciting but that the Trustees could not contemplate entering into an agreement with an anonymous organisation.

A Trustee queried whether any attempt had been made to identify the members of the Group. In response the Clerk advised that both herself and the Chief Executive had sent several emails asking for the members to identify themselves so that meaningful conversations could be held but that each time this request had been refused.

A Trustee stated that she was in agreement with the deferment adding that it was hoped that the Winthorpe Residents Group would declare their identities. She suggested that work on the Groups proposal be started and stated that she was pleased that the voting Trustees had agreed not to sell the land. She also requested that clarity be provided at the training session on the role of the non-voting Trustees. In response, a Trustee clarified that no decision on the future use of the land had yet been taken.

A Trustee advised that all the appointed Trustees had the right to speak but not all could vote. He stated that it would be inadvisable for work on the Group's proposal to commence as this could result in monies being wasted and again noted that the Trustees could not contemplate entering into an agreement with an anonymous organisation. The Clerk to the Board of Trustees added that the alternate proposal was well presented but acknowledged the concerns of the Trustees.

In noting that a meeting had not been held for 12 months, a Trustee queried why it was now felt that training was necessary. In response it was stated that delays in holding a meeting had been largely down to the unavailability of a member of the Gilstrap family together with the cancellation of all meetings from March 2020 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

**AGREED** (unanimously) that consideration of the options detailed in the report for the future use, retention or disposal of the land off Cedar Avenue/Lincoln Road, Newark be deferred pending the Trustees receiving training as referred to in Minute No. 5 above.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

AGREED (unanimously) that meetings of the Board of Trustees would be held quarterly and commence at 6.00pm.

Meeting closed at 3.18 pm.

Chairman