

Runnymede Borough Council
Cabrera Trust Management Committee

Thursday 13 July 2023 at 2.30 pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillor C Howorth (Chairman), P Beasley, M Owen and P Grobien.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillor D Coen, Councillor J Hulley, T Ashby, H Lane,

1. Election of Chairman

Councillor Howorth proposed himself for the Chairman for the Municipal Year 2023/24 which was agreed by the Committee.

2. Election of Vice-Chairman

Councillor Howorth proposed Councillor Hulley as Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2023/24 which was agreed by the Committee.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on Thursday 5th January 2023 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

4. Apologies for absence

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor D Coen, Councillor J Hulley, and T Ashby.

5. Actions since the last meeting

The Committee was updated on various actions which had taken place since the last meeting.

- It had been clarified that ownership of the pond was split between the Council and a developer. It was acknowledged that this made dealing with the incursion in the water challenging due to the constantly changing nature of the boundary.

Action: Councillor Howorth to follow up with Planning Enforcement to see if they had finished their actions around the pond.

- The Tree Officer stated that it appeared that the incursion had been dealt with and had taken photos to prove this.

- The Green Spaces Manager stated that coppicing works had been successful, with new growth appearing. The total cost of removal was £3,900, and work was completed in February.

Boundary Inspection

Committee members expressed disappointment that wardens had not been involved in the boundary inspection survey, as they believed it would give them a better understanding of issues in the area.

Action: Wardens to be invited to all future boundary inspections.

The Tree Officer noted that there was one definite and one potential incursion along the northern boundary to do with green matter and that both would be followed up. The Honorary Warden for the northern part of the land asked if he could be involved in this, so that he could inform others when he was asked.

It also appeared that fifteen properties had been depositing green waste along the northern boundary, and The Green Spaces Manager stated that there would be letters going to all properties in the area reminding them of the procedure for the correct disposal of green waste.

The inspection also identified the need to carry out tree works to the north and west boundary, with eighteen issues being identified in total and eleven being on the river. Debate centred around the benefit of carrying out tree works in the short-term offset against the potential financial impact on the Trust's dwindling budget. Councillor Howorth asked what the specific issues with the trees were, and if they could have a potential impact on the health and safety of the reserve. The Tree Officer replied that most issues were on the riverside and beyond the public path, with seven known issues blocking parts of the river. Whilst the river is low, this would not cause any problems. However, there were concerns that this could lead to flooding in the winter. An Honorary Warden asked what the cost of essential tree work would be. It was believed it was around £4,500, but it could be as much as double that depending on the complexity of the issue. There was a reluctance to commit to potentially costly and unnecessary tree work, so it was suggested that the land be surveyed again in the winter, and a report brought back to January's meeting if required. Councillor Howorth wanted to clarify that waiting would not lead to a more expensive problem later which the Tree Officer did not believe it would.

Therefore, Councillor Howorth proposed and Mrs Owen seconded the following motions:

- 1. The Committee noted the two boundary incursions which would be investigated further with a view to taking further action as required.**
- 2. The Committee noted that action would be taken to contact properties which have deposited green waste on the northern boundary and removed some small trees in the woodland.**
- 3. The Committee noted that the inspection identified the need to carry out tree works to the northern and western boundary.**
- 4. The Committee voted to delay asking to approve tree works at an estimated £4,000 to £4,500 to be funded from Cabrera Trust reserves until the winter**

period, with a view to bringing a report to the January 2024 meeting if required.

Voting was unanimous and the motion was passed.

Action: For the land to be surveyed in the winter months and a report compiled for January's meeting if required.

Coppicing Works

The Green Spaces Manager stated that coppicing had been successful, and there was an increase in understorey species including Red Campion and Dog's Mercury. The total removal had cost £3,900 and work was completed in February 2023.

6. Financial Statement for Quarter ending 30th June 2023

The Honorary Treasurer clarified that the estimated cost of £4,400 for tree works at Riverside Walk mentioned in the report had been confused with a one-off payment when devising the budget, and therefore the gross expenditure was brought down to £18,547, and the net expenditure down to £13,476.

7. Any other business

Co-opting a member of The Friends of Cabrera Trust onto the Committee

An honorary warden asked that a member of The Friends of Cabrera Trust be co-opted onto the Committee, to enable them to vote in decisions affecting the Group. He requested that this not be a named person or position so that any member of the Group could substitute if required.

Action: Democratic Services/ Councillor Howorth to look into co-opting a member of The Friends of Cabrera Trust onto the Committee.

Appointment of Honorary Wardens

Honorary Warden Tony Ashby had resigned with immediate effect. It was also believed a second warden may be in ill health and unable to continue their duties, although this had not been confirmed by the warden in question. It was therefore necessary to appoint one warden immediately, and possibly a second in the short-term.

It was questioned if as many as six wardens were necessary, with the Committee feeling that four could be sufficient.

It was agreed to look for one new warden now, and to clarify the status of the second warden. Appointment of a second warden could then happen in the next meeting.

Action: to appoint an Honorary Warden, and for Councillor Howorth to clarify the status of the second warden for a potential appointment at the meeting in January 2024.

Councillor Howorth thanked both wardens for their work for the Trust. Councillor Howorth particularly praised the second warden for their extensive knowledge that had proved invaluable over the last twenty years and thanked all members of the Trust for their hard work over the last year.

8. Dates of future meetings

The next meeting of the Management Committee would be held on Thursday 4th January 2024 at 2.30pm.

The AGM and Cabrera Trust Management Meeting would be held on Thursday 18th July 2024 at 2.30pm.

Chairman

Meeting ended at 16:02pm.