

## CHARITY COMMITTEE

18 SEPTEMBER 2023

Present: Councillors Cannan (Chair), Rogers (Vice-Chair) and Batsford.  
James Cook (The Protector)

In attendance: Mary Kilner Chief Legal Officer, Kit Wheeler Chief Finance Officer, Victoria Conheady Deputy Chief Executive, Kevin Boorman Marketing and Major Projects Manager, Rita O'Mahoney Chief Accountant

Aaron Woods Resort Services Manager and Ian Sycamore External Funding and Compliance Manager accessed the meeting remotely.

### 14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None Received.

### 15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

### 16. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CHARITY COMMITTEE 12/06/23

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023 be approved as a true record

### 17. MINUTES OF COASTAL USERS GROUP 12/09/23

The Marketing and Major Projects Manager gave an update from the last Coastal Users Group meeting. The state of the Stade family fun park was raised as a concern with large areas of the fun park being shut during the summer also being a concern. Other concerns raised were the signage for Rock A Nore car park and the electronic car parking signs and the delay of the annual report. The committee discussed their shared frustration with Stade Family fun park.

Special thanks were given to Kevin Boorman on his approaching retirement at the end of the meeting for all the excellent work he has done with the Charity Committee over many years.

### 18. FORESHORE TRUST FINANCE REPORT

The Chief Accountant reported to the committee that income is currently projected to be a £102,000 increase on the Budget. Car Parking income is expected to exceed budget by £90,000. Expenditure is anticipated to be £19,000 under budget. This is due to the reduction of the cleaning costs that will be incurred because of the new cleaning contract. The governance cost which relates to auditors fees, protectors fees, chair

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allowances, legal and professional in the insurance is going to be in line with budget. The forecast operating surplus for 2023/24 is expected to be £377,000 which is £121,000 greater than the budgeted surplus.

Councillor Hilton asked why maintenance projects and cyclical repairs are being reduced after next year. The Chief Finance Officer explained the numbers will be revised as part of budget setting. Councillor Hilton asked if no parking cross hatching can be painted by the coast guard exit in Rock A Nore car park. The Deputy Chief Executive explained this request will be reviewed with officers, and that this land is in HBC ownership.

The committee discussed keeping the Foreshore trust self contained and to make sure the Foreshore trust does have some distance from Hastings Borough Council. This would include its own staffing and not using Hastings Borough Council resources on future projects. The Deputy Chief Executive explained a report will be brought to a future meeting.

**RESOLVED** (Unanimously)

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**To agree the draft financial outturn position for 2023/24.**

### Reasons

- The Council has the responsibility for the proper management of the financial affairs of the Trust. In doing so it complies with Accounting Codes of Practice and the high standards required for the accounting of public money.

### **19. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS**

### **20. URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)**

### **21. FORESHORE TRUST PLAYGROUND RENEWAL SCHEME 2024/25**

The Resort Services Manager reported to the committee on the proposed playground renewal scheme for the main play area at Pelham. A budget is allocated and for a renewal scheme for several of the larger items within the playground. It is recommended to proceed with a contractor on the framework that's available through Sussex Procurement Hub. Annual maintenance takes place but some of the larger items are approaching the end of their serviceable life. The playground was designed over 10 years ago and the renewal of the playground will make the playground as usable as possible to all the members of the Community that would use it.

The Chair highlighted this is good news and the Foreshore trust assets must be looked after. The play park is a popular attraction in Hastings and accessibility is an

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important part of the refurbishments. The Chair highlighted having a budget for maintenance but also redevelopment of the play park in future years.

Councillor Hilton asked regarding the risks that were identified within the play park earlier in the year. Aaron Woods answered any substantial or intolerable risks have been fixed. Councillor Hilton also requested for different markings for different sports to be marked out in the multi-use games area.

The committee discussed the importance of inclusivity as well as accessibility and for the play park to be used by people together. The committee discussed the time frame for the refurbishments. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that plans are for work to begin before the end of the financial year.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained there is sufficient surplus within the reserves to be able to cover the cost of up to £250k

### **RESOLVED (Unanimously) Amended recommendation 1)**

- 1. That for the 24/25 financial year the Foreshore Trust allocate a budget of £250,000 (225 for playground improvement and a £25k budget for staff resources) for a renewal scheme for the play equipment at the main Pelham playground.**
- 2. To proceed to direct contract award for a playground contractor on a framework available through the East Sussex Procurement Hub.**

### **Reasons:**

1. Pelham playground is a popular facility and important asset to the Trust. The playground and some play items are now of an age and design where replacement and renewal is required, over and above general upkeep.
2. The cost of replacing individual items varies, but products supplied by the current provider are typically in the range of £15k to £25k per item including installation. The cost of replacing one item can exceed the entire annual maintenance budget for all play equipment.
3. The first objective of the charity is to “hold and maintain the charity’s land for the objects set out in the trusts of the charity, namely for the common use, benefit and enjoyment of all his majesty’s subjects and of the public”.

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4. In the trusts use of income and capital it must “firstly apply the charity’s income and, if the charity thinks fit, expandible endowment, in meeting the proper costs of administering the charity and of managing its assets (including the repair and insurance of its land and buildings). After payments of these costs the trustee must apply the remaining income in furthering the objects of the charity”
5. Improvements to the playground, including improving the accessibility of the facilities for users, are a priority for the Trust.

### **22. EVALUATION OF FORESHORE TRUST LARGE GRANT PROGRAMME**

The External Funding and Compliance Manager reported to the committee to provide an independent review and summarize the achievements and learnings from the foreshore Trust large grant programme, which is currently in the last year. All the direct service delivery projects address the most basic needs of survival and access to safety, food, accommodation and warmth in the town. The funding, advice and support project supports other voluntary and community organizations to bring in funding and keep their organisations sustainable and the golden thread facilitates joint working across the large grant funded projects to improve how they identify and respond to the mental health needs. The review found that all the projects have delivered well, meeting and often exceeding targets up till the end of the programme (as of year 2). The review suggests that clearer and more specific focus is put on outcomes, changes for the better, which would improve knowledge about how the funding is benefiting individuals and communities.

The committee discussed how the projects have made a difference within the borough. The Chair highlighted that the current grants end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and between now and then plans will be worked out as to what will happen with the next round of large grants. The committee discussed the need to make sure that the foreshore trust is financially viable and sustainable as an entity, and then review what are the priorities for the foreshore trust and the borough.

The Chair and committee gave thanks to all the charities for their work.

#### **RESOLVED (Unanimously)**

**Charity committee to note the evaluation (appendix A) and discuss any implications for any future Large Grant programme.**

**That officers bring back a further report in December outlining any changes to the programme.**

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Reasons:

1. The current Large Grant programme is coming to a close at the end of this financial year.
2. The intention of the evaluation is to help inform the future plans for this programme.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at. 6.45 pm)