

## CHARITY COMMITTEE

23 SEPTEMBER 2019

Present: Councillor S Beaney (Chair), Councillor Batsford (Vice-Chair) Councillor Rogers and Chris May (The Protector).

**42. WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR OF THE CHARITY COMMITTEE, COUNCILLOR SUE BEANEY**

The Chair welcomed those present to the committee meeting.

**43. TRUSTEE ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR 18/19**

The Assistant Director of Financial Services and Revenues (Chief Finance Officer) submitted a report affirmed and signed at the Charity Committee held at 6:00pm earlier in the evening.

The Chief Accountant presented the report to the committee.

Councillors thanked officers for all their work on this report

Councillor Batsford proposed a motion to approve the recommendations in the report, seconded by Councillor Rogers.

**RESOLVED (unanimously):**

**1. To agree the Annual Report and Financial Accounts 2018-19**

**Reasons for Recommendations**

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.

The Council as Trustee, through the Charity Committee, is authorised to approve the annual report and accounts which must be done by the 30th September each year.

**44. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (30 MINUTES)**

A notice had been placed in the local newspaper inviting written questions. No written questions had been submitted.

The Chair invited questions from the public gallery on matters relating to the Trust.

Mr Dick Edwards asked questions of the committee, as follows:-

- 1. Question:** There has been a steady growth in prosperity of the charity yet the reserves policy still maintains £700,000 in the charity reserves. Is this figure too high as the charity is never likely to need a reserves level as high as this?  
**Answer:** The Assistant Director Financial Services & Revenues answered that the policy is reviewed every year and the charity has been fortunate not to have to use the reserves to this date. When this is reviewed areas of risk are

## CHARITY COMMITTEE

23 SEPTEMBER 2019

identified and this is why the policy and the risk register are agreed at the same time. There are risks on the horizon such as Brexit which cause some financial uncertainty on not only car park income but rental income also. So although the reserves aren't needed at the moment they may be needed in the future. As the charity takes on more responsibilities in the future then it may want to use more of those reserves.

2. **Question:** The elderly are concerned at the closure of the Isabel Blackman centre. Could the charity consider re-opening it as for around £35,000 a year it could be opened two days a week?  
**Answer:** The Assistant Director Regeneration and Culture answered that the Grants Advisory Panel (GAP) are the panel that would deal with this, with officer engagement, through the large grants programme. Feedback from older people has been taken in terms of the large grants schemes.
  
3. **Question:** There is an inequality in Hastings in water quality and Pelham beach is the least clean with the lowest standard. Southern Water are misreporting quality of water tests and making large profits, can the council look at their relationship with Southern Water and prevail upon them?  
**Answer:** The Assistant Director Regeneration and Culture answered that quality of water tests are performed by the environment agency and not by Southern Water. Pelham received a blue flag this year and Hastings Borough Council and the environment agency have been chasing misconnections to improve water quality. Southern Water south misconnection team has also been investigating and are co-operating to stop Hastings falling below EU standard of water quality, which has recently increased.
  
4. **Question:** There was supposed to be a children's water plant facility opposite Muriel Matters House that has recently been cancelled. Was this to do with Southern Water?  
**Answer:** The Assistant Director Regeneration and Culture answered that the recycling of the water and the cost implications attached were the main reason that facility was cancelled. An initial site visit for another site has just been performed and further work to identify the best locations still needs to be done. Other projects such as the White Rock Fountain need to be completed before this work can continue.
  
5. **Question:** A lot of young people have stopped going to the source skate park and are now skating on rooves and in other places. Is best value still being achieved at the source? How many young people are using it?  
**Answer:** The Assistant Director Regeneration and Culture answered that officers do advise on value and everything the foreshore trust does is viewed through the filter of benefits. The Chief Legal Officer commented that money

## **CHARITY COMMITTEE**

**23 SEPTEMBER 2019**

spent on buildings is money spent on assets. The Assistant Director of Financial Services and Revenues commented that the source is a large spend and the charity are looking at reducing the costs of reactive maintenance. There are other benefits to the source such as employment and links to other businesses that also need to be considered. Large events both national and international events draw many people to the source. Councillor Rogers commented that since the source has opened she has not had to deal with a resident complaint about skateboard noise in the car park behind Debenhams. The Nora cup was held recently and many people attended. There are other skate parks in the area such as the one by clammers, the Hollington Bowl and the One in Farley Bank.

The Chair thanked Mr Edwards for his questions.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at. 6.57 pm)