

## CHARITY COMMITTEE

18 MARCH 2024

Present: Councillors Roark (Chair), Haffenden (Vice-Chair) and Hilton and James Cook (Protector)

In attendance: Victoria Conheady Deputy Chief Executive, Kit Wheeler Chief Finance Officer, Mary Kilner Chief Legal Officer, Rita O'Mahoney Chief Accountant

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

### 37. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None Received.

### 38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

### 39. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CHARITY COMMITTEE 16/11/23

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023 be approved as a true record.

### 40. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS

None

### 41. MINUTES OF COASTAL USERS GROUP 11/03/24

The Coastal and Commercial Services Manager gave an update from the last Coastal Users Group (CUG) meeting. The CUG meeting was not quorate with a low attendance. The current lack of signed off accounts creates low confidence in the finance reports. The CUG requested for officers to attend the meetings to be able to answer questions. The CUG expressed a need for more time to review the reports and without this were unable to provide comment on any reports on the agenda. The CUG feel that they may disband if things don't change.

Cllr Hilton expressed the need for better working with the Charity committee and the Coastal users group.

The Chair explained the Coastal Users Group feedback has been heard and will be taken forward by the new Chair after the elections.

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### **42. FORESHORE TRUST 2024/25 BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT 2023/24**

The Chief Finance Officer updated there is a plan going forward which will be further discussed at the AGM.

The Chief Accountant reported that for 2024/25 the budgeted investment income is lower than the outturn but higher than the 2023/24 budget. Car park income is forecast to exceed budget by £90,000 and rental income by £12,000 due to rental reviews. The operating surplus for 2023/24 was budgeted at £257,000 and is now forecast at £379,000 and a surplus of £413,000 is budgeted for 2024/25.

The Chair asked regarding a breakdown of charitable activities. The Chief Accountant explained the charitable activities are made up of car park operating costs, Stade and Foreshore operating costs and cleaning expenditure.

The Chair asked regarding the surplus. The Chief Finance Officer explained the money goes back to the reserves.

The Committee discussed the cost of the upgrade to the Pelham play area and the need to have capital projects as part of finance reports. The Chief Finance Officer and The Protector agreed to review this.

Cllr Hilton asked if there is an update on the 2023/24 accounts. The Chief Finance Officer answered the aim is for the trust auditors to audit the accounts by September 2024.

**RESOLVED** (Unanimously)

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**1. Approve the budget for 2024/25.**

**2. A full Financial and Business Plan review of future years be conducted once Final Financial position for 2023/24 is confirmed.**

**3. Fees and Charges for 2024/25 increase in line with Hastings Borough Council's approved policy (Appendix 5**

Reasons

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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.

### **43. FORESHORE TRUST SMALL AND EVENTS GRANTS ROUND 8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The External Funding and Compliance Manager presented the report.

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Round 8 had £43k allocated with 54 applications. 12 were recommended by Grant Advisory Panel and for all of them to deliver within 12 months of approval of the grant. There was an underspend from round 7 with the recommendation for this money to be allocated at round 9.

Cllr Hilton asked for more help to be available to applicants. The Deputy Chief Executive explained this will be discussed with the Grant Advisory Panel.

Thanks was given to the Chair of the Grant Advisory Panel.

### **RESOLVED (Unanimously)**

**1. Consider for approval the Small and Events Grants Round 8 2024-25 recommendations of the GAP as set out in Appendix 1 (with projects listed in Appendix A)**

#### **Reasons:**

The Grant Advisory Panel has appraised the merits of the applications received for Small and Event Grant support and has made a number of recommendations for grant awards that can be funded from the available 2024-25 budget.

### **44. FORESHORE TRUST LARGE GRANTS PROGRAMME 2024 ONWARDS**

The External Funding and Compliance Manager presented the report. The large grant program which is due to finish at the end of March is proposed to be extended for six months until the end of September and that the Charity Committee then decides the specification for a new program starting after the elections.

### **RESOLVED (Unanimously)**

**1. That the charity note the extension of the Large Grant programme for a period of 6 months until end of September 2024**

**2. That the charity will decide specifications for a new Large grant programme and agree an implementation plan for a new scheme to start from financial year 2025-2026.**

#### **Reasons:**

To provide additional stability to organisations whilst a new Large Grant scheme is developed.

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### 45. FORESHORE TRUST EXISTING EVENTS FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY GRANT 2024-2026 UPDATE

The External Funding and Compliance Manager presented the report. The Charity committee last December agreed to temporarily expand the budget for the small and events grants for established events to apply for funding to support the move towards a reduction in grant aid. It agreed to ring fence part of this expanded funding for 3 established events. The GAP recommends to the Charity Committee that none of these are approved for funding. There will be an open call for this grant in June.

Cllr Hilton highlighted the need for the festivals to continue.

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

**Consider for approval the Foreshore Trust Existing Events Financial Sustainability Grant recommendations of the GAP as set out in Appendix 1**

Reasons:

The Grant Advisory Panel has appraised the merits of the applications received for Foreshore Trust Existing Events Financial Sustainability Grant support and has made recommendations for grant awards that can be funded from the ringfenced budget.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at. Time Not Specified)