

BLACKDOWN DISTRICT SCOUT COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held at Tangier on Tuesday 7th November 2017 at 7.30pm

Present John Lewis (Chairman), David Johnson (Treasurer), Pam Gaines (DC), Shaun Dale, Jo David, Lauren David, Marian Scott, Tricia Sedgbeer, Peter Venn

- 1 **Welcome** – John welcomed all to the meeting **ACTION**
- 2 **Apologies** - Will Bugden, James Lowe
- 3 **Minutes** – The minutes of the meeting held on 12th September were agreed as a true record.
- 4 **Matters arising not on the Agenda** - None
- 5 **Finance**
From previous meetings
 1. David had investigated several options for electronic banking. The CAF Bank (used by many Scout Groups and other Charities) appeared best, with various account options and authority levels including dual authorization. Moving to CAF would also provide the opportunity to rationalize accounts. David proposed a new account be opened with CAF to deal initially with the Tangier Shop and General accounts, with a view to moving the Huish Woods account later. All AGREED. *Treasurer to pursue*
 2. Shaun reported the BT contract for Tangier had expired. He was working with Adrian Ashford (County Chairman) to obtain three quotes for VOIP connectivity. This could provide dedicated numbers diversion facilities hopefully at a lower cost than the present system. *Shaun to pursue*
 3. David reported his investigations had found very limited options for savings on utility bills. Following discussion it was AGREED to look at the waste disposal options for Huish Woods including promoting recycling. *Chairman to pursue with Somerset Waste Partnership*
 4. Huish Woods income was now running at a higher level than 2016. Further work on comparing bookings between years to be done. John to discuss further with Steve Mitchell. *Chairman to pursue*
 5. David proposed spending £30 on a card payment facility for the Tangier Shop. If this proved successful a similar facility could be provided at Huish Woods. All AGREED *Treasurer to organise*
 6. David was still trying to organise a second meeting with Tesco's Community Champion, Debbie Bentley to pursue potential practical help (time and resources) at Huish Woods. *Treasurer to pursue with Tesco, liaising with Steve Mitchell*
 7. David was still investigating the appropriate level of insurance cover for District items at Tangier, namely Shop stock, Gang Show and Archives. He had been requested to provide an inventory. It was AGREED to *Treasurer to pursue*

provide a figure for Shop stock based on the annual stocktake value and to produce a generic inventory for the remainder in the short term.

New items

8. David had circulated the end October financial summary. He felt more comfortable with the present situation than at the previous meeting. Huish Woods income was showing a major improvement over the same period in 2016. If the current trends on all headings continued David anticipated a small year end deficit of less than £5k. The current revenue figures included some items (eg new bunk beds) which were more properly capital expenditure and could be financed from reserves. AGREED the position was better than anticipated and to note the capital item discussion.
9. David had received proposed 2018 figures from several budget holders, but was waiting on details from Huish Woods. His draft 2018 District budget provided for an overall 2% increase where specific figures had not been provided, including a 1% increase in employee pension costs. Following discussion it was AGREED
 - (i) David would confirm the situation regarding Living/Minimum wage requirements and speak to Steve Mitchell regarding Huish Woods figures
 - (ii) To increase the International Events figure to £4k (note this is not solely for WSJ)
 - (iii) To look at how capital or exceptional items were most appropriately recorded

Treasurer to pursue

For further discussion

6 **Huish Woods**

(a) Sub-Committee report

1. Considered proposals previously circulated for the Traversing Wall. A full discussion covered costs, location and the 'free to use' principle. The proposal from Climbing Wall Solutions at £6537.76 plus VAT was seen as the most suitable. It was AGREED
 - (i) that initially the cost would be met from reserves to allow the project to go ahead,
 - (ii) District would fund 50% with the remainder coming from matched funding between County and external third parties,
 - (iii) the Sub-Committee would be required to pursue the latter as per previous discussions and minutes and
 - (iv) the final location should be determined before an order was placed.
2. Considered proposals previously circulated to extend the Climbing Tower and make it more challenging. As this was a paid activity the costs would be recovered from increased usage. AGREED to accept the quotation from RAM Scaffolding at £1400 plus VAT and to purchase additional hand hold sets at a cost of £479.40

Chairman to liaise with James

DC to pursue with County

Chairman to liaise with James

(b) Proposed A358 Improvements

John reported that Highways England would be reconsulting on

the proposals for the route between West Hatch and M5 junction, but had yet to announce the timetable.

(c) Tree Works

Lauren left the meeting during discussion of this item

Following concerns at the condition of some trees, Steve Mitchell had arranged for Somerset Tree Surgeons & Landscapers to survey the whole site and report on what works were needed now and in the medium term. This had identified in excess of 30 trees needing attention. A small number were dealt with as emergency works. STSL had quoted £9,168 plus VAT to carry out all works. Steve had sought two other quotes, but only one had been received at £16,500 plus VAT. Some of the cost would be defrayed by income from the sale of timber. Following discussion about the extent of work required and costs together with the safety issues it was AGREED

- (i) to accept the STSL quote and fund this from Reserves during 2018,
- (ii) to require the Huish Woods maintenance budget for 2019 onwards to include an element for annual tree works and
- (iii) to seek advice from the Forestry Commission about management of the whole site.

Chairman to advise Steve Mitchell of action required

7 Appointments Advisory Committee

Regular meetings were still ongoing, but at a reduced frequency from the summer peak.

8 Youth Commissioner Report

The YC team have been busy lately, with the County YL training weekend and more recently the County Explorer Moot. As I'm sure you will hear from the DESC, the YL training weekend was hugely popular and more are being planned. Young Leaders came from across the county to work together through 5 different modules, also learning about their missions. Supporting this event gave us a great opportunity to speak to Young Leaders from across the District as well as County, to understand how they find being a YL in their respective groups. It also provides us a great network of contacts to help us reach more people and groups across the district. These Young Leaders are the leaders of the future and they are already very aware of what the YouShape programme means for them which is great to see.

The Explorer moot was also very well attended and the YC team took their turn providing both wall climbing and tree climbing as activities at the camp. During these sessions we had some great conversations and a number of explorers were particularly interested in the idea of expanding the climbing facilities. Some suggestions were passed to Steve Mitchell (on the day), who will be able to pass them to the sub-committee I am sure, but ideas included; extending one side of the wall and adding features such as an overhang, to add challenge for our youth members - especially when they have climbed this wall and others since Cubs.

In the background, we are preparing for more visits to groups

across the district, as well as actively encouraging the young people (of the appropriate age) to get involved with the various social media and online presences the District now has. The YC team now also has an active Facebook page which we hope will provide an additional platform for young people to get involved, ask questions and provide their ideas to us.

9 **DESC Report**

The County Young Leaders' training weekend was a huge success. It was a true pleasure to see so many of the young leaders from Blackdown taking part, and as Will has already said more training weekend dates have been out forward for next year to help clear the waiting list!

Explorer Moot has just taken place with more Blackdown Explorers taking part than ever before. Great to see all of the units mixing with each other over the weekend.

Ten Tors training starts soon with a lot of new interest.

10 **District Network Commissioner Report** - Nothing to report

11 **ADC Activities Report**

Lauren reported on the lack of Assessors for approving Instructors for Zip Wire and Climbing activities. In the meantime it was AGREED to fund a course four Climbing Instructor at £140 each from this year's Training Budget.

Lauren to organise course.

Tricia to pursue at County level.

12 **District Commissioner Report**

1) The take up of OSM has been slow - some will not take up the code until their existing subscription expires. However since the November newsletter several Leaders have requested the code, so numbers are expected to grow.

2) There were four 2018-223 consultations. Considering all in District were invited numbers for some sessions were disappointing. The results were

Beavers

1. Offer for 14-25 year olds –ensure clearer links to employability skills

2. Improve the volunteer journey –transform adult recruitment

3. Delivery of a quality programme –digital tools to help keep track of scouting progress, capture and measure impact.

Cubs

1. Improve the volunteer journey –clearer, more accessible, self-service online member resources and information.

2. Delivery of a quality programme –focus on developing amazing section leaders with practical Scouting skills.

3. Improve the volunteer journey –transform adult recruitment

Scouts

1. Offer for 14-25 year olds –ensure clearer links to employability skills

2. Transforming our image –provide tools and resources to promote the benefits of Scouting

3. Transforming our image – brand review focused on providing skills for life.

GSLs and Chairs

1. Improve the volunteer journey –clearer, more accessible, self-service online member resources and information.
2. Offer for 14-25 year olds –ensure clearer links to employability skills
3. Delivery of a quality programme –digital tools to help keep track of scouting progress, capture and measure impact.

- 3) All GSLs/Chairs who attended the September meeting took away a Group vacancy board - the rest are being handed out when appropriate. Hopefully it will help them with their local recruitment.

13 Tangier Management Committee

1. John reported preliminary discussions had been opened with TDBC's Estates Team about Lease renewal
2. Several members reported finding lights switched on when entering the building. There were concerns regarding the closure mechanism for the Fire Door in the main hall.

Shaun to pursue

14 Safety

- 1) Pam reported several lights at Tangier either not working or working intermittently causing headaches to attendees.
- 2) Pam reported HQ were still yet to provide safety statistics for the District. Shaun was concerned as he felt there was an under-reporting of accidents generally.

Shaun to pursue

DC to chase HQ

16 Any Other Business

1. John reported TDBC had confirmed there would be no charge for the use of Wilton Lands for the Taunton St George's Day parade. Pam confirmed the second parade would be held in Ilminster.
2. John was waiting on Dave Mullen to provide the details required under the Gang Show SLA for approval by the three Executives, including the 2019 Show budget.
3. Peter reported slow progress with the Huish Woods website. Photos had now been provided but James Lowe was still working on the content matter.
4. John reminded everyone that Executive Members had to complete Module 1E and get it validated.

Chairman to pursue

*James Lowe to provide HW website content
ALL*

17 Date of next meetings

Tuesday 12th December 7.30 at Tangier (to approve budgets)
Tuesday 6th February 2018

Meeting closed at 9.45pm

Signed as a true record

Date

Chairman