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**MINUTES of MEETING of DUCHESS WOOD LOCAL NATURE RESERVE COMMITTEE held
in the BRAEHOLM, 31E MONTROSE STREET, HELENSBURGH
on TUESDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2015**

Present:

Councillor Aileen Morton (Chair)
Alastair Macbeth – Friends of Duchess Wood
David Lewin – Friends of Duchess Wood
Charlie Cairns – Lower Clyde Green Space
Morevain Martin – Third Sector Interface
Johanna Urquhart – Principal, Lomond School

1. APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were intimated from:-

Iain Wilkinson
Eileen Kay
Stewart Campbell
Stuart McCracken

2. MINUTE

The Minute of the previous meeting which was held on 18 August 2015 was approved.
as a true record.

Matters Arising

Alastair Macbeth drew attention to the wording at Page 1, Item 2, Minute of a previous meeting held on 19 May 2015:

Development of the Wood

Discussion followed and as the Minute had been agreed at the previous meeting held on 18 August 2015 it was agreed not to amend. The Chair reiterated that the Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve Committee had no role in the provision of instruction in any negotiations relating to land ownership.

Page 3, Item 4 – Funding Update/Development of the Wood.

Charlie Cairns confirmed that he had sourced the arboriculture safety survey reports and passed them to David Lewin (FODW).

Page 5, Item 7 – Any other business

Charlie Cairns advised that that SNH had produced further literature relating to dog management and he would circulate the link to the Committee

Alastair Macbeth highlighted that these were 2 separate issues and requested that they remain separate.

Decision:

The Committee agreed that for future Agendas, this item would appear as:

Engagement with Schools and Community

3. FRIENDS OF DUCHESS WOOD REPORTS

The Committee considered a report which outlined the work undertaken by Friends of Duchess Wood (FODW).

Johanna Urquhart outlined the success of the recent Lomond School public orienteering event and that it was hoped to continue this as an annual event. She put forward the suggestion of having permanent orienteering markers in Duchess Wood, of which Lomond School would be happy to fund. This would encourage more casual use of Duchess Wood.

Decision

The Committee agreed:

1. to note the FODW report; and
2. that Johanna Urquhart would provide a short report for the Committee outlining the orienteering proposal; and
3. this would be given consideration at the February 2016 meeting

4. DRAFT FIVE-YEAR MANAGEMENT PLAN - OCTOBER 2016-SEPTEMBER 2021

The Committee considered the draft 5-year Management Plan.

Discussion followed the Committee commended the hard work and input by Stewart Campbell in compiling the Management Plan.

Decision

The Committee agreed:

1. That comments relating to the draft Management Plan would be forwarded to Theresa McLetchie by Tuesday 8 December.
2. That Theresa McLetchie would collate comments and email to Stewart Campbell.
3. That a final reminder would be sent to the Committee on 26 November advising of the final date for receipt of comments.
4. That the finalised version of the Management Plan will be worked on by the sub-group and come back to the full Committee for approval in February.

(Reference: Draft Management Plan by Stewart Campbell, Chair Friends of Duchess Wood dated 4 November 2015, submitted).

5. WIAT FUNDING APPLICATION

The Committee considered an update on issues relating to Woodlands In and Around Towns (WIAT) funding.

Discussion followed in regards any commercial action undertaken in the Duchess Wood and it was highlighted that Luss Estates had been supportive of recent negotiations relating to timber sale. The Committee gave further discussion to the preparation of an Urban Woodland Management Plan and the pros and cons of applying for the grant of £1.3k to assist with the application.

The Chair outlined the LEADER funding programme to the Committee and suggested that the Committee give thought to other funding avenues which may be available.

Decision

The Committee agreed:

1. That the Sub-Group would arrange to meet before 11 December to formulate the initial WIAT application and make a decision on the grant application.
2. That Charlie Cairns would manage the application and procurement process in consultation with the Sub-Group.
3. That the Duchess Wood Committee would forward funding suggestions to the Sub-Group for consideration.
4. That the Chair would make contact with Arlene Cullum, Senior Development Officer in relation to the potential for FODW to consider their position regarding ownership of the Wood.

(Reference: Draft Management Plan by Stewart Campbell and David Lewin, Friends of Duchess Wood dated November 2015, submitted).

6. ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL MAINTENANCE AND FINANCIAL UPDATE

The Chair explained that the Amenity Performance Manager had been unable to attend the meeting and tabled a short report providing an update on routine maintenance in the Duchess Wood.

It was highlighted that there were still tress overhanging the railway and it was pointed out that there were several other trees within the Wood which required attention. David Lewin agreed to carry out an inspection and provide an update.

Decision

The Committee agreed:

1. To note the report.
2. That David Lewin would carry out an inspection and provide an update

(Reference: Report by the Amenity Performance Manager dated 2015, submitted).

7. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

The Committee gave consideration to the existing Terms of Reference and current Membership.

Discussion followed in regards finding another Youth representative for the Committee and Johanna Urquhart, Lomond School agreed to try and identify a pupil with an interest in the environment to attend future meetings.

Decision

The Committee agreed:

1. That the distribution list would be reviewed and updated.
2. That Johanna Urquhart would try and source a Youth representative from Lomond School.
3. That the Terms of Reference and Membership would be reviewed again in Spring 2017.

8. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

The Chair opened the meeting for Any Other Business and the following issues were raised:-

Alastair Macbeth tabled the contact details for the Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve Committee and asked that any change in contact details be forwarded to him. He advised that he had a new email address:-

al.macbeth@btinternet.com

An update was provided regarding ongoing discussions about the ownership of Duchess Wood. It was indicated that Stewart Campbell would email an update to Committee members.

9. MEETING DATES FOR 2016

The Committee agreed:

1. That the meeting dates for 2016 would be as follows - Tuesday 16th February, 2016, Tuesday 17th May , 2016, Tuesday 16th August, 2016 and Tuesday 15th November, 2016.
2. That the February 2016 meeting would be held in The Helensburgh and Lomond Civic Centre.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting and providing informative updates and reports.

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