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MINUTES of MEETING of DUCHESS WOOD LOCAL NATURE RESERVE COMMITTEE held in the LOMOND SCHOOL, 10 STAFFORD STREET, HELENSBURGH on TUESDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 2016

Present: Councillor Aileen Morton (Chair)

Charlie Cairns – Lower Clyde Green Space
Stewart Campbell – Chair, Friends of Duchess Wood
Alastair Macbeth - Secretary, Friends of Duchess Wood
Johanna Urquhart – Principal, Lomond School
Josie Slater – Youth Representative, Lomond School
Morevain Martin – Third Sector Interface

1. APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made around the table.

Apologies for absence were intimated from:-

David Lewin
Ailsa Cunningham

2. MINUTE

The Minute of the previous meeting which was held on 23 August 2016 was approved as a true record.

Matters Arising

The Chair drew attention to the success of the recent Dog event held in the Duchess Wood Sunday 9 October and made the suggestion of a similar event to be scheduled for early in 2017.

Decision:

The Committee agreed that this would be given further discussion at the February 2017 meeting.

3. ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY

Johanna Urquhart highlighted that the recent Community Orienteering event had been well attended and outlined plans for a *climbing event* to be held at the same time as the orienteering event in 2017.

Discussion took place about the new fixed orienteering marks that Lomond School had installed in the wood. It was felt that it would be nice to publicise these and how members of the public might make use of them. Lomond School will consider how best to launch/publicise in the Spring.

The Chair suggested that an invitation to attend a future meeting be proffered to both Ruth Cairns, Community Development and Youth worker and Gillian Simpson, Third Sector Interface to provide more information on the GIVE youth volunteering programme.

Decision:

The Committee agreed:-

1. To note the updates, and
2. That Lomond School will consider a possible "launch" event for community orienteering in the spring.
3. That both Ruth Cairns and Gillian Simpson would be invited to attend a future meeting to provide general information on the GIVE youth volunteering programme

4. FRIENDS OF DUCHESS WOOD REPORTS

The Committee considered a report which provided an update and outlined the recent work undertaken by Friends of Duchess Wood (FODW). Discussion followed and Alastair Macbeth tabled the Annual Financial report. In addition, Stewart Campbell drew attention to several other issues which included:-

- Erection of a willow fence at the Ponds
- Damage to the culvert and the need for the investigation of the cost of remedial work

Johanna Urquhart advised the Committee of the recent appointment of Keith Robertson, the new Facilities and Estates Manager at Lomond School.

Decision

The Committee agreed to note and endorse the actions which were noted within the report.

Reference: Friends of Duchess Wood by Stewart Campbell, Chair Friends of Duchess Wood (dated November 2016, submitted).

5. FIVE-YEAR MANAGEMENT PLAN - OCTOBER 2016-SEPTEMBER 2021

The Committee were advised that the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee had approved the finalised 5-year Management Plan at the Area Committee meeting held on 11 October 2016.

Decision

The Committee agreed:-

1. That the Management Plan would be amended to reflect that this was the final version which had received approval at the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee on 11 October 2016; and
2. That an electronic version of the Management Plan would be emailed to Committee members.

6. WIAT FUNDING APPLICATION

Charlie Cairns updated the Committee on the progress of the Woodlands In and Around Towns (WIAT) application. He highlighted that a more detailed mapping exercise would need to be undertaken by the sub-group in order to progress the application. The final version of which would accompany the application.

The Committee discussed the possibility of exploring further funding avenues and it was agreed that the WIAT application was the most appropriate one.

Stewart Campbell updated the Committee on the status and progress of the forthcoming Duchess Wood *thinning exercise* scheduled for 8th and 9th December. He advised that if this exercise proved to be a success, then it could be taken forward as a woodland management measure. Simon Lockwood, Lockwood Forest Services would be able to advise further on this.

He highlighted that there would be the opportunity for the public to purchase wood for fuel on Saturday, 10 December and this would be advertised accordingly. Also, the FODW have 50 Scots pines and other mixed saplings which will be planted in due course.

Decision

The Committee agreed:-

1. To note the update on both the WIAT application and the Duchess Wood Thinning Exercise; and
2. That Charlie Cairns would make contact with the sub-group members to schedule a further meeting(s) in order to progress and submit the WIAT application.

7. ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL MAINTENANCE AND FINANCIAL UPDATE

There was no representative from Amenity Services and the Chair asked the Committee for any issues which she would relay to the Amenity Performance Manager.

The Committee highlighted the following:-

- Remedial work which was need at the bridge/culvert
- Issue of overhanging trees at the garages which were still to be resolved.

Decision

The Committee agreed that the Chair would review the issues which had been pointed out with the Amenity Performance Manager to determine if it was realistic for these to be progressed.

8. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

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

Alastair Macbeth commended the current model of the Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve Committee and suggested that this was taken forward to a public meeting which was being held on 13 December by Helensburgh Community Council.

The Committee agreed that they did not have any objection to this. However, in the present climate of reduced budgetary funding, caution should be exercised as Argyll and Bute Council could not provide a resource to accommodate similar requests to other local groups or organisations who may wish to replicate this model.

Stewart Campbell highlighted operational issues with the existing camera trap in the Duchess Wood. He asked if there was any relevant expertise within the Committee who could assist him in this matter. It was noted that despite technical difficulties, the camera has captured deer and fox as well as smaller animals in the Wood.

9. MEETING DATES FOR 2017

The Committee gave consideration to the proposed meeting dates for 2017.

Decision:

The Committee agreed the meeting dates for 2017 as follows:-

Wednesday, 22 February 2017	-	Lomond School
Tuesday, 16 May 2017	-	Helensburgh and Lomond Civic Centre
Tuesday, 22 August 2017	-	Lomond School
Tuesday, 21 November 2017	-	Helensburgh and Lomond Civic Centre

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and to Johanna Urquhart for hosting the meeting.