



TEL 01491 573535
EMAIL hq@oss.org.uk
WEB www.oss.org.uk

**Minutes of the twenty-seventh meeting of the Board of Trustees of
the Open Spaces Society held at 12 noon on Thursday 15 December 2016 at
Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ**

PRESENT Graham Bathe (chairman)
Chris Beney
John Lavery
Jean Macdonald
Peter Newman
Phil Wadey
Steve Warr

IN ATTENDANCE Kate Ashbrook (general secretary)

APOLOGIES Diane Andrewes

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

122/16 There were no declarations of interests.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2016

123/16 The minutes were approved as a correct record and for publication on the website.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Minutes of finance committee meeting on 24 November 2016

124/16 The trustees noted the minutes.

125/16 Minute 4, claiming gift aid on AGM lunches: Phil Wadey queried whether there was a more efficient way of collecting gift aid on AGM donations, and it was agreed to refer this back to the finance committee.

Management report to end October 2016

- 126/16 It was agreed that the treasurer's commentary should accompany the report in future. It was noted that we were close to budget, and all who had worked towards this were thanked for their efforts.

Investment and cash summary at end October 2016

- 127/16 The report was noted.

Draft budget for 2017

- 128/16 The trustees agreed to increase staff salaries by 2% (RPI) in 2017. The draft budget was approved subject to the approval of the website and Subscriber costs (minute 130/16).

- 129/16 It was suggested that our accounts might be presented graphically at the AGM.

OSS website and Subscriber CRM portal

- 130/16 The trustees approved an online portal for membership and product sales which is integrated with our Subscriber contact management database, at an annual cost of £642 plus one-off costs of £5,850-£8,190 (according to requirements). It was noted that the trustees wanted there to be a single login.

RISK REGISTER

- 131/16 The trustees went through the risk register and proposed a number of amendments. It was agreed that the chance should be presented by the frequency of the risk, expressed as once in so many years. It was also agreed to clarify that the register was primarily about organisational risk (cf risks to our charitable objectives). It was noted that the new section on Brexit was probably more about the world outside than the organisation itself, although this may be reflected in workloads and content.

SUBCOMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES

- 132/16 The terms of reference and membership were approved with the addition of Steve Warr to the general purposes committee.
- 133/16 The trustees agreed that applications for funding from the legal fund must normally come from an individual or group who or which has been a member of the society for at least one year, but felt that this did not form part of the terms of reference. The wording should be included on the form, in guidance and on the website as appropriate.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership figures at end of November 2016

- 134/16 The trustees were disappointed that membership had dropped by 92 in the last twelve months, largely due to people lapsing, and they looked forward to proposals from the membership working party to address this.

Note of membership working party meeting on 10 November 2016

135/16 This was noted.

CASEWORK STRATEGY

136/16 The trustees discussed and approved the casework strategy which had been drafted by Graham Bathe. They agreed to publish the criteria for prioritisation, with reference to examples to illustrate cases where we had, and had not, assisted people. It was noted that we should try to monitor the outcomes and the impact of our help. The trustees thanked Graham for his paper.

PARLIAMENTARY REPORT

137/16 The trustees noted the report on public and private bills from Paul Clayden and thanked Paul for researching and providing the information.

COMPANY DIRECTORS

138/16 The general secretary inquired whether she could be authorised to sign documents on behalf of the company. The trustees decided that they could not give a general authority but could do so on a case-by-case basis.

139/16 The trustees approved the general secretary's signature on an agreement with Richmond Care Villages (RCV), in which the society agreed to withdraw its objection to an obstructed-path diversion once RCV had met certain conditions, which included an application voluntarily to dedicate a new green and a new footpath on the site of its development. It was noted that Trevor Quantrill, as company secretary, was authorised to sign on behalf of the company.

LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS

Reappointments

140/16 It was agreed to reappoint for a further three years Ralph Holmes (Purbeck District and Weymouth & Portland Borough, Dorset), Chris Smith (Brighton & Hove City and Lewes District, East Sussex) and David Williams (London Borough of Hillingdon).

Appointments already approved

141/16 It was noted that trustees had already approved Chris Meewezen (Cheshire East) and Lucy Wilson (North Cornwall) for one year in the first instance.

Appointments

142/16 The trustees approved the appointment of Jacqueline Merrick (Kerrier, Cornwall) for one year in the first instance.

Resignations

143/16 It was noted with regret that Chris Bloor had resigned as local correspondent for Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire. The trustees thanked him for his work.

Reports

- 144/16 Chris Beney and Peter Newman had studied the reports and drew trustees' attention to a number of issues.
- 145/16 The trustees requested that the pages in the consolidated reports be numbered and the reports presented in alphabetical order of surnames.

CO-OPTION

- 146/16 It was noted with pleasure that Mary Traynor has offered to stand as a trustee next year. The trustees agreed to invite her to attend the March meeting as an observer.

INTRANET

- 147/16 It was agreed that trustees should give the intranet a proper trial and submit comments by the end of January so that it could be discussed at the March meeting.

PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

- 148/16 The trustees were not aware of any claims or circumstances or problems which may give rise to a claim.

ANY OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 149/16 The report was noted.

Minute 110/16: Leaflet on how to present an evidence form

- 150/16 It was agreed that Phil Wadey should defer drafting this until commencement of the Deregulation Act 2015.

Minute 115/16: Finsbury Park legal action

- 151/16 John Lavery reported that there had been no progress on our application to join the Friends of Finsbury Park in seeking leave to appeal against the high court judgment allowing the Wireless Festival to proceed. He was concerned that Wireless would soon be seeking permission for next year's festival. He would ask our solicitors to follow this up.

Minute 118/16: British Standard 5709 Gaps, Gates and Stiles

- 152/16 Chris Beney reported that the British Standards Institute had accepted the working party's full update for BS5709 Gaps, Gates and Stiles for their formal revision process. The revisions included specification changes resulting from the Natural England/British Horse Society bridlegate trials in York.

REVIEW OF MEETING

- 153/16 The trustees were content with the meeting.

MEETINGS IN 2017

154/16 These would be on Thursday 9 March at 12 noon, Thursday 8 June at 12 noon, Thursday 6 July (immediately after the AGM), Thursday 28 September at 12 noon and Thursday 7 December at 12 noon at Friends House, London.

The meeting closed at 3 pm.

GMB

