

Present:

Trustees: Judie Hodsdon (JH), Fiona Clarke (FC), Paul Benfield (PB), Chris Archibald (CA), Adrian Allen (AA), Andy Hopkins (AH), Philippa Howell (PH), Sandy Marshall (SM), David Richards (DR), Henry Williams (HW)

Non-voting representatives: Dennis Parsons (DP), John Payne (JP)

Observing: Janina Kay

Minutes: Jocelyn Potter

1 Apologies Gloria Jones

2 Minutes of last meeting, 29 January 2019

These were accepted as a true record.

3 Matters arising

3.1 Bench near gates, lack of consultation on this and other matters DP pointed out that the bench didn't need planning permission. JH has written to the Cabinet Member for the Green and Clean Environment, Chris Coleman, about issues arising in the last meeting, but has had no reply; she will follow DP's suggestion and copy the email to Karen Watson.

Action: JH

3.2 Footpath parallel to Tommy Taylors Lane Adam Reynolds (AR) had agreed that this was CBC's responsibility and money had been allocated for repairs, but GCC did the work before he could take the job forward. HW pointed out that the work has been done very badly. JP will feed back to GCC. CA will talk to AR.

Action: JP, CA

3.3 Damage caused by Ubico litter-picking trucks CA has spoken to AR, who will try to widen some turning areas (for delivery trucks too). JP said that larger vehicles are having to be used as smaller ones are having to be decommissioned.

3.4 Recycling in the park DP reported on a plan to introduce recycling to all Cheltenham's parks. CA pointed out that dog urine rots the current double black bins; JP is aware of this.

4 Finance

Finances are healthy. It was agreed that PB should transfer money to the savings account. CA asked whether there was a separate fund for projects. PB replied that the fund, just from car parking income, stands at £7,093. Other money can be transferred into this fund, from the general fund, as needed for specific projects.

Action: PB

5 Albemarle Gate car parking, 12-15 March 2019

HW reported that this went well. Next year, if the grass is used for parking, mesh (about ten rolls at £60 a roll, 10m x 2m each) would be useful to maximise revenue – or a rubber base. CA will talk to AR. JH thanked HW, CA and all the volunteers.

Action: CA

6 Pittville History Works

PHW meeting notes had been circulated to FoP trustees before this meeting. JH congratulated PHW, on behalf of the committee, on their five years of existence. SM reported that four students, doing a project on crime and scandal in Pittville, attended the last PHW meeting.

7 Pump Room Action Group

FC had circulated an update on the day of the meeting [*and CA later circulated a brief report on PRAG's 27 March meeting with the Pump Room review panel, at which FoP was the only stakeholder present*]. FC replied to PB that the new baseball bat, recently placed without consultation, will be staying on the Pump Room.

8 Facebook and website AA and FC are adding photos and notices of events to the Facebook page, and are also posting news of events and newsletters on the website.

9 Past events

9.1 FoP Quiz Night, 18 February 2019 PH reported that the event went well, and was very enjoyable as well as a fund-raiser (making a profit of £370). FC pointed out that the trustees may need to organise future quizzes themselves.

9.2 Cheltenham Horticultural Society Spring Show, 24 March 2019 JH reported that this was very successful. FoP had a table, and many visitors commented on the masterplan and park activities. There were also a few donations.

10 Forthcoming events

10.1 FoP Plant Sale, 4 May 2019 SM and PH have a trading licence and other documentation, have spoken to Scout leaders and are organising raffle prizes. FC has raffle tickets. About nine volunteers will be needed to help. CA will email Green Space volunteers, FC suggested asking Mike and Liz King. JH and her husband will join the team. AH will sell bedding plants. HW suggested a tombola, rather than a raffle; he has a drum and will sell tickets. DR has table covers.

Action: CA and others

10.2 Summer event

HW has spoken to Vince Norville about the idea of a summer picnic or barbecue in the orchard at Albemarle Gate, and a date needs to be booked. It was agreed that Sunday 11 August would be requested. The event might be for the committee only, or with the addition of all or the most regular volunteers. A sub-committee of HW, JH and FC will bring a plan to the next meeting.

Action: HW, JH, FC

10.3 Heritage Open Days, 13-22 September 2019 JH and CA agreed to do a joint talk on the rockery on two afternoons during the week.

Action: FC, JH, CA

10.4 2020 joint event with Holst Birthplace Museum, 30 October 2020, talk by Stephen Blake, entitled 'Pittville after Pitt' at Pittville School This will need to be promoted to FoP members.

11 AGM 2019

This will be held some time after 22 October. James Hodsdon will be asked to give a ten- to fifteen-minute talk on the swimming pool.

12 FoP Newsletter, March 2019 and June 2019

AH reported that the March newsletter was produced early, and that the process went smoothly as trustees had committed to writing articles during meetings. He suggested that all the newsletters should be in colour, for the sake of the photographs (which should be at least 800kb); since the black-and-white editions have a smaller distribution, costs shouldn't be high. He will circulate costs. JH reminded the meeting of a past decision that subscriptions should cover newsletter costs.

AH requested submissions for the June newsletter by 20 May, but ideas for articles and photos (and an idea of length) by 2 April. He will interview the chair of Cheltenham Open Studios, an event being held in June around the estate as well as elsewhere in the town. He will also take pictures of the Plant Sale. FC suggested an interview with the woman who runs the bird count for the park. CA will have drawings for the steps in front of the Pump Room if the landscape architect meets the deadline.

Action: AH, all other trustees

13 Drop In, 28 March 2019

FC reported that this is a trial run, in the basement of Havana, between 10am and 12pm. FC, SM and CA will be there for part of the time. Numbers are needed to persuade Havana that these events are worthwhile for them.

14 Pittville Park Masterplan and Green Space Volunteers

14.1 Green Space Volunteers CA reported that there have been about twenty volunteers each time, clearing the rockery and doing routine jobs like litter-picking, sweeping the underpass and bark-spreading. Work has also started on improving the tatty bed opposite no.38. The lower parts of yew tree canopies are being thinned, and stumps and potentially dangerous branches removed, to protect children. DR has been maintaining the snowdrop bank. During race week, graffiti was sprayed in the tunnel and three of the five lights smashed. Children were observed destroying plants, so Pittville School was contacted and there is now a possibility of children helping in the park.

14.2 Masterplan CA reported that plans for the steps in front of the Pump Room, for comments and pricing, are being drawn up. New railings and gates, on both sides of the Pump Room, will also be included. There was some discussion about whether gates are needed since they are never closed, but DP said that there was pressure to shut one gate to interrupt a rat run. The gates might be lower priority if money is tight. Tarmac will be left, but thought could be given to edging. Trustees were asked to suggest to CA and FC what might go on the two plinths.

Action: all trustees

15 Cheltenham Amenities Groups meeting, 2 March 2019

JH reported on this initiative by the Civic Society to bring groups together. In the March meeting, groups described their activities and (very disparate) issues. JH felt that it was a useful way of networking, and the FoP website could provide a link to a page on the Civic Society website. The next meeting is on 1 June.

16 Any other business

16.1 Fallen poplar HW asked if this was going to be removed. Several trustees felt it was not appropriate to leave it in situ. CA will investigate.

Action: CA

16.2 Travellers in the park HW reported that they had been moved on, but were now in the wildlife area. DP reported that they would be moved again, but a legal process had to be followed. Council officers were researching the strategies of other councils.

16.3 Fate of the cedar tree JP reported that an update was expected the next day.

16.4 Pavement on Wellington Road, where it meets the Square JP reported that GCC will replace the mud and rubble with flagstones and a new kerb.

16.5 Events in the park There has been disquiet that these are being planned without consultation (with FoP or with the public). DP reported planned changes within CBC: an events coordination group and the licensing of open spaces, which would require consultation. A meeting the following week would discuss an event called 'Prosecco in the Park', with a film, which organisers are hoping to hold in a fenced-off area. AH expressed discomfort about FoP being consulted rather than simply notified, but DP said that feedback would be useful in configuring events. There will be a trapeze in the park, near the Leisure Centre, this summer. *[DP confirmed in an email after the meeting that it would be there from 6 April – 6 October.]*

17 Date of next meeting, Tuesday 21 May 2019 at 6.15 pm

The meeting ended at 7.40 pm.