

Runnymede Borough Council

CABRERA TRUST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 17 June 2014 at 8.00pm

Members of the
Committee present: G B Woodger
Mr C Hunt (Honorary Secretary)
Mr P McKenzie (Honorary Treasurer)

Apologies were received from: Councillors Mrs M Roberts and P S Sohi

The meeting was also attended by 11 members of the public, Honorary Wardens Mr Stephens, Mr Barkham and Mr P Winfield, Parks and Amenities Manager

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 16 June 2013 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

2. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed members of the public to the 2014 Annual General Meeting of the Cabrera Trust and introduced the members of the Management Committee, Council Officers and Dr Deborah Harvey of Royal Holloway University.

The purpose of the Annual General Meeting was to inform local residents of how the Trust had managed the land and how its funds had been spent over the past year, together with a formal report on the current state of the Trust's accounts. The meeting would include a discussion forum, during which residents could ask questions of the Trust Members.

The Cabrera Trust was constituted by Deed of Trust, as amended by a Scheme made by the Secretary of State for Education and Science, dated 24 March 1972, and was a registered charity. Runnymede Borough Council was the Trustee.

The Trust was responsible for the management of the open space playing area on Cabrera Avenue and approximately 52 acres of land alongside the River Bourne, known as the Riverside Walk. It was also responsible for the administration and use of the Trust funds. The Trust Deed required that the Riverside Walk was maintained for the exercise, recreation and benefit of the inhabitants of Virginia Water and the neighbourhood, and the open space on Cabrera Avenue was to be used as a public recreation ground for the benefit of the same area.

The Management Committee had been set up by the Trustee to provide a clear local focus for the management of the Trust land. The Management Committee comprised of the three Virginia Water Ward Councillors, together with two Council Officers, acting in the capacity of Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary.

In addition to this, the Committee had six co-opted members, Mrs H Lane, Mr T Ashby, Mr K Barkham, Mr J Midwinter, Mr A Saunders and Mr P Stephens. The Trust wished to express their thanks to the co-opted members for their invaluable help, support and advice. The Chairman stressed the importance and value of this team who reported back any problems. This undoubtedly assisted Officers to maintain the land to such a good standard.

3. ANNUAL REPORT

The Honorary Secretary reported that the last year had been relatively quiet in terms of work needed on site. A few fallen trees had to be cleared from the Riverside Walk, and the vegetation alongside the path had been cut back three times.

The site boundaries were regularly monitored for encroachments from neighbouring properties and one such encroachment was currently being dealt with.

The Honorary Secretary thanked the co-opted members – Mrs H Lane, Mr T Ashby, Mr K Barkham, Mr J Midwinter, Mr A Saunders and Mr P Stephens on behalf of Runnymede Borough Council's Parks Team. Their continued help and support was very much appreciated.

4. TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014

The Honorary Treasurer presented the Trust's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2014.

The statement of Financial Activity showed a deficit in the year of £12,970. This was offset against increase in the market value of the external investments of £15,279, which resulted in an increase to the fund balance of £2,309.

Total expenditure had been £22,642, which exceeded total income of £9,672. In the coming year, the number of shares will need to be reduced to generate income to enable the Trust to cover its costs. However, it was expected that the yield on investments would increase.

The Trust had investments in Charities Official Investment Fund (COIF) Income Shares and M & G Charifund Shares, both of which had increased in value during the year. At 31 March 2014, the value of the holding in COIF Income Shares was £86,817 and £138,950 in the M & G Charifund Shares. These were held as long term investments and provided a regular income stream, with dividend income of £9,672 during the year.

At 31 March 2014, the Trust also had £4,400 invested with the Council, on which interest was paid at the Public Works Loan Board rate, this produced income of £136 in 2013/14. This investment was decreased from £17,400 to £4,400 to cover the cash outflow on its operations.

The Balance Sheet showed an overall fund balance of £230,507 at 31 March 2014.

Details of the maintenance works undertaken on both Cabrera Open Space and the Riverside Walk area was noted.

In response to a question regarding the sustainability of Trust funds the Honorary Treasurer confirmed that based on the current levels of expenditure, Trust funds should last for 10-15 years, although this was dependent upon the amount of required maintenance work. In addition, Officers actively pursued sources of grant funding in order to protect investments.

5. ANNUAL INSPECTION OF THE TRUST'S LANDS

This year the Annual Inspection of the Trust land took place on 7 May 2014 and was attended by Councillor Woodger, Mrs H Lane, Mr T Ashby, Mr K Barkham, and Mr J Midwinter, together with four Council Officers.

Riverside Walk

The following points had been recorded during the inspection:

- A tree had fallen by the entrance due to the strong winds. However, this had provided an opportunity to divert the path slightly so walkers were taken away from a wet area.
- Funding was still being sought for re-routing a section of the boardwalk.
- The stone filled wire cages (gabions) below the upstream bridge continued to be successful.
- A considerable amount of 'Skunk Cabbage' had been dealt with last year through the application of herbicide. However, 3 or 4 patches remained and would be treated this year.
- A large amount of Himalayan Balsam had been removed last June, but there was a lot of this present elsewhere on site and Officers would need to consider how this could be dealt with.

- A small tree had fallen and was slightly obstructing the footpath. This would be cleared.
- The fence adjacent to the station path was falling. Council Officers would liaise with the Railway Authorities, who were responsible for the fence.
- The dip in the station path, as previously noted, remained. Both Council Officers and a member of the Management Committee had been in communication with Surrey County Council regarding getting the dip levelled.
- Funding was still awaited for replacement of the footbridge. All boards were now in need of replacing due to deterioration. The cost of this would be substantial. The structure of the footbridge, however, remained sound.
- The information panels in the notice boards at both entrances still needed replacing.

Cabrera Open Space

- The open space was noted to be in good order, with no litter or graffiti, and all trees were also in good order.

6. PRESENTATION BY GUEST SPEAKER

'Stag Beetles' by Dr Deborah Harvey, Royal Holloway University.

Dr Harvey gave a presentation on the life cycle and habitat of Stag Beetles and reported on a monitoring scheme, which she had developed. An informative slide show and live exhibits were also shown.

The Management Committee and members of the public thanked Dr Harvey for a very interesting and informative presentation.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 9.15pm)