

Minutes of the Charities and Trusts Committee Meeting held on 15 June 2021

Present: Paul Snape (Chairman)

Attendance

Ian Lawson
David Smith (Vice-Chairman)

Mark Winnington

Apologies: Thomas Jay

PART ONE

2. Declaration of Interests

There were no Declarations of Interest on this occasion.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2020 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

4. Stafford 14-19 Partnership: Updated Business Plan 2019-2024

The Committee received the Stafford 14-19 Partnership Business Plan 2019-24 and were requested to approve it. They were reminded that the Stafford 14-19 Partnership was a collaboration of five schools in Stafford enabling the delivery of a large Post 16 curriculum in wider subject areas which may not be viable in the schools if working alone. It also works together to include provision for specific groups of 14-16 year olds particularly addressing the needs of gifted and talented and those at risk of being Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

The Committee were advised that at the Charities and Trusts meeting on 9 September 2020, the Committee approved in principle that it would fund £191,294 for the 2021/22 academic year however due to underspends in several areas the amount requested is £169,029.

The Committee were requested to approve Stafford 14-19 Partnership's request for an estimated sum of £176,319 for the 2022/23 academic year. The Committee were advised that this increase is required to meet the continued anticipated shortfall on income due to lower pupil numbers accessing central Partnership courses.

RESOLVED – That (a) - the updated Stafford 14-19 Partnership Business Plan 2019-2024 (hereinafter called the Business Plan) and 2020/21 Partnership Update report be approved.

(b) the funding request to the Staffordshire Education Centre Charity (registered number 528604) as set out in the report and Business Plan for 2021/22 and 2022/23 academic

years be approved. For 2021/22 academic year this will be a sum of £169,029 as set out in the Business Plan. For 2022/23 academic year the Stafford 14-19 Partnership is requesting an estimated sum of £176,319 as set out in the Business Plan.

(c) Staffordshire County Council's Assistant Director- Skills and Employability, continues to be authorised to approve the release of funds set out above subject to the successful delivery of the 2020/21 element of the Business Plan.

5. Land forming part of the Richard Clarke First School Schoolhouse Lane, Abbots Bromley, Rugeley

The Committee received the report relating to Land forming part of the Richard Clarke First School, Schoolhouse Lane, Abbots Bromley, Rugeley WS15 3BT.

The Committee were advised that the Richard Clarke First School is a community school and has been approved by the Secretary of State to convert to an Academy on 1 September 2021. As part of the conversion process, Staffordshire County Council as corporate landowner and Local Education Authority are required to grant a lease of the land and buildings used by the school to the Academy Trust.

It was reported that it is uncertain who owns part of the School Land, it is either owned by the County Council in its corporate capacity or as Charity Trustee. The Committee were advised that this must be further investigated upon receipt of a response from the Charity Commission to establish ownership.

The Committee discussed that a lease of the site would be more appropriate than a tenancy at will between the County Council, Charity Trustee and Academy Trustee.

RESOLVED – That (a) the uncertainty of the land ownership referred to in the report be noted.

(b) the tenancy at will of land on Plan 2 in the report be granted between the County Council, Charity Trustee and Academy Trust with an obligation for the Academy Trust to take a lease of this area when the issues identified in (a) above have been resolved.

(c) correspondence with the Charity Commission to establish ownership of the land continue.

(d) if the land on Plan 2 in the report is in the ownership of the Charity Trustee apply to the land registry to register the land in the Conveyance and rectify title number SF551798.

(e) delegated authority to agree the terms of the lease and to take such other actions as may be necessary to implement the decision in (b),(c) and (d) above be granted to the Director of Corporate Services.

6. Tamworth Youth Centre - Charitable Trust

The Committee were advised that the Charity own the property known as Tamworth Youth Centre, Spinning School Lane, Tamworth, B79 7BD.

It was reported that currently the site is not delivering any benefit in line with the charitable objectives as it is not used by groups for young people and the site has been identified to form part of the Gungate development area.

The Committee discussed that selling the property would realise the Charitable Trust obligations.

RESOLVED – That (a) an application be made to the Charity Commission to amend the charitable scheme to enable the sale of the Property and the reinvestment of the sale proceeds as part of an endowment in line with previous Charities and Trust Committee approvals across all Staffordshire County Council Charitable Funds.

(b) an annual grant programme to be run by appointed quasi management trustees to deliver against the charitable objectives.

(c) the marketing of the sale of the Property jointly with adjoining landowners;

(d) approval of sale be delegation to the Assistance Director for Commercial and Assets;

(e) fund management be undertaken in the normal way for charity trusts capital.

7. Rugeley Educational Endowment

The Committee received a report with a proposal from The Hart School, Penkridge Bank Road, Rugeley, WS15 2UE relating to the Rugeley Educational Endowment.

It was reported that The Hart School is proposing to commission detailed feasibility project work to carry out the following works:

(a) The creation of additional learning spaces by adding a sustainable modular building to the former caretaker's bungalow;

(b) The creating of additional social space by undertaking landscaping work; and

(c) The repurposing of the redundant swimming pool block that is currently derelict.

The Committee were advised that the estimated costs of these works would be approximately £2.5million, which is the amount requested from the Charity in support of these works. The Committee were also advised that the Hart School considers that it is otherwise unable to fund the proposed investments, it was highlighted that the request was for solely these developments and not to meet additional staffing costs.

RESOLVED – That the Committee approve the request to release the restrictions on spending the Charity's capital and agree in principle to funding of £2.5million subject to the concurrence of the Charity Commission and subject to the grant agreement being entered into between the parties.

(b) the resolution annexed to the report be agreed subject to the concurrence of the Charity Commission.

8. Exclusion of the Public and Press

RESOLVED – That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972 indicated below.

9. Landau Forte Academy - Verbal update

(Exemption paragraph 3)

Chairman