

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

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| TRUSTS AND CHARITIES COMMITTEE 13 MARCH 2023 |
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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
TRUSTS AND CHARITIES COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 13 MARCH 2023
AT 1030 HOURS IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, COUNCIL HOUSE, VICTORIA
SQUARE, BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT: - Jilly Bermingham in the Chair;

Councillors Mumtaz Hussain, Kath Scott, Adrian Delaney, David Pears, Basharat Mahmood, Rashad Mahmood.

ALSO, PRESENT: -

Nigel Oliver – Birmingham Property Services
Rajesh Parmar – Legal Services
Zahid Mahmood – Capital Projects Manager
Elaine Peach – Finance Manager
Sofia Mirza – Committee Services

NOTICE OF RECORDING

1090

The Chairman advised that the meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site (www.youtube.com/channel/UCT2kT7ZRPFCXq6_5dnVnYlw) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1091

The Chairman reminded Members that they must declare all relevant pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests arising from any business to be discussed at this meeting. If a disclosable pecuniary interest was declared a Member must not speak or take part in that agenda item. Any declarations would be recorded in the Minutes of the meeting.

APOLOGIES

1092

None submitted.

MINUTES

1093

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 January 2023, having been circulated, were confirmed by the Committee and signed by the Chair.

RESOLVED: -

1094

That, subject to the above, the Minutes of the last meeting of the Trusts and Charities Committee held on 16 January 2023 having been circulated, be taken as read and confirmed and signed.

**REPORT NO. 6 - HUNTERS HILL COLLEGE CLOSURE – EDUCATION
WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CROPWOOD ESTATE**

1095

Zahid stated Site has not been used in 18 months as a school. Want to relinquish the sight for Cropwood. Report recommends that we hand the site back to Cropwood by April 1st to be managed by BPS.

Nigel stated that we are progressing with the procurement of advisors to provide a report back to Trust and Charities, the appointment should be made within the next two weeks which should give the members of the committee position on the future uses of the site and its disposal. Trust and Charities doesn't have any finances to operate the site. Property Services have declined to take it but this is a discussion that Education and Property Services can have. At present have we to rely on education to provide the costs and security for the site. Looking at surplus sites should be resolved as soon as possible subject to committee report agreeing to the findings of the advisors we appoint.

Zahid stated that the site was declared surplus nearly 2 years ago and it was clearly identified that advisors needed to be provided. From an Education perspective now that we have vacant possession there was enough time for the advisor to be provided as they have been using their own funds. It would be difficult for education to fund the security if it was in the portfolio. As it sits with the Trust we would not have the capital receipt.

Councillor David asked the survey costs and asked if we are liable and if there are there any interested parties that have shown any interest in the site. Nigel stated there has been interest in the site, the party was interested in using it as a school. Others were looking for its development potential and we have had a recent application to bring forward one of the buildings known as the Stables. Those can all be addressed as part of the future decisions by committee. There has been a delay in external agents which is down to procurement. Also, recognise there is a budget pressure by education but there isn't an alternative funding mechanism to secure this site.

The position is that properties that Birmingham City Council wish to declare as surplus will stay with the outgoing service until such time as disposal can be arranged. The Trust status does not affect this. Thank education for continuing with the security as there have been occasions on the site which would have been much worse if there was no security.

Zahid stated that from an education perspective will have to take it back to their cabinet member and director as the budget is coming out from the funds that are used to maintain schools. In terms of interest, Phil Andrews from property services is aware of interest from located who are the DFE property who look for sites for free schools. They have been put into contact with Phil so discussions can take place from a disposal perspective.

RESOLVED

- Noted the report submitted by Education.
 - Properties which are part of Birmingham City Council which are declared surplus will stay with the outgoing service until disposal can be arranged.
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REPORT NO. 7 - Highbury Estate – Update Report from Chamberlain Highbury Trust

David Kidney introduced himself and declared that he chairs the trustees at Chamberlain Highbury Trust. The trust is a charity and manages the gardens. Mike Williams is the treasurer and introduced the report to the members. The objective of acquiring funds is to provide a full restoration of both the Highbury mansion and the gardens which will cost approximately £10m.

Since the Chamberlain Highbury Trust was created, the committee was to provide the financial support so we can operate legally. The fund covers modest administration, audit fees etc. Most significantly the funding allows the house to be open to the public to satisfy the Highbury Trust's Charities objectives. Have seen the objectives develop over years in a significant way.

City Council was subject to criticism as the house wasn't open to the public. The report is about the budget for next year 2023/2024 and it is set out in the report. The budget is set out in paragraph 8 and totals £33,300 and that is the request they are making to the committee to approve so they may carry on for another year. The report also updates members on where they are on with regards to the development of a major project.

The national lottery fund has provided further funding to continue with plans, this is in the development phase which is on track. A bid to the national lottery heritage fund is going to take place in August. The delivery phase is where the significant spend will take place. The development phase is not a cheap process and are grateful for the funds provided by the Committee.

RESOLVED:

The Trust and Charities Committee:

- Noted the report submitted by Chamberlain Highbury Trust to update the Committee on recent activity.
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REPORT NO. 8 – Highbury Accounts

The applicant asked for a funds of £33,300 to be approved by the committee.

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Councillor Pears stated on page 12 why has the volunteer coordinator cost increased; Kidney stated that there will be a period in this financial year where we will still want to have some volunteers working on the grounds. The coordinators other funds will come from the lottery fund. We plan more activities and therefore increased the costs.

Councillor David asked if they receive information from Birmingham City Council where you can apply for funding. Kidney stated that the information is not available, however the focus is on the necessary funding for the delivery phase of the project where we are talking about millions of pounds. The £3,500 is the cost for running our meetings and for contingency purposes as well.

RESOLVED:

- Award a grant of £33,000 to Chamberlain Highbury Trust.
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REPORT NO. 9 – APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT FUNDING TO BIRMINGHAM MUNICIPAL CHARITY

Rajesh raised the question of how will checks be taken with regards to the payments as it is very high. Chair stated that the reports cannot be agreed until the questions have been answered. Trustees need to ask the applicant questions before anything is agreed as £10k is the maximum and they should be able to answer questions from trustees. Chair asked for this to report to be postponed to the next meeting. The Chair asked if the applicants could be present for the next meeting as we need to have the ability to ask questions wishing to have the opportunity to ask questions.

RESOLVED:

The application is to be deferred until it is presented at the next meeting with the applicants present.

OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

1096

No matters raised.

AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

1097

RESOLVED:

‘That in an urgent situation between meetings, the Chairman jointly with the relevant Chief Officer has authority to act on behalf of the Committee’.

The meeting ended at 1038 hours.

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CHAIRMAN