

ECONET meeting
11th July 2022, 7.00pm
Online meeting

Attendees: Alan Stevens, Dave Barks, Dave Kenny, Keith Alexander, Marcus Wheeler, Sandra Jackson, Steve Ayers, Teresa Verney-Brookes, Tricia Marcouse, Vicky Clayden

Apologies for absence: none

Minutes from previous meeting (6th April 2021): approved

Matters arising: none

Proposed amendments to the constitution:

- BTCV to be changed to TCV
- It has been suggested by CROW's insurers that the committee have a secretary to take the elected body up to three members.

Election of officers:

- Steve Ayers will be standing down as chair.
- Dave Barks has stepped up for chair. This was unanimously approved.
- Dave suggested that some younger members might consider taking up roles, and indicated that he and Sandra had discussed her becoming co-chair, to which she had agreed. This was unanimously approved.
- Alan accepted to continuing as treasurer. This was unanimously approved.
- Dave indicated that he and Marcus had discussed him becoming secretary, to which Marcus had agreed. This was unanimously approved.

Econet: What is it? In previous e-mails Alan has raised a number of issues. These have included:

- The need to incorporate 'friends-of' groups in a more formal way,
- Other groups, such as Friends of Ruscombe, becoming part of Econet.
- Alan felt the need for a more formal process of organising the activities of those who have merged, or may in the future merge, with Econet was required, to ensure it does not appear to be working as an 'umbrella organisation'. This was unanimously agreed upon.

Insurance: Vicky thanked Alan for his assistance in her taking over as insurance coordinator. She will be updating the details of all the tasks.

News and Updates:

- CRoW: The scheduling of tasks continues successfully.
- Friends of Mapledurham Playing Fields: The orchard needs more attention, and good work controlling ivy, especially on the old apple trees, has continued successfully.
- Friends on Reading Old Cemetery: Teresa laid out future plans for work including maintenance of wild flower areas.
- Reading Urban Wildlife: This is part of Econet; it does not undertake tasks but reviews local planning and related matters with regard to the environment impact.

Health and Safety: Tool talks.

- Keith, to unanimous approval, pointed out the need to reinforce the message about tool safety at the beginning of tasks, including maintaining safe working distances, felling protocols, etc.
- Alan recounted how, due to Oonagh's (TCV leader) insistence on this matter, any time he

- picked up a tool he automatically thought about safety issues.
- Dave mentioned and recommended Alan's recent document on tool safety.

Accounts: Alan confirmed that these were in a very healthy state.

Publicity and Events: These had all been held and proved successful. The one cause for concern was that the Caversham Court buildings were changing hands, and possibly being redeveloped. This had implications for, among other things, the storage of Christmas trees. Without much information to go on, it was agreed to await future developments, and review the situation at a later date.

Tools:

- The Prospect Park storage facility's future is still an issue. Access is a problem. Dave and Keith agreed, in consort with Tools for Self Reliance, to contact RBC about increasing access.
- CROW's tools are currently distributed among task leaders. Furthermore, mention was made of who should order new tools. It was felt that on these issues, and generally, that a full inventory was required, and we could then formalise our policy on storage and maintenance. Keith agreed to organise this.

AOB: Sandra pointed out that with the heat that we have been experiencing, and are likely to experience in future, we might consider modifying the working hours of some tasks. Whilst upcoming tasks have been set, it is certainly worthy of future consideration.

Date of next meeting: July 2023 was suggested, but as and when developments of any of the above issues occurs, we should meet sooner.

Close of meeting: 8.30pm