

Minutes of the Charities and Trusts Committee Meeting held on 14 November 2023

Present: Paul Snape (Chair)

Attendance
David Smith (Vice-Chair)

Also in attendance:

Apologies: Phil Hewitt

Part One

8. Apologies

9. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of Interest on this occasion.

10. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2023

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2023 be approved and signed by the Chair as an accurate record.

11. Nicholson Institute - LUF Refurbishment Project

The committee received a report on the Nicholson Institute (NI) – LUF Refurbishment Project. The Nicholson Institute is held in Trust by Staffordshire County Council and its use is shared between the County Council's Library Service and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council. Leek and Buxton College, which is part of the University of Derby, no longer use the building.

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council was awarded Levelling Up Funding (LUF) earlier in 2023 for the repairs and renovation of the Nicholson Institute. As part of the funding agreement Staffordshire Moorlands District Council would take the role of 'Client' and be responsible for the successful delivery of the project, with the County acting as a lead stakeholder and landlord during and post project.

The lower ground floor of the NI was not currently occupied due to issues with damp, general poor internal condition, and poor access. The first phase of the project would refurbish this space bringing it back into use and provide a segregated new access.

The Levelling Up Funding budget allocated to phase one is £1.4m, which would focus on the lower ground floor works, and would take 18 weeks with pre-construction stages estimated to take 37 weeks. It was anticipated that works would start on site on the 20th May 2024, with handover in September 2024.

Resolved – That (a) For the Charities and Trusts Committee to review the contents of the report and provide a recommendation to proceed with the LUF funded refurbishment project lead by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.

(b) For the Charities and Trust Committee to delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets to approve the Schedule of Works, together with the plans and specifications required to complete a project to the required standards, and to agree a Licence for Alterations and any other documents required to implement these works.

(c) Officers to return with a further detailed update in respect of the occupation and use of the building, once agreed and finalised.

12. Endowment Charities Annual Accounts 2022/23

The Committee received a report on the Endowment Charities' Annual Accounts 2022/23 for the 12 Charities where the Council is the Custodian Trustee. The Committee were asked to approve the Trustee's Annual Reports for the 3 Charities where Staffordshire County Council has been appointed Custodian Trustee.

The Committee were also informed that 3 of the 12 Charities, with income levels of over £25,000, had their annual reports included for approval by the Committee, which have been audited by the Staffordshire Internal Audit Service, prior to submission to the Charity Commission.

Resolved – That (a) the Charities and Trusts Committee approve the Annual Accounts for 2022/23 for the 12 Charities where the Council is the Custodian Trustee; and

(b) the Charities and Trusts Committee approve the Trustee's Annual Reports for the 3 Charities which are required to submit such to the Charity Commission.

13. Exclusion of the Public

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.

Chair