

**MINUTES OF THE FOSSIL GROVE TRUST MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 28TH JANUARY 2020 AT 10.00
IN THE CITY CHAMBERS**

Present: Walter Semple (WS) (Chair); Councillor Maggie McTernan (MM), Elizabeth Brown (EB), Michael Herrigan (MH); Campbell Forrest (CF); Neil Robertson (NR). David Webster (DW); Ian Veitch (IV), Treasurer.

Apologies: Bailie Ade Aibinu (AA), Councillor Feargal Dalton (FD), Fiona McKinnon (FM)

1. Notice.

The Chairman apologised for the late submission of the Agenda and papers. Essential material had arrived a short time before the meeting.

2. Minute of the Meeting on 29th October 2019.

This was approved subject to the following addition: Add at the end of paragraph 6: "CF undertook to clarify directly with the Heritage Fund their position following their refusal."

3. Declaration of Amendment to Trust Deed.

The meeting noted the copy Extract Registered Declaration of Amendment to Trust Deed and the updated version of the Trust Deed submitted to OSCR. The Chairman was authorised to present the updated version for registration certified by three trustees.

4. Bank Account

IV explained that a new bank account would be opened when formalities for all trustees had been given to RBS. Meantime expenditure was being paid by the City Council.

5. Financial Report

The trustees noted from the Report from City of Glasgow Council, which was tabled, that the gain in value of the investments for the period from 01.04.2019 to 07.01.2020 was £21,042 and that the value of the investments on the latter date was £386,048. The trustees also noted the Report from Ruffer on the LF Ruffer Absolute Return Fund.

6. Report from GCC Neighbourhoods and Sustainability.

This tabled report stated that Opening time this year would be from 11th April to 18th October from noon to 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays. Staffing would be by Park Rangers. Meetings of a short life working group were proposed.

7. Priority Building Repairs

DW spoke to his report. The new lighting was installed and was a great improvement although it highlighted the unsatisfactory state of the building as well as the fossils. The roof clean had exposed leaks. A price was being obtained for the additional work in repairing these. This would be sent to the trustees by email for decision on whether to carry them out. The price for drainage works was dependent on what the excavation revealed. Ken Robertson had put a budget figure of £10K on them. The works was essential. The trustees relied on the discretion of DW. He will keep the trustees informed. The trustees approved the refund to him of his expenditure of £217.77 and also the invoices submitted to date by Ken Robertson.

8. Report to SNH and reclassification.

The trustees noted the correspondence with SNH. A further email had been received from SNH and sent to the trustees on Monday afternoon. This confirmed that SNH considered that the fossil features of the SSSI were in unfavourable condition and partially destroyed.

9. Future of Fossil Grove.

The paper produced by DW had been prepared without his being aware of the follow up meeting between CF and Meghan Brathwaite of the Heritage Fund. DW therefore asked that CF make his report of that meeting. CF produced a written report of the meeting and a proposal both of which are attached to this minute. It was recognised that responsibility for Fossil Grove lies with the owner. There were three main recommendations:

- Inadequate partnership support from the owner leading to the need to transfer responsibility for the SSSI to another acceptable responsible body.
- The present owner must make a contribution to ongoing maintenance cost
- The arrangement for management of the site over a 25 year period must have as a principal objective that it can be handed to an experienced and responsible body such as Glasgow Life at the end of that period.

If these requirements were met, an application should be made to a different fund for a development or pilot project which would fund the preliminary stages including obtaining the required professional advice as well as doing preservation work. If that were successful it would support a further application to fund the main works. The approval period for this preliminary application was 8 weeks. The Architectural Heritage Fund would be approached.

The November Climate Change Conference would be a suitable target date for completion of the development phase.

MM said that a short term solution was needed. She agreed with the need for a development phase. A partnership with Victoria Park Community Trust was needed. She thought that discussions with HF and other potential funders should involve other trustees in addition. She and EB said that volunteering schemes were difficult to organise. That needed to be taken into account. In the preparatory work the question would arise as to whether there should be a new building or a refurbishment of the existing building. Professional advice would be needed as to whether the existing building was capable of supporting the needs of maintaining and exhibiting the fossils adequately with the benefit of new technology and without the need for onsite staff in attendance whilst the exhibition was open.

The email from Seumas Connolly dated 24th January was considered. It proposed a short life working group with four meetings. It gave no indication that there was any change in the position regarding absence of funds, the neglect that had caused the reclassification of the status of the SSSI or the known position of Glasgow Life.

A partnership between the Fossil Grove Trust and the Victoria Park Community Trust might be formed to take over responsibility for Fossil Grove. That partnership would need to form a company accountable to them and having directors with the skills needed to ensure that an appropriate project which was fundable and required very low maintenance costs was properly designed and delivered. MH is the Chairman of VPCT.

The trustees concluded that it was necessary to take the matter to a political level. MM said that she would discuss it with Councillor Anna Richardson,

10. Future Meeting Dates.

5th May 2020 (changed from 28th April 2020)

25th August 2020

27th October 2020

Prepared by Walter Semple on 29th January 2020.