

**LOWER CENTRAL GARDENS TRUST BOARD  
9 October 2017**

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

**ELECTED MEMBERS:** Councillor Robert Chapman - Chairman; Councillors Ian Lancashire, Pat Oakley, David Smith.

**CO-OPTED MEMBERS:** Dr. Bernard Uzzell - Vice-Chairman, Mr Roger Boon, Mrs Rebecca Newnham.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:**

Andrew Emery	Resort Development & Strategic Planning Manager
Michael Rowland	Head of Parks Development
Mark Smith	Service Director - Tourism
Stephen White	Company Accountant

The meeting commenced at 2.00 p.m.

**Note:** To see a copy of the public reports that were considered by the Trust Board at this meeting please visit:

<https://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/councildemocratic/CouncilMeetings/CommitteeMeetings/lowercentralgardenstrustboard/2017/10/09/lowercentralgardenstrustboard09-oct-2017.aspx>

**SECTION I - BUSINESS RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL**

No Items

**SECTION II - BUSINESS DECIDED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

**19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests or other interests by Members on the Board.

**20. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**DECISION MADE:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2017 be agreed and signed by the Chairman.

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It was noted that there were no public questions, deputation or petitions to present at this meeting.

**22. PIER APPROACH - WORKS UPDATE**

The Resort Development & Strategic Planning Manager presented some visual images of the work about to commence at Pier Approach - Phase 2. The funds have been in place since 2015 which has come from the Government's Coastal Communities Fund and the Department for Local Government's profits from crown state licenses for wind farms and dredging. The works will include hard landscaping, street furniture and new to us, semi-submerged storage bins, primarily for use by the businesses. The public will still have access throughout the works, which will continue until early March and low fencing will be used to ensure it's clear that the businesses are all open as usual throughout the works. It was reported that Wessex Water will additionally be undertaking work at the same time to the underside of the flyover.

Members asked questions on how the bins worked, whether the businesses on the Pier were involved in the planning of the works, the surface being used, the work being undertaken under the flyover and the long-term plans for the leisure facilities at pier approach.

**DECISION MADE:**

That the verbal update on the work at pier approach be received and noted.

**23. EVENT UPDATE**

The Service Director for Tourism reported on the future of Candlelit nights. It was explained at the last meeting that the Council were hoping to secure a Heritage Lottery Fund bid for £10,000 to fund the event for 2017, however this did not materialise. The Council therefore used the advised fall-back of using some residual money to fund a smaller-scale event. Unfortunately, the weather was not great for a few of the weeks, so it was hard to see if the revised format was successful or not. For 2018, there is no budget for the event, so the Council is looking to see if they can secure any external commercial backing for the event to continue. An updated will be provided in the New Year, as it is a popular event that the Council would like to continue running.

Members asked questions if BH2 catering venues would financially support the event, it was confirmed that this is an avenue being investigated.

An update was given on Christmas 2017 plans, which includes moving the ice rink to the area the Balloon occupied previously. The main rink will be larger than last year and there will be a second, smaller rink for children/less confident skaters to use. It was reported that the build will start on 30 October for it to be in operation 14/15 November. It was advised that the build team are working closely with the

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Parks team to ensure the build is done without any un-necessary impact to the gardens. It was assured that the ice rink site overall was no larger than in previous years and the Head of Parks Development was asked to circulate a link to the plans to Members of the Board.

A discussion took place on the planning application for the rink and assurances were given that the progress is on-track and on-time. The Service Director for Tourism was asked to follow this up to ensure all is in order.

Discussion took place with regards to the damage to the grass from the Balloon site and the ice rink and the choice of seeding grass rather than re-turfing. The Board were given assurance that the Parks Team take the most appropriate option to avoid too much of the gardens being out of use for too long and that they are working closely with this year's ice rink contractor to try and avoid the grass dying off under the rink. It was clarified that the Parks Team undertake any repair work from a deposit paid by the contractor.

An update was provided with regards to Christmas 2017 - more trees would be wrapped with lights in the gardens. Other events were highlighted, but these would be in other areas of the Town. The Christmas light switch-on was advised as being Friday, 17 November from 6:30 - 7:30 pm. It was also advised that there is a different supplier providing the Christmas market who will offer a different style to the market.

The Service Director for Tourism briefly updated the Board on Christmas for 2018-2022 in that the funding is in place, an investors group will be set-up (mainly the BID and the Council) to manage the arrangements. Tenders are currently out for the supply of materials. The Lower Gardens will be a hub for the celebrations and the Board will be advised of all information coming forward. It was advised that further comprehensive information will be provided at the Board's next meeting.

**DECISION MADE:**

That the verbal updates on the candlelight nights, the ice rink and Christmas 2017 plans be received and noted. It was agreed that the Head of Parks Development would circulate links to the ice rink plans to all Members of the Board. It was agreed for the Board to receive a comprehensive update on the plans for Christmas 2018-22 at the next meeting.

**24. FINANCIAL UPDATE REPORT - DRAFT ACCOUNTS 2016/17**

The Company Accountant presented the draft accounts (figures only) for 2016/17. He noted that the layout is similar to the previous year and that they are subject to change as they have not yet been audited internally or externally yet. He drew Members attention to the key items highlighted within his covering report.

It was advised that the donated services were predominantly for the repairs to the Pavilion and the donated assets were from the Westover Gardens kiosk and the expenses for the Festival of Light. Attention was drawn to a net revaluation for the Pavilion theatre car park and the Continental Coffee Bar in the Lower Gardens.

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Overall, it was highlighted that the donated services received were increased from £222,209 in 2015/16 to £615,529 in 2016/17.

It was highlighted that the final accounts would be brought to the January meeting of the Board for approval as the final accounts need to be submitted to the Charities Commission by 31 January 2018 at the latest.

Questions were asked by Members of the Trust Board to clarify their understanding of the accounts presented and answers were provided. An anomaly was noted of a listing of “deckchairs”, which should in fact read as “the Art Exhibition”.

It was advised by the company accountant that the overall figures, putting the donated services aside, were broadly similar from 2015/2016 to 2016/2017 for income and expenditure. The Company Accountant advised members to contact him directly after the meeting if there were any items Members didn't understand or needed further clarification on.

The figure of £18,300 for the “Illuminations - candles” was queried and the Service Director for Tourism advised that he would circulate a note to members to clarify the figure and inclusions after the meeting.

The significant increase in cost this year for the Bandstand was queried and the Head of Parks Development advised he thought this was for redecoration. The Company accountant is to confirm this to members after the meeting.

One Member queried if they could have a budget to decide how to spend funds in future rather than retrospectively look at events in the past. Another advised they would like to see more bands playing in the bandstand and being able to pay the bands from a fund would assist this. The Head of Parks Development advised he thinks the bands are not allowed to collect in the gardens due to a bylaw on the gardens. Discussion took place on covering their travel expenses and it was agreed that the Head of Parks Operations will look into this further and revert back at the next meeting.

Discussion took place on the Board having a set figure to use imaginatively without going to the Council for funds. It was noted that a large proportion of costs were for the maintenance of the gardens. Discussion then moved on to strategy for the gardens and what the Board would like to see going forward. The Head of Parks Development offered to circulate the Lower Gardens Management Plan (written in 2011), Lower Gardens Master Plan (which came via the Board in 2015) and Lower Gardens Event Plan and to arrange a special meeting for the Board to discuss these items, in tandem with looking at visitor surveys to then set new priorities if necessary.

**DECISION MADE:**

That the Trust Board note the draft accounts for 2016/17 and agreed to receive an email from the Service Director for Tourism with regards to the “Illuminations - candles for 2016/17” shown in the accounts as well as clarification from the Company Accountant on what the bandstand expenditure was for.

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The Trust Board also agreed to receive information on options to increase usage of the bandstand at the next meeting and further information with regards to bylaws in the gardens and any restrictions this places on usage.

The Trust Board agreed to receiving the Lower Gardens Management Plan, Lower Gardens Master Plan and Lower Gardens Event Plan and for a special meeting to be convened to discuss these and amend if necessary.

**25. FINANCIAL UPDATE REPORT - INTERIM ACCOUNTS 2017/18**

The Company Accountant presented a document detailing the interim spend for the 2017/18 financial year to September 2017 alongside the forecast outturn for the year. He pointed out that figures exclude the Council's contribution for donated assets and services at this stage. It was suggested that expectation of the Company Accountant is that the 2017/18 figures are not going to change drastically from the 2016/17 draft covered earlier based on the information available at the time of the preparation of the report

Discussion took place on the loss of income from the Balloon site and confirmation of the plan going forward for the plans for the first kiosk in the garden were given by the Head of Parks Development.

**DECISION MADE:**

That the Trust Board note the interim accounts for 2017/18.

**26. PARKS GENERAL UPDATE**

The Head of Parks Development updated members on a number of areas as set out in his report.

The removal of the balloon and operation of the kiosk were covered in earlier items at the meeting.

The Board were advised of recent cable laying work in the gardens to allow for electrical and communication cables to be put in place for the ice rink and first kiosk.

The Aviary fund currently stands at just under £85,000 in donations and pledges. A funding bid will be put forward to the Heritage Lottery Fund in coming months.

It was reported that initial work to develop concepts and gain pre-planning advice for the replacement of the arts exhibition area, balloon kiosk replacement and the toilets is underway. The Trust Board will be consulted by the architect to inform detailed design decisions.

The Lower Central Gardens retained its Green Flag Award and won Gold Award and best large park at South and South East England in Bloom.

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There has been a lot of anti-social behaviour in the Lower Gardens, especially around the toilet area. The parks staff have been working extremely hard to try and retain standards and repair vandalism. The Parks Team are working with the Police and do not expect to see the same issues next year. It was reported that the redesign of the toilet and kiosk are hopefully going to help alleviate this issue going forward - a feasibility study is being worked on.

Members asked questions about the art exhibition area and the expected completion date, some lights in the gardens potentially not working, the design of the toilets in the area if they are being replaced. Discussion also took place with regards to the timing of the vandalism coinciding with the opening of BH2, where else it's taking place and the days/times involved - no connection with BH2 has been established, however joint working with BH2 and the Police to resolve the issues will be needed going forward. It was agreed the design of the toilets and kiosk area would be discussed further at the informal meeting where the Board will discuss the Lower Gardens Management, Master and Event Plans and advised that this would include all options including purchasing the kiosk already in place from S&D Leisure. The Board are keen to be involved in looking at ways to increase revenue for the Lower Central Gardens.

The Chairman wished to express his thanks on behalf of the Lower Central Gardens Trust Board to the ground staff employed by the Council as well as volunteers who work in the Lower Gardens, especially with regards to their support during the spate of vandalism. HE wished to formally recognise the following:  
Robin Garrett, Rob Stanley, Andy Allflatt, Dave Dibben, Sam Lund, Richard Mortimer, Ted Tremain, Nick Griffiths, Adrian Belgrave-Whittle, Jens Selke, Roger Smale, Simon Alner and Steve Jones.

#### **DECISION MADE:**

That the update report be received and noted. That the redesign of the kiosk and toilets is discussed at the informal meeting of the Board when they are looking at the Lower Gardens Management, Master and Event Plans as well as ideas for increasing revenue. That the Board formally record their thanks to the grounds staff named above.

### **27. FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Democratic Services Officer reported that the 2018 Calendar of Council meetings is currently being planned and that the next date of the Lower Central Gardens Trust Board has not yet been set. It was advised that this would be circulated with the minutes of this meeting.

Councillor Oakley left the meeting at 2.58 p.m.

The meeting closed at 3.38 p.m.

Please note that the next meeting of the Lower Central Gardens Trust Board will take place at the Town Hall, Bournemouth on **Wednesday 24 January 2018 at 2.00pm**. It is recommended that you double check this information with Democratic Services

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nearer the scheduled date of the next meeting in case the arrangements have been changed.

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