

Coombe Wood LTC

Minutes of Main Committee meeting Monday 15th July 7.00pm by Zoom

Present: Rob Gale, Kerry Ono, Paul Baxter, Natasha Sherrard, Donato Calviello, Armand Shahverdian, Tim Hussain, Zak Hirt, Daniel McQue, Nicki Tattersall, Jo Haigh, Eniola Sanwo.

Apologies: Heather McAtackney, Chris Lewis, Ollie Lloyd, Belinda Delic, Ian Stewart, Jan Stewart, Nandini Narayanan.

In Heather McAtackney's absence, the members of the Committee present appointed Rob Gale to chair the meeting.

Lane Project Contractor Selection

The meeting had been called to approve the selection of a contractor to carry out the lane footpath development project.

Donato took the meeting through a presentation entitled Lane Project Approval, a copy of which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. He outlined the history of the project and explained some minor amendments being proposed to the specification set out in the approved planning application to:

- allow for a passing place near the entrance,
- change the wiring from 240v to 12v, and
- use sleepers to allow for the external fixing of electrical cables and also help contain the path gravel.

Donato had contacted a total of 22 contractors from which a shortlist of 3 companies was selected. Companies House checks ruled out one of the three, leaving a choice between Flourish Landscaping and Highcliffe Gardeners.

Donato explained that the fence along the border with Trevallyn Lodge was in very poor condition. Photos will be taken before the work starts in case the owners try to claim any damage was caused by the works. A discussion took place as to whether we should replace any of the worst panels ourselves to preserve an adequate border. Unless concrete fence posts were in place and in good condition, it was likely this would be quite expensive, and it was agreed that this should not be done as part of the project. The issue could be addressed separately post project completion if necessary.

Ollie had sent a mail to Heather and Donato in advance of the meeting asking whether we should have a project manager on site during the project as otherwise the coaching team could end up being involved to help the crew. Donato explained that the works will take place well away from the main club grounds and the contractors should not need to visit the clubhouse other than to use the lavatory. They will know to contact Donato if they have any queries and will be asked not to bother the coaches or any other club member. The nature of the project is such that a dedicated project manager would not be necessary. Donato or other members of the lane sub-committee will attend on site to inspect progress at key stages. Regular communications will be sent to members to make them aware of the project and to warn of any potential disruption, such as if the lane will need to be closed for any short periods.

At the 2024 AGM, a member had questioned whether the new footpath would be used in practice because it is set back from the lane roadway and some members may be reluctant to use it for safety reasons, especially at night. This same question had previously been raised by a committee member. The meeting discussed this issue and concluded the project represented the best solution to providing safe use of the lane for pedestrians. While some members might still be reluctant to use the footpath at night, most of the usage would be during the daytime and the lighting would improve safety after dark. It was agreed that it will be important to keep the hedge between the path and the road surface as low as

possible to ensure full visibility for users. It was also noted that the project had the overwhelming support of members as evidenced by approval at successive AGMs, the survey results (which ranked the lane footpath as the highest priority project), and the favourable comments submitted by members in support of the planning application.

Flourish Landscaping originally quoted £47k for the work which Donato had managed to negotiate down to £40k.

Highcliffe Gardeners have quoted £35k in total, which, although it might be possible to negotiate down, was not thought to be as robust as the Flourish quote.

References were requested with a view to carrying out site visits. Highcliffe provided only an address where their work could be viewed from the road and links to YouTube videos of their work in progress. Flourish provided details of two reference sites where they had carried out significant projects. Heather and Donato visited these and a summary of those visits, both of which were very positive, has been circulated to the meeting.

Flourish Landscaping were considered to be the more professional of the two companies, had provided much better references and were less likely to require hands on management from the club in carrying out the project.

It was unanimously agreed to proceed with the project and that Flourish Landscaping should be engaged to carry out the work.

Donato will seek to negotiate the contract details including a payment schedule with Flourish Landscaping. The final contract should be approved by Heather and Paul.

Any minor changes to the scope, or additional works that may be required during the course of the project, can be signed off by the Lane sub-committee of Donato, Zak, Tim and Ian. More significant variations should be referred to the Management Committee if necessary.

Donato was thanked for the extremely thorough work he has carried out on the project so far.

/End