



## Arthur Hill – Save Our Swimming CIC Meeting of Board of Directors

8.00 pm, Thursday 23 November

Directors present: Gerard Stewart (chair), Peter Burt (minutes), Phil Vaughan.  
Others present: Graham Bates.  
Apologies: Marjan Kuyken, Nikki Gordelier, Liz Hayes, Phil Johnson.

### 1. Declaration of conflicts of interests (standing agenda item).

No conflicts of interest were declared.

### 2. Minutes and matters arising from the previous meeting (6 September 2017) (including confirmation of decisions made since last meeting).

Minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. The 'Light Up Arthur Hill event was considered to be a success, given the very poor weather.

The following actions remain outstanding:

- Provide note of key passwords and location of key company papers to Chris (Peter).
- Review policies (Peter / Marjan).
- Phone Paypal to register the company as a charitable organisation (Peter).
- Provide invoice for webhosting services (Chris).
- Prepare report for Persimmon Homes.
- Investigate arranging a Swimathon.

### 3. Feedback from meetings with Matt Rodda and Sarah Hacker

Tom, Gerard, and Peter met Matt Rodda at the beginning of November. The meeting was constructive and Matt was supportive but admitted that there is little he can practically do other than “have diplomatic conversations” with colleagues on the Council.

A second meeting with Sarah Hacker took place later in November. The meeting was extremely disappointing. Reading Borough Council are now saying that they intend to sell the pool as soon as possible and will put it on the market in January. They have no intention of reopening the pool and categorically will not work in partnership with Arthur Hill SOS CIC. Plans for the new pool in East



Reading remain vague and hinge around the hope that a private operator will put in a proposal to build the pool as part of the tender process for privatisation of Reading Sport and Leisure. The opening date for the East Reading pool has already slipped.

#### 4. Sale of the Arthur Hill Site

Reading Borough Council will be putting the Arthur Hill site on the market in January. At the recent meeting with Arthur Hill SOS CIC the Council encouraged us to put in a bid to buy the site but refused to give any support or guarantees to us in doing so. It was made clear at the meeting that the CIC had no confidence in the Council's process for assessing bids and that, in the light of our experience with the Community Right to Transfer bid and the parallel experience of the Aspire CIC and the Central Club site, we hold the view that the Council is not prepared to seriously consider bids from the community sector.

In the light of this situation, Arthur Hill SOS CIC faces three options when the Council puts the Arthur Hill site on the market:

1. Put in a realistic bid for the site. This would involve a major effort in preparing a business plan, raising funds, and working with commercial partners to develop the site. Peter has followed up conversations from earlier in the year and spoken to Jamie Flatman (Flatman Partnership – local property developers) and Tim Wright (Fusion Leisure) about this. Jamie is keen to work with us on a mixed use development for the site (housing and leisure) but would require payment of a monthly retainer. Fusion Leisure were non-committal but said they would not rule out working with us to refurbish the pool and would want to see the detail of the Council's proposal in January before coming to any decision
2. Put in a token bid for the site. We could but in a token bid (say £1) for an option to buy the site on the basis that we consider it has no commercial value on the basis that the barriers to developing it are too high for development to be profitable.
3. Refuse to participate in the process and publicly boycott it on the basis that we consider it to be biased against the community sector.

Following discussion, the view of the meeting was that we should either put in a token bid or refuse to participate in the process, but that no decision need be taken yet. The matter should be explored further with Fusion Leisure when the Council has published its proposals. The matter was deferred until the next meeting and Peter will have further discussions with Fusion in due course. Peter to also investigate whether Persimmon Homes might be interested in partnering to develop the site for leisure use [Post-meeting note: Having investigated on the internet, there is no evidence that Persimmon have previously been involved in this type of development].

#### 5. Community events and activities for 2018

Summer activities at local festivals were felt to have gone well and the possibilities of organising future events next year were discussed. A number of suggestions had been made:

- Regular weekday fitness activities at local venues, eg the Warehouse.
- A programme of summer walks.

- A Swimathon event as part of the national Swimathon activities in spring.
- Summer wild swimming in the River Thames.
- Repeat of the Fitness challenge activities at local festivals.

Any or all of these activities could be carried out in combination with each other.

It was felt that the two swimming activities (wild swimming and Swimathon) deserved further consideration. These should be organised as inclusive events with the aim of maximising participation. Peter to find out more about organising a Swimathon and to contact Amy Sharrocks about open water swimming in the Thames.

Possible sources of funding were also discussed. Graham to find out whether Reading 2020's 'Celebrating Reading's Waterways' initiative can help.

## 6. Resignations from the Board and succession arrangements

At previous meetings a number of Directors had announced that in the not too distant future they would hope to step down from the Board. Sarah and Marlon have written to hand in their resignations from the Board and Peter has asked whether this could be effective from the end of December to minimise paperwork.

In order to avoid a collapse of the CIC we need to make sure that large numbers of Directors do not resign at the same time, and also recruit new Directors who will be able to help take forward the company's work. We need to maintain a core of a minimum of four Directors, and ideally six or more.

It was agreed that everyone should ask friends and colleagues who are interested in Arthur Hill Pool whether they would be interested in becoming Directors. It was also agreed that an email should be sent round to supporters asking for new recruits, and explaining the opportunities of directorships and that training will be given.

Graham indicated that he might be willing to consider becoming a Director in due course when he is in better health.

## 7. Financial report (standing agenda item)

Cheques for donations made to three of the four local schools have now cleared. When the fourth has cleared we will have around £500 in the bank account. We are solvent and likely to remain so, but need to draw in more income.

## 8. Health and Safety (standing agenda item)

There were no Health and Safety matters to discuss.

## 9. Safeguarding (standing agenda item)

There were no safeguarding matters to discuss.

## 10. Complaints (standing agenda item)

No complaints have been received since the previous meeting. Directors were reminded that any complaints or concerns that they were aware of should be brought to the Company Secretary's attention or raised at meetings.

## 11. Any other business

Book launch invitation: Phil has been invited to a book launch by Two Rivers Press about the Hill family and the National Trust on 4 December. Phil to pass details on to Nikki.

Get Berkshire Active: Roger Lightfoot has nominated Arthur Hill SOS CIC for a Get Berkshire Active award. We are highly unlikely to win anything, but it may provide the campaign with publicity. The award event will be in February if we are invited.

## 12. Arrangements for next meeting: date, location, and chair

Next Directors meeting to take place towards the end of January 2018. Gerard to chair. Date to be selected by a Doodle poll.

## Summary of actions

Action	Who
Provide note of key passwords and location of key company papers to Chris.	Peter
Review policies.	Peter / Marjan
Phone Paypal to register the company as a charitable organisation.	Peter
Provide invoice for webhosting services.	Chris
Prepare report for Persimmon Homes about summer festivals.	Peter
Discuss sale of the Arthur Hill site with Fusion Leisure and prepare a recommendation to the next meeting.	Peter
Investigate whether Persimmon Homes might be interested in partnering up to develop the Arthur Hill site for leisure use. [Done].	Peter
Find out more about Swimathon.	Peter
Find out about organising open water swimming events from Amy Sharrocks.	Peter
Find out about possibility of funding from Reading 2020.	Graham.
Sound out friends and colleagues on becoming Directors of the CIC.	All
Email supporters about becoming a Director.	Peter
Send details of Two Rivers Press book launch on to Nikki.	Phil.