

MINUTES OF THE PENLEE HOUSE AND PARK COMMITTEE MEETING
held in Committee Room No. 3, St. John's Hall, Penzance on Tuesday 1st November 2005
at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT

Councillor M. Freeman (Chairman)
Councillor A.J. Richings (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors D.J. Axford
R. Clark
M.R. Cotton
R.M. Lawrence
P.C.H. Rendle

ALSO PRESENT

A. Bevan (Director of Penlee House Gallery and Museum)

16. **APOLOGIES**

Councillors J.H. Dixon, F. Granger and S.J. Reed.

In respect of Councillor S.J. Reed, it was

RECOMMENDED: that the medical reason for non-attendance be accepted within the regulation relating to members' attendance at meetings.

17. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13TH SEPTEMBER 2005**

Having been circulated, it was resolved that they should be signed as a true and correct record.

18. **REPORT OF DIRECTOR**

(a) **Exhibition, Income and Visitor Number Report**

The Director advised that within the present calendar year, there have been 33,029 visitors which was 200 up on the whole of the previous calendar year.

Visitor numbers for the financial year stood at 24,242 as against 25,118 to the same point last year.

With regard to income from all sources, last year being a record year, this currently stood at £88,634 as against £91,939 in the previous year and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the Director's Report be received.

(b) Forthcoming Exhibitions

The Director advised that the arrangements for the Serpentine Exhibition were well in hand and that she had had the pleasure of reading a draft of the Mike Sagar-Fenton book which accompanied the exhibition.

This exhibition was keenly anticipated and would run alongside the Crafts for Christmas Selling Exhibition which would take place in Gallery 1.

This would be followed by the Richards Brothers photographic exhibition and it was hoped that as with the “Flash Harry” exhibition some three years ago, this would create considerable local interest.

Finally, the Director referred to the Summer Exhibition in 2006 which would be a show of the works of Charles Napier Hemy which would be accompanied by a book which had already been published and the Director was pleased to report that this show would travel to at least four other venues and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the report be received.

(c) Accreditation

Members had been furnished with a summary of the amendments to the Collection Management Policy which had been approved in 2001.

The revision and updating of this policy formed part of the requirements of the new accreditation process and following debate, with particular regard to the wording of the statement relating to the collection of contemporary works, it was

RECOMMENDED: that the changes to the policy be approved.

The Director went on to advise that a number of other policies required to be approved to meet the 6th December deadline, and copies of these policies were presented to those present and would be forwarded to other members with the papers for the full Town Council Meeting, and the Director would attend at that meeting with a view to the matter being concluded on the 14th November.

The policies concerned related to child protection, the Forward Plan and educational development and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(d) Admission Charges

The Director advised that the ticket charges at Penlee House, currently £2.00 full price, £1.00 for concessions and free on Saturdays had been in place since the opening of the refurbished premises in 1997.

The Director also referred to a proposed joint ticketing arrangement with the Tate Gallery at St. Ives where tickets would be sold by the Tate staff as a joint entry ticket, providing a reduction in cost to both establishments.

In view of this and the fact that the charge had remained unchanged for eight years, it was

RECOMMENDED: that the entry fee be increased to £3.00 full price and £2.00 concessions and that in respect of the Tate ticket, the preferential rate through joint ticketing should be £2.00 and £1.00. It was

FURTHER RECOMMENDED: that the admissions pricing structure at Penlee House should be subject to periodic review.

(e) Acquisitions

The Director advised that through the good offices of the Friends of Penlee House, a Thomas Hart painting of a tin mine at Cape Cornwall had been purchased and appreciation was again expressed for the generosity of the Friends.

Reflecting on the most recent Mayor Choosing Ceremony and Civic Dinner, where a number of veterans were invited to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War, it was felt that the event could be used to invite a number of “Friends” to demonstrate the appreciation of the Council for the great contribution they make to the running of Penlee House.

It was also noted that the “Friends” had recently recruited their 1000th member and a suitable presentation would be arranged and the Director would endeavour to arrange press coverage and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(f) Newsletter of the South Western Federation of Museums and Galleries

A copy of the above document was available to any member who wished to have sight of it and it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

(g) Hypatia House Newsletter

Again, a copy of the newsletter was available to any member who wished to have sight of it and it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

(h) Museums Association Conference

The Director advised that her attendance at the conference had been of great value and she wished to record thanks to members for their support and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

19. **REPORT OF TOWN CLERK**

(a) Annual Tree Inspections

The Town Clerk advised that the annual tree safety inspections were taking place and that he anticipated that pollarding work would be required to a number of the larger specimens which were reaching maturity.

Of the 40 trees planted in 2004, only 3 had been lost and replacements had already been planted and tree-guards had been ordered to allow for the planting of another 12 to 15 new trees and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(b) Open Air Theatre Season 2005 Report

The report prepared by the Acorn Theatre had been circulated to all members for information and it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

Members felt that it would be useful to have further detail of attendance at individual performances to establish what did and did not work and, some further detail in respect of the refreshment provision on the nights when the Orangery Café was not open and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the Town Clerk provide the additional information in due course.

(c) Improvements to Park

(i) Sensory Garden

The Town Clerk advised that he was awaiting a final decision on the part of the Penwith District Council Planning Department as to whether or not the creation of a sensory garden would be a “permitted development” or whether a planning application was required and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(ii) Resolution to Exclude the Press and Public

Due to the confidential nature of the next item to be discussed, it was

RESOLVED: to exclude the press and public from the next part of the meeting.

(iii) Tenders Received - Pond Project

See Confidential Appendix "A".

(iv) Resolution to Re-Admit the Press and Public

RESOLVED: to re-admit the press and public to the meeting.

(v) Playground

The Town Clerk advised that he had written to five companies, inviting them to design, provide and install play equipment at three levels of cost, ie. £60,000.00, £50,000.00 and £40,000.00 and his hope was that in the light of estimates received in respect of other park improvements, that it would be possible to expend up to £60,000.00 on this aspect of improvement.

The closing date for receipt of the documents was the 11th November and at the forthcoming full Town Council Meeting, a date would be decided for a Special Meeting to select the design considered to be best value and most in keeping with the park location. It was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(vi) Northern Boundary Railings

The Town Clerk advised that the estimate provided in respect of galvanised railings to be erected from the junction with the Tennis Club project railings, through to the electricity sub-station, had been received and was well within the budget estimate.

In this respect, the Town Clerk was, again, waiting for a response from the District Council as to whether the provision of the railings, to be effectively "erected within" the Hawthorn hedge and disguised by its future growth, required planning consent or not and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(vii) Resurfacing of Driveway

Again, the estimated cost of repairs and resurfacing of the driveway was well within the budgetary provision and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(viii) Open Air Theatre/Education Room

The Town Clerk advised that following on from discussions with the Acorn Theatre, the Director and Mr. Holmes in respect of the Education Room/changing accommodation, it was felt that a complete review of the use of this facility was required with the possibility of extending the room to incorporate public toilets available for users of the park.

The Town Clerk estimated that the cost of improvements, listed above, could see as much as £30,000.00 available which could be used for matched funding to create improved accommodation. It was

RECOMMENDED: that the residue of the improvement monies, hopefully in the sum of £30,000.00, be earmarked for the Open Air Theatre accommodation/education room.

(d) Staffing

The Town Clerk advised, for the record, that, as members already knew, Djan Auberson had sadly died and condolences had been sent to her family and members

RESOLVED: to record their appreciation of the work carried out in the park by Djan.

In respect of the improvement works to be carried out, and in recognition that Mr. Gregory would be involved in the creation of the sensory garden, it was

RECOMMENDED: that the current trainee be considered for a 12 month contract, subject to the budgetary review in December.

(e) Items for Consideration with a Financial Implication for 2006/2007

Councillor Richings referred to Penlee House Car Park and following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk should establish the cost of car parking machines with a view to the installation of either two new machines or a second machine to be located in the lower car park.

The latest machines provide for vehicle registration numbers to be printed which assists with the policing and in preventing misuse of tickets and it was also noted that the position of the present machine causes some concerns in terms of safety in as much as vehicles go over to the wrong side of the entrance to collect their tickets and, in so doing, present pedestrian vehicle conflict and tail-backs onto the main carriageway.

On the wider question of car park pricing, ie. the daily ticket charge, it was felt that this should be considered in the New Year and related to the present use of the car park in terms of the facility which it provides for visitors to Penlee House and it was

RECOMMENDED: that a discussion paper be prepared in the Spring.

20. **FINANCIAL POSITION**

The committee considered its finances to the 31st August 2005 and it was

RESOLVED: to note the position.

The committee also considered payments made in the months of July and August 2005 and it was

RESOLVED: to approve such payments (see Appendix “B” for both financial position and payments made).

In relation to expenditure on ‘Exhibitions Council Run’, despite the fact that there was income yet to be received to off-set expenditure, the Town Clerk advised that it was likely that this budget would overspend in the current year, although such overspend would be covered from income above that anticipated.

It was further noted that, year on year, Penlee House had provided more income than that anticipated and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

9.05 pm

Chairman
6th December 2005