

**MINUTES OF THE PENLEE HOUSE AND PARK COMMITTEE MEETING**  
held in Committee Room No. 3, St. John's Hall, Penzance on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2006  
at 7.00 pm.

**PRESENT**

Councillor M. Freeman (Chairman)  
Councillor R.A. Mann (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors M.R. Cotton  
J.H. Dixon  
R.M. Lawrence  
J. Parkin

**ALSO PRESENT**

Mrs. A. Bevan (Director of Penlee House Gallery & Museum) and Ms. Toni Kirk (Director of Acorn Arts Centre).

**17. RESOLUTION TO VARY THE ORDER OF BUSINESS**

It was

**RESOLVED:** to vary the order of business to receive the report of the Acorn Theatre Director in relation to the Penlee Park Open Air Theatre season 2006.

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to Toni Kirk who had provided a written report in respect of the Open Air Theatre season which had been circulated to all members.

Ms. Kirk advised that in her opinion the standard of performances had been higher than in previous years and there had been an increase in family/children targeted performances which had been a success.

In the context of a very good summer, August had been disappointing and six performances had had to be moved to the Acorn Theatre due to the weather and two performances were cancelled.

A new format questionnaire had been compiled which had enabled audiences to provide feedback and with a larger number of returns, the information would be invaluable in future planning and audience targeting.

One slight area of concern had been about the quality of the performance from 'hirers', ie. those companies which pay a fee to the Acorn Theatre to perform and which then retain box office takings as opposed to those commissioned by the theatre to take part in the season.

At the present time, there is no system of quality control and, as a result of that, the Acorn staff are looking to develop a modified hiring policy for the ensuing season.

It was also hoped that marketing would improve for 2007 with the appointment of a new marketing officer and ways to more actively promote the 'open air' aspect of the performances would be reviewed.

In terms of the future, it was felt that there should be an even greater focus on the family/children oriented performances and there was also a desire to work more closely with Penlee House and to link to educational activities during the summer.

In this respect, consideration would be given to the creation of a project which could see the upgrading of the education block/dressing room and a meeting would be arranged in due course between Ms. Kirk, the Director of Penlee House and the Town Clerk.

The Chairman thanked Ms. Kirk for the comprehensive report and for her attendance at the meeting and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be accepted.

18. **APOLOGIES**

Councillors D.J. Axford, F. Granger and J. Moreland.

19. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 19<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2006**

Having been circulated, it was

**RESOLVED:** that they should be signed as a true and correct record.

20. **REPORT OF DIRECTOR**

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

The Director advised that visitor numbers were considerably down compared to the previous year, being at 21,122 for the financial year 2006/07 as opposed to 24,310 for the financial year 2005/06.

Income from sales in the shop was also down on last year - £68,045.57 to the end of October 2006 as opposed to £71,458.41 to the end of October 2005.

However, with the admission charges having increased, the overall income from all sources was up, being at £93,579.53 at the end of October 2006 as opposed to £88,413.91 at the end of October 2005.

The Director went on to advise that the current exhibition was being very well received with numerous favourable comments being made in the visitors' book and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Director's verbal report be received.

(b) Forthcoming Exhibitions

The Director advised that the next exhibition would be the R.T. Pentreath show which would run over the Christmas period alongside the annual Christmas Craft Fair.

The exhibition celebrates the bicentenary of the birth of the artist and the Director anticipates considerable local interest.

The show would be followed by the Penwith Printmakers who would be producing contemporary interpretations to sit alongside archive material and, throughout the exhibition, workshops would be taking place for both children and adults and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

(c) West Cornwall Arts Archive - Update and Report of Meetings

The Director advised that a further meeting had taken place since the 'Away Day' which had been reported on at the last meeting.

The consultant, Sam Hunt, had been extremely active and was looking at various options for the archive and he was hoping to foreshorten the timescale for delivery of his report to the Spring of 2007 and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

(d) Maintenance Contract

The Town Clerk reported that the maintenance contract with Hadens had now ceased and, in the short-term, maintenance duties were being carried out by the former employee of Hadens who had set up a new company.

The Town Clerk proposed that the arrangements should continue until January when the situation would be reviewed and possibly extended until June and, in the meantime, the company would be asked to review the maintenance schedule which would form the basis of a new tender document and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

(e) Museums Association - Annual Conference

This year's Annual Conference of the Museums Association had been held in Bournemouth and the Director was pleased to advise that she had managed to attend for one day and had also secured a place for Katie Herbert to attend.

The Director was pleased to have attended a session relating to the funding of acquisitions and possible changes to disposal policies.

The Director went on to advise that it had been particularly pleasing to hear Penlee House mentioned by name by principle figures in the 'museum world' and the Director thanked

members for their support for her attendance and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

(f) TRACT Events - Penlee Park and Penlee House

The TRACT events had been organised in conjunction with Newlyn Art Gallery and took place over the weekend of 23<sup>rd</sup> September throughout the park and in Penlee House.

The events had been very well received by the public and the Director felt that there had been a real buzz throughout the park with adults and children engaging with the various live art presentations.

The Director advised that although it was not something which would be repeated on a frequent basis, she had been extremely happy with the co-operative effort between the two galleries in staging the events and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

(g) Brunel Education Packs

The Director advised that the Brunel Education Packs had been launched in the week commencing the 23<sup>rd</sup> October and 25 schools had been present at the launch event and had purchased the packs.

The packs had been created in conjunction with the Royal Cornwall Museum and tie in with the national curriculum and a number of other schools had ordered packs at a cost of £5.00 and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

21. **REPORT OF TOWN CLERK**

(a) Report re. Park

(i) Woodland Walk

The Town Clerk advised that the woodland walk had now been planted with bulbs and seeded with a mix of meadow grass and wild flowers.

The grass seed had already taken and there should be a considerable improvement in the woodland area by next Spring.

Following the flowering of the wild flowers and bulbs, the area could be strimmed and kept tidy through to the following flowering season and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

(ii) The Pond

The pond had been cleaned out in September and the excess vegetation and rubbish had been removed.

The water level had been very low throughout the summer, partly due to the lack of rainfall, but it now appeared clear that there was a leak in the pond lining and repairs would be required in the Spring to be funded from the next financial year's budget and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

(iii) Northern Boundary

Extensive work had taken place to clean out the Hawthorn hedge along the length of the new railings.

The bases of the old concrete posts had been removed and the Town Clerk had written to SWEB with regard to the electricity compound which was constantly covered in graffiti.

The Town Clerk hoped that SWEB would provide metal gates to run parallel to the boundary railings which would prevent acts of spray paint vandalism and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

(iv) Tree Works

The Town Clerk reminded members that there was an annual inspection in the late Autumn of the trees in Penlee Park and work was then divided into three schedules of immediate to three months, within six months and within twelve months and tender exercises had been carried out in respect of each of the schedules of work.

An order had now been placed in respect of the works required to be done within twelve months and the work would be carried out within the next two weeks and the annual inspection would be carried out in late November.

Two or three trees in the park were now reaching maturity and would require pollarding at the least or possible removal following inspection and new trees would be planted in their stead and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

(b) Resolution to Exclude the Press and Public

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

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

(c) Staffing - Penlee Park

See Confidential Appendix "A".

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

It was

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

(e) Items from Members for Consideration in the 2007/2008 Budget Preparation Process

The possibility of building a conservatory extension onto the terrace of Penlee House had been discussed previously and the Town Clerk advised that he had met with the Conservation Officer to receive his initial thoughts.

The Conservation Officer had agreed to sketch out what he thought might be acceptable in planning terms and members agreed that this was seen as a longer term priority which would not attract any form of grant aid.

Members also concurred with the view that the extension/refurbishment of the education block/changing facility would take priority over the above project and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the position be noted.

22. **FINANCIAL POSITION**

The Committee considered its finances to the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2006 and it was

**RESOLVED:** to note the position.

The Committee also considered payments made in the months of August and September 2006 and it was

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

8.35 pm

Chairman  
5<sup>th</sup> December 2006