

MINUTES OF THE PENLEE HOUSE AND PARK COMMITTEE MEETING
held in Committee Room No. 3, St. John's Hall, Penzance on Tuesday 6th March 2007
at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT

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

Councillors M.R. Cotton
R.M. Lawrence
J. Moreland

ALSO PRESENT

Mrs. A. Bevan (Director of Penlee House Gallery & Museum).

34. **APOLOGIES**

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

35. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 23RD JANUARY 2007**

Having been circulated, it was

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

36. **REPORT OF DIRECTOR**

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

The Director advised that visitor numbers for the current financial year stood at 27,290 to date as opposed to 33,048 to the end of February 2006.

Income from shop sales stood at £91,301.00 to date against £93,596.00 to the end of February 2006, although total takings for the current period, to include admissions, stood at £121,978.00 against £121,608.00 for the full financial year ending the 31st March 2006 and it was

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

(b) **Forthcoming Exhibitions**

The Director advised that the next exhibition would be 'Seal's Colony' comprising works by Richard ('Seal') Copeland-Weatherby and his fellow Lamorna artists, with the exhibition running from the 17th March 2007 to the 2nd June 2007 and the Preview taking place on Friday 16th March.

Running alongside the 'Seal's Colony' exhibition would be an exhibition to mark the

centenary celebrations of Penzance Orchestral Society and this exhibition would include the well-known work by Stanhope Forbes, 'The Village Philharmonic' which would be on loan from the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.

Finally, the Director advised members that the 2007/08 brochure had been printed and it was circulated to those members present and it was

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

(c) Acquisition of Painting

The Director confirmed that Penlee House had been successful in December in acquiring the small Stanhope Forbes painting entitled 'Study for fish sale on a Cornish Beach' and the painting would arrive within the next few days.

With regard to the painting by Stanhope Forbes entitled 'The Quarry Team', which had an estimated auction price of £50,000.00 to £70,000.00, the Director advised that the 'Friends of Penlee House' had pledged a donation of £10,000.00 towards this painting which was in poor condition and which would need extensive restoration at a later date.

Members had already supported the Director's efforts to obtain grant aid in respect of the acquisition of this painting and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

The Director also advised of a further painting entitled 'Where There's Life There's Hope' by William Eadie (a St. Ives Society artist) which was also available at auction at an estimated price of £15,000.00 to £20,000.00.

A private benefactor of Penlee House had offered a donation in the sum of £10,000.00 towards the painting and the Director advised that she would make an approach to the 'Friends' for a further donation and it was, again,

RECOMMENDED: that the Director be supported in the acquisition of this painting.

(d) Update re. Fire Damage

The Town Clerk advised that estimates for the remedial works were still awaited and an insurance claim was pending and a further report would be provided to the committee in due course and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(e) 'Friends of Penlee House' - Meeting 29th January 2007

The minutes of the latest meeting of the 'Friends of Penlee House' were circulated to those members present and it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

(f) Award of Fellowship of the Museums Association

The Director thanked the committee for its support and was pleased to advise that she had now received the 'Fellowship of the Museums Association' qualification one year ahead of time and members congratulated the Director on her achievement and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(g) Request for Signage - The Orangery

A request had been received from the franchisee of the Orangery Café in respect of the mounting of a 'daily specials' blackboard on the wall adjacent to the main entrance to Penlee House.

Members felt that the blackboard was not appropriate at this location and it was

RESOLVED: not to accede to the request.

(h) Review of Maintenance Contract

The Town Clerk reminded members that the maintenance contract, which had been let to a new company in the late Autumn following the withdrawal of Hadens, was due to be reviewed in January but the review had not taken place because of his absence.

The Town Clerk went on to advise that the new company was performing well and it was

RECOMMENDED: that it should continue with the contract until June when a further review would be carried out.

37. **REPORT OF TOWN CLERK**

(a) Surface Water - Main Field

The Town Clerk advised that the high level of rainfall during the winter had highlighted the problem of drainage of the main field in the park and, it was felt that the position had been exacerbated by the possible re-connection of a disused storm drain during the recent works carried out on behalf of South West Water.

The layout of the present drainage system was available and the Town Clerk advised that new drains would be laid once the weather improved and, modifications had been made to the Council's mini-digger which were required under Health and Safety Guidance and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(b) Pond Steps - Investigation of Water-Course

The contractor, who had carried out the work around the pond, had revisited the site to investigate the problem with water cascading over the steps and landing area.

His recommendation was to place another drainage pipe to run under the steps into the pond and he was asked to provide an estimate for the cost of this work and, at the same time, to review the water-flow through the lion's head fountain and to carry out remedial works as required, and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(c) Spring Works Programme - Penlee Park

The Town Clerk advised members that the following projects were planned or already underway:-

(i) An advertisement had been placed for a part-time gardener (6 months full-time) who should be in place to commence on the 1st April;

(ii) The Sensory Garden walls were to be dug back and re-rendered and painted;

(iii) The dry-stone hedging behind the playground and between the upper field and the main field was scheduled to be repaired and cleared of overgrowth;

(iv) New signage was to be provided in the park;

(v) Estimates were being obtained for the replacement of the Trewithen gates to match the new railings;

(vi) A gate/fence was being costed to run across the entrance to the electricity compound to prevent continuing graffiti and EDF Energy had been approached with regard to covering 50 per cent of the cost of this work;

(vii) A second car park machine was to be installed in the lower part of the car park;

(viii) Arboricultural works arising from the latest annual tree safety inspection would be carried out through a tender process for works required to be done within 6 months and within 12 months and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(d) Memorial Chapel Roof

The Town Clerk advised that the Memorial Chapel roof had been inspected by a building surveyor and his report indicated that the lower part of the roof-joists were suffering from wet-rot, most probably caused by the defective guttering along the sides of the building.

Details of the work required had been sent to a local builder requesting an estimate of cost and, in the meantime, the chapel would remain closed with the Book of Remembrance temporarily re-housed in Penlee House, adjacent to the window overlooking the garden, and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(e) Arboricultural Training - Event Postponed

Notification had been received that the planned arboriculture training had been postponed and a new date would be fixed in due course and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(f) Staffing Matters - Temporary Gardener's Post and Review of Staffing Grades

(i) Temporary Gardener's Post

As mentioned at minute (c)(i)), the temporary gardener's post had been advertised with a closing date for applications being the 8th March. It was

RESOLVED: that the Interview Panel should comprise the Chairman of the Penlee House and Park Committee, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, Jane Haslam (Consultant at Penlee Park), the Town Clerk and Head Gardener and members would be advised of the interview date in due course.

(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) Review of Staffing Grades

See Confidential Appendix "A".

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

It was

RESOLVED: to re-admit the press and public.

(g) Possible Relocation of the Cider Press

The Town Clerk advised that expert advice was still awaited regarding the feasibility of moving the cider press from the historic environment department of Cornwall County Council.

Councillor Moreland advised that he had contact with a local stonemason who could also provide advice and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(h) Street Entertainers' Competition

The Town Clerk advised that he had received a communication from Totnes Street Entertainers regarding a competition in the park on the 7th May.

This would be a charity fundraising event, running from 11.00 am to 6.00 pm, with each act lasting for approximately 10 minutes.

Associated with the competition would be a variety of other activities including stalls, children's rides, singing, a band in the evening and a lantern procession through the town.

Judging would be carried out by well-known names from the entertainment world and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the council agree, in principle, to the event, subject to further information being obtained by the Town Clerk which would be discussed with the Chairman of the Penlee House and Park Committee.

(i) Park Security

The Town Clerk advised that he had written to Inspector Chris Strickland concerning problems with anti-social behaviour in the park and with a request that the police visit known offenders in their homes.

Inspector Strickland had responded by acknowledging that there were known to be difficulties from time to time in the park and he provided details of visits which had been made to Penlee, and arrests which had followed, but he went on to advise that it was not possible to visit people in their homes without firm evidence of a misdemeanour.

Inspector Strickland would arrange for the Neighbourhood Beat Manager to visit the park and liaise with the gardeners and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

38. **FINANCIAL POSITION**

The Committee considered its finances to the 31st January 2007 and it was

RESOLVED: to note the position.

The Committee also considered payments made in the months of December 2006 and January 2007 and it was

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

8.15 pm

Chairman
22nd May 2007