

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

PRESENT

Councillor J. Moreland (Chairman)
Councillor J. Parkin (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors M.R. Cotton
F. Granger
R.A. Mann
T.E. Williams

ALSO PRESENT

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

6. **APOLOGIES**

Councillors R. Clark, J.H. Dixon, R.M. Lawrence and J. Ruhrmund.

7. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

8. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 22ND MAY 2007**

Having been circulated, it was

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

9. **REPORT OF DIRECTOR**

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

The Director advised that June had been an exceptionally good month (partly due to the very wet weather) but also in recognition of the superb Stanhope Forbes exhibition and visitor numbers at 3,853 was the second highest since the refurbished building opened in 1997.

Overall, visitor numbers were fairly steady and largely in line with previous years showing 14,387 for the calendar year to date as against 16,604 for the previous calendar year.

For the financial year, the figures stood at 8,654 against 8,081 for the same period last year.

Shop takings to the end of June stood at £27,213.23 as against £29,087.70 for the same period last year and the total takings to date for the financial year stood at £37,703.23 as

against £38,864.70 for the previous year and it was

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

(b) Forthcoming Exhibitions

The Director advised that the Dod Procter exhibition arrangements were progressing well and were on target for the 15th September opening of the show.

Some additional work had been required in respect of the book which had been produced to accompany the show and this work was also coming to a satisfactory conclusion ahead of publication and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the Director's Report be received.

(c) Possible Acquisition of Painting

The Director was pleased to advise that a painting by Finnish artist Helene Schjerfbeck had been acquired at auction at a cost of £60,000.00 with grant aid being provided from the 'Friends of Penlee', the V & A and the National Arts Collection Fund. Although Schjerfbeck's work is represented in a number of European countries, there are no known examples of her work on show in a public collection in the UK and nor are any known to be in private ownership.

Helene Schjerfbeck was invited to St. Ives in 1886 and was a major Nordic artist of her time and the painting fits well into the Penlee House Collection Policy of work produced in West Cornwall between 1880 and 1940, and the scene depicted is almost certainly that of a local location, and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the Director's Report be received.

(d) 10th Anniversary Celebration of Refurbished/Extended Building

The Director advised that the 'Friends of Penlee' had suggested the production of a short print booklet based on a recent talk given by Jonathan Holmes about the 'Branwells of Penlee' and this could be linked to the development of the House into an Art Gallery and onwards to the refurbishment and extension of the current building.

The Director advised that a Steering Committee had been formed and Ruth Simpson would be contacting long-serving councillors to contribute to the booklet and the architect, Bob Allen, would be contacted to provide before and after photographs.

The plan was to have the booklet published in time for the 10th anniversary celebrations which would take place on the 15th November 2007 and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(e) External Decoration of the Building

The Town Clerk advised that a written quotation had now been received in respect of the decoration of the exterior of the building.

The quote was in two parts, the second of which related to the hire of scaffolding and, after discussion with the Director, it had been agreed that too great a risk was posed by the erection of scaffolding and the work should be carried out using a mobile tower.

The Town Clerk went on to advise that a tender process would now be set in motion confirming that the work would be carried out in the manner described above and it was

RESOLVED: that, due to time constraints, the tenders received would be presented to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the committee, together with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Finance Committee, to enable an order for the work to be placed in the near future.

(f) Stewards' Reception

The Director advised that the recent Stewards' Reception had been a great success with over 60 people in attendance.

The stewards had been particularly pleased to have a preview of the Stanhope Forbes show and although this provided an additional challenge for staff in ensuring that the summer show was ready one day early, the Director felt that it had been worth the effort to show appreciation for the volunteers and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(g) Major Overhaul of Lift

The Director advised that the lift at Penlee House was now 10 years old and required some minor modification and a major service to ensure that it met current safety standards. The work had been carried out recently at an approximate cost of £2,500.00 and would be covered from the plant/fabric fund and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(h) Request for Curatorial Support - Helston Museum

The Director advised that she had been approached by Helston Museum with regard to the provision of curatorial support and the Director went on to say that she felt that this would provide good experience and staff development for Katie Herbert.

It would involve an annual visit to the museum and the writing of a report and, of course, being on hand throughout the year for advice as needed with any expenses being covered by Helston Museum and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the provision of curatorial support to Helston Museum be provided by Katie Herbert.

(i) Museums Association - Vacancy for South West Representative

The Director advised that nominations were being sought for this position and the Director went on to advise that she would welcome the opportunity to represent Penlee House and this area at national level.

The position would require three meetings per year which were a mandatory part of membership, with the possibility of a further three voluntary meetings, and the cost of attending in London covered by the Association and it was

RESOLVED: to support the Director's nomination for this post.

(j) 'Artefact' - The Newsletter of the 'Friends of Penlee House'

The May issue of 'Artefact' had been received and was available from the Town Clerk's Office and the Chairman requested that he be added to the mailing list and it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

(k) Meeting of the 'Friends of Penlee House' - 25th June 2007 and Minutes of the Meeting of 14th May 2007

Minutes of the above meeting had been received and were available to any member who wished to have sight of them and, again, it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

(l) 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.

(m) Improvements to Security Cameras

See Confidential Appendix "A".

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

It was

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

(o) Conservation Work

The Director provided details of expenditure already agreed by the committee in the sum of £3,915.00 and also provided details of further work which had been carried out on 'Primrose Day' by Ralph Todd, which was on loan from Newlyn Art Gallery and which had cost £612.00, being 50 per cent of the cost, with the remainder being covered by

Newlyn Art Gallery. The Director went on to advise that two further paintings required repair work - 'Where There is Life There is Hope' by William Eadie which had arrived with some damage and the repair cost was estimated to be £180.00 to £220.00.

The Director was in dispute with regard to the damage with the auctioneer and the transport company but it was proving difficult to determine blame.

A further painting 'View of St. Ives' by Dorothy Lawrence had been bequeathed to the gallery and it was also in a poor condition, and the conservation work was estimated to be in the region of £490.00, and it was

RESOLVED: that the repair work to the William Eadie painting should be carried out as it was required for the next exhibition but that the work on the Dorothy Lawrence painting should be held back until later in the year.

10. **REPORT OF TOWN CLERK**

(a) **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.

(b) **Remedial Works to Sensory Garden**

See Confidential Appendix "B".

(c) **Resolution to Re-Admit the Press and Public**

It was

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

(d) **Annual Conservative Party Fete**

The Town Clerk advised that the annual Conservative Party Fête would take place on Saturday 18th August 2007 on the main field with a fee charged to the association of £120.00 and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(e) **Request for Use of Open Air Theatre for Charity Event**

A local shop 'Knitwits' was organising local participation in a national fundraising event on behalf of the Wallace and Gromit Children's Fund and had requested the use of the Open Air Theatre for the event.

The theme of the event would be a Cornish Picnic and members felt that this was a suitable charity event well worthy of support and that the Open Air Theatre would provide an ideal venue and it was

RESOLVED: to approve its use.

(f) Acquisition of Grass-Cutting Deck - Jinma Tractor

The Town Clerk advised members that the small grass-cutting tractor was struggling to cope with work on the larger fields in the park and the situation could be improved with the provision of a new grass-cutting deck for the larger Jinma tractor.

This matter was being investigated but if it was not possible to acquire a new deck, a new grass-cutting machine, which would be capable of coping with all grass-cutting requirements in the park, could be purchased for approximately £3,100.00.

The Chairman provided the Town Clerk with a local contact who could offer advice in this respect and the matter would be brought back to committee for consideration and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(g) Appointment of Part-Time Gardener

The position of part-time gardener had been re-advertised as a half-time post for 18½ hours per week throughout the year.

Suitable applicants had now been short-listed by the Chairman and Town Clerk for interview on the afternoon of the 12th July and it was

RESOLVED: that interview arrangements should proceed.

(h) Open Air Theatre Season

The Open Air Theatre season had been finalised and the programme would be produced shortly.

Unfortunately, two children's performances had been cancelled due to the companies being unable to obtain further venues in Cornwall thus making it too expensive to travel to this area.

The Town Clerk went on to advise that he had been approached by a further theatre company for permission to stage a production in the park which would have clashed with a performance in the Open Air Theatre and, unless the company was able to vary its date, it was

RESOLVED: that consent could not be given for the performance.

(i) Surveyor's Report re. Memorial Chapel

The Town Clerk advised that he had commissioned a surveyor's report in respect of the Memorial Chapel following signs that the rear wall was cracking and moving away from the remainder of the building.

The Town Clerk would now commission a report from a Structural Engineer and a specification would then be drawn up in respect of the remedial or re-build works required and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

11. **FINANCIAL POSITION**

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

RESOLVED: to note the position.

The Committee also considered payments made in the months of April and May 2007 and it was

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

8.20 pm

Chairman
18th September 2007