

MINUTES OF THE PENLEE HOUSE AND PARK COMMITTEE MEETING
held in Committee Room No. 3, St. John's Hall, Penzance on Tuesday 4th December 2007
at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT

Councillor J. Moreland (Chairman)

Councillors M.R. Cotton
J.H. Dixon
F. Granger
R.M. Lawrence
R.A. Mann
J. Ruhrmund

ALSO PRESENT

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

26. **APOLOGIES**

Councillors R. Clark, J. Parkin, T.E. Williams and H. Worth.

27. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

28. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 6TH NOVEMBER 2007**

Having been circulated, it was

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

29. **REPORT OF DIRECTOR**

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

The Director advised that visitor numbers had remained at a very good level and that with free admission to the current exhibition, 'Gifts Given', which had commenced three days earlier, numbers for the beginning of December period were almost double those for early December last year.

The "Cornishman" newspaper would hopefully be running a double page feature in this week's edition which again would do the visitor numbers no harm.

In broader terms, the visitor numbers for the calendar year stood at 34,698 to the end of November as against 32,076 for the corresponding period in 2006, with the figures for the financial year standing at 29,184 to the end of November against 30,328 to the end of the financial year 2006/07.

Shop takings were also up on this period last year, standing at £86,554 to date and income from all sources stood at £120,005.00 to the end of November, an increase of approximately £18,400.00 over the same period in the last financial year and it was

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

(b) Forthcoming Exhibitions

As mentioned above, the current exhibition is 'Gifts Given' which will run from the 1st December 2007 to the 12th January 2008 and which had already attracted a lot of interest.

The Director reminded members that all items on display had been gifted to the Gallery including 43 items from Mr. George Bednar.

Mr. Bednar declined the invitation to open the exhibition and, as there were various other events which would have clashed with the normal opening date, it had been decided not to hold a Preview Evening.

The current exhibition was running alongside the normal selling show in gallery 1 over the Christmas period under the auspices of Cornwall Crafts.

The next exhibition would be the Jack Pender Show running from the 19th January to the 8th March 2008 and this would be accompanied by a book.

The Director was confident the show would attract considerable interest and she had been delighted with the rich and varied material offered on loan to the Gallery and it was

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

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

The Town Clerk reported that the 10th Anniversary Celebration had been an extremely enjoyable evening, which had been attended by approximately 50 people, and a previous Chairman of the Penlee House and Park Committee, Mr. Steve Simmons, had reflected on his period on the council and had been one of the driving forces behind the extension and refurbishment, and he had paid tribute to the success of the building and the support provided to it by the Town Council over the last 10 years, and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(d) Penlee House Forward Plan - Annual Review

The Director had circulated to all members the revised Forward Plan for Penlee House, setting out the short-term objectives for 2008/09 and also the longer term aims for the future development of the Gallery and Museum and this process formed part of the registration requirement with the Museums, Libraries and Archives Association and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(e) 'Friends of Penlee House' - Minutes of Meeting held on 15th October 2007 and Verbal Report re. Meeting on 19th November 2007

The Director advised members that at the last meeting of the 'Friends' on the 19th November, various art works which were coming up for auction at Sothebys, had been discussed and the 'Friends' had agreed that one painting 'On the Beach at Newlyn' by Ernest Proctor would be a suitable acquisition for the Gallery as it was regarded as one of the artist's major oil paintings and also reflected the social history of the area.

The estimated price of the painting was £20,000.00 to £30,000.00 but the Director had been advised to seek funding up to £40,000.00, with the 'Friends' donating £6,000.00.

The Director was now in the process of endeavouring to secure grant aid and went on to advise members of the increased commission rates being charged by Auction Houses and this was a matter which she would raise with the Museums Association at its next meeting and it was

RESOLVED: to approve the actions of the Director in endeavouring to obtain grant aid in respect of the above named painting.

(f) Report of West Cornwall Arts Archive Meeting and General Meeting re. Future of Archive Materials Held at Trevelyan House

The Director reported that the WCAA material was still in storage in Hayle and that little progress had been made with finding a venue for its permanent location.

However, progress was being made with regard to a virtual archive that would be available to promote the artistic value of the area without the need for a physical building and the most likely sources of funding for such an archive would come from the academic world - in particular from the University of Exeter through the combined Universities Campus at Tremough near Falmouth. The Director also advised that because of her core commitments to Penlee House, she had advised the WCAA that she would be stepping down from the lead role she had taken with the organisation and that James Green of Newlyn Art Gallery would be taking over the lead in this matter in future.

Councillor Ruhmund extended thanks to the Director on behalf of the Trustees for all her hard work on behalf of the Arts Archive.

The Town Clerk then provided a short verbal report with regard to the meeting held on the 23rd November with Melissa Hardie of the Hypatia Trust, Steve Simmons as Chairman of the West Cornwall Arts Archive and Jonathan Burnett, the Principal of Truro College, together with other interested parties.

Mr. Burnett had been invited in order that he could be made aware of the archive material held locally, particularly in relation to the Hypatia Trust and West Cornwall Arts Archive and of the aims of the group to ensure that this material was available to assist with research and further and higher education courses.

Mr. Burnett advised that Penwith College would shortly be submitting plans to Penwith District Council in respect of the demolition of the current 'modern' buildings at the rear of the former Girls' Grammar School and the rebuild of new college facilities to link with the six acre Treneere Manor site.

Mr. Burnett felt that Treneere Manor itself may provide a suitable location for at least some of the archive material and the group were advised to look at this possibility and return to Mr. Burnett with proposals in due course.

Councillor Moreland went on to advise members that Penzance Civic Society was also looking at various archiving initiatives, and concern had been expressed about the number of collections of material in private ownership which could be lost when people died, and it was hoped that archival organisations could be encouraged to bring forward proposals to ensure that such material was saved and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the Director's and Town Clerk's report be received.

30. **REPORT OF TOWN CLERK**

(a) Correspondence from Community Regeneration Team re. Funding for a 'Natural Play Area'

The Town Clerk advised the Committee of potential funding available for the design and implementation of a natural play area (£5,000.00 for the design and £15,000.00 for the implementation) and although this funding had not been originally offered to the Town Council, the Town Clerk had indicated to the project organisers at Penwith District Council that it could move at fairly short notice (if any of the two organisations shortlisted or the other three, which had applied), were not able to proceed and a scheme could be drawn up to develop the area behind the existing traditional play area in Penlee Park.

The Chairman referred to a number of play areas which had incorporated wooden structures as part of their equipment and it was suggested that there were organisations in the area which could be approached for funding for such a project and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(b) Proposed New 'Eco' Education Building

Members were aware of previous discussions in relation to the possible redevelopment of the existing theatre store/education building adjacent to the Open Air Theatre with the construction of an 'Eco-Friendly' multi-use education space.

The Penlee House and Park budget notes made reference to the sum of £2,000.00 which had been brought forward from the previous year, with a view to engaging the services of a consultant to draw up a project brief and the Town Clerk and Director tabled the contract specification in respect of a part-time fixed term contract in the sum of £2,000.00.

The position would be advertised through appropriate outlets nationwide and it was acknowledged that, as the project moved forward, it should be noted that there is a wealth

of local architectural expertise with the ability to deliver such a building and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the Chairman, together with Councillor Ruhrmund, assist the Director and the Town Clerk with the long-listing and appointment process for the Development Brief Co-ordinator.

(c) 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.

(d) Staffing - Penlee Park

See Confidential Appendix 'A'.

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

It was

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

31. **FINANCIAL POSITION**

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

RESOLVED: to note the position.

The Committee considered the proposed revised budget in respect of the year 2007/2008 and the proposed budget in respect of 2008/2009 together with supporting notes and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the revised budget for the current year and the proposed budget for the ensuing year be approved (see Appendix "B").

8.20 pm

Chairman
22nd January 2008