

MINUTES OF THE PENLEE HOUSE AND PARK COMMITTEE MEETING held in Committee Room No. 3, St. John's Hall, Penzance on Tuesday 4th November 2008 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillors JF Moreland (Chairman)
M Lovegrove (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors MR Cotton
JH Dixon
RM Lawrence
RA Mann
D Nebesnuick

ALSO PRESENT

Katie Herbert (Curatorial Officer, Penlee House Gallery & Museum)

19. **APOLOGIES**

Councillors F Granger, J Parkin, CAC White, TE Williams

20. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

21. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 16TH SEPTEMBER 2008**

Having been circulated, it was

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

22. **REPORT OF DIRECTOR**

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

It was reported that visitor figures for the calendar year at the end of October were slightly up on last year at 33,618 against 32,875 although for the financial year a slight dip was showing (26,362 at the end of October against 27,142 at the end of October 2007).

Shop takings for the financial year at the end of October were slightly lower than the previous year standing at £75,830.00 against £77,112.47 and total takings for the same period were in a similar position at £106,919.00 at the end of October against £109,841.57 at the end of October 2007 although overall figures were still up on the target for the year.

Councillor Nebesnuick raised the issue of the impact of inflation on the comparative figures and the Town Clerk advised that inflation at varying rates was accounted for during the budgetary process in respect of expenditure but that income was set at conservative

levels (which were usually exceeded) because of the vagaries of the weather and the popularity of different exhibitions. Admission prices had not changed and were therefore a direct year on year comparison and much of the shop stock remained unchanged in price and it was therefore

RECOMMENDED: that the impact of inflation on income should be considered annually as part of the budget process.

The feedback from the current exhibition had been outstanding with many regular visitors praising the show as the best ever and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the Officer's verbal report be noted.

(b) Forthcoming exhibitions

The next exhibition would be 'A Village in Focus: Mousehole' running from 29th November 2008 to 14th March 2009 and the preview evening would be opened by Nicola Bayley who provided the illustrations for the book 'The Mousehole Cat' and entertainment would be provided by the Mousehole Male Voice Choir and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(c) Feedback from 'British Association of Friends of Museums' Conference

The BAfM conference had been a huge success with just under 170 delegates taking part over the weekend and special thanks went to Jonathan Griffin of the National Maritime Museum who stepped in at the last minute to give the after-dinner speech and the Porthcurno Telegraph Museum for hosting the gala buffet on the Saturday evening. The success of the weekend was due in large part to the 'Friends of Penlee House' and it was

RECOMMENDED: that a letter of thanks from the Mayor should be sent to Heather Corbett and Richard Clement of the 'Friends of Penlee House'.

(d) Bid to Heritage Lottery Fund for Social History Museum

The Director had submitted a pre-application for funding to refurbish the Social History Gallery to the HLF 'Your Heritage' fund which had received a positive response and a full application would be submitted towards the end of November.

The refurbishment would bring the Social History Gallery up to the standard of the rest of the galleries in Penlee House (along the lines of the Archaeology Gallery that was refurbished in 2006) and would enable the museum to stage 'mini-exhibitions' in response to community events or anniversaries and to have a rotating display of historic photographs from the collection. A further bid for funding of £5,000 had been submitted to Penwith District Council and had been successful and it was hoped that all funding would be in place by February 2009 so that work on the refurbishment could begin in the Autumn of 2009 and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(e) Acquisitions

An application for funding to the Art Fund Committee for the purchase of 'On The Cliffs/ Lamorna Cove' by Laura Knight had been unsuccessful due to the extensive conservation work that the piece had been subjected to but the Committee would be willing to support future applications for a major work by Laura Knight that would be beneficial to Penlee House.

'Old Kneebone of Helston' by John Opie had been recently valued below the figure that the vendor had hoped to achieve and he was now deciding whether to proceed with the sale. If the sale did go ahead, 'The Friends of Penlee House' had agreed to cover the full cost of the purchase and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(f) Recruitment Process – Retail Assistant

An advertisement for the above position appeared in the local press last week and there had been a high level of interest so far with many people asking for application packs. The closing date for receipt of applications had been set as 17th November and interviews would be held on 1st December and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the interviewing panel should comprise the Director of Penlee House, the Chairman of the Penlee House & Park Committee and the Shop Manager.

(g) Agenda and Minutes for 'Friends of Penlee House' meeting – 27th October 2008

The agenda and minutes of the meeting held on 27th October were available for anyone who wished to have sight of them and it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

23. **REPORT OF TOWN CLERK**

(a) Forward planting and layout plan – Penlee Park

The Chairman had recently met with the gardening staff and Councillor Freeman to conduct a tour of the park and draw up a general overview plan for the park incorporating suggestions for improvements to the overall planting and layout. The Chairman was pursuing various avenues for small grants and had spoken to the 'Friends of Penlee House' about setting up a 'Friends of Penlee Park' group that would be in a position to apply for funding where available. Steps were also being taken to encourage people to donate plants to the park or to participate in a cuttings 'swap programme and the annual sale of surplus plants could be resurrected in 2009 and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(b) Proposed improvement works – initial costings

The Town Clerk had received a quote for laying tarmac on the proposed new seating area on the lower terrace by the café and also the small area outside the entrance to the greenhouse compound. Some of the work required would be carried out in-house and a further quote would be requested from another supplier and this would be looked at again during the forthcoming budget review.

A suggestion had been put forward to open up the side gate to the Memorial Garden opposite the greenhouse compound but the steps would need to be re-set and a quote would be obtained for replacing the wooden gate with a wrought iron one so that the garden could be viewed even when the gates were locked.

There were some concerns over security in the park and it was confirmed that the PCSO's (who, it was noted responded quickly to calls for assistance) would increase their patrols through the park and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(c) Report of meeting re car park revenue and charging structure

A meeting had been held on 23rd October to look at the current pricing structure of the car park that was normally reviewed every three years and the notes from this meeting were distributed.

A quote for relining the parking bays had been received and the Chairman suggested that open-ended bays would be more economical than the current boxed in ones.

Councillor Nebesnuick suggested that shrubs and trees could be planted to enhance the appearance of the car park and that fines should be issued to people who parked outside the designated bays and these suggestions would be considered following the re-lining and re-designing of the car park layout. Projection of revised income levels would be brought forward during the forthcoming budgetary process and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(d) Confirmation of date for dedication of Sensory Garden

The Town Clerk confirmed that the dedication of the Sensory Garden would take place on Friday 13th March 2009 and would coincide with the preview of the 'Wild Cornwall' exhibition and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

24. **FINANCIAL POSITION**

The committee considered payments made in August and September 2008 and its financial position to the 30th September 2008 and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the payments and financial position be approved.
(See Appendix 'A' for both financial position and payments made.)

8:25pm

Chairman
2nd December 2008