

**MINUTES OF THE PENLEE HOUSE AND PARK COMMITTEE MEETING** held in Committee Room No. 3, St. John's Hall, Penzance on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2009 at 7.00pm.

**PRESENT**

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

Councillors MR Cotton  
JH Dixon  
F Granger  
RM Lawrence  
RA Mann  
J Ruhrmund (left at 8pm)  
CAC White

**ALSO PRESENT**

Alison Bevan (Director, Penlee House Gallery & Museum) and Tamsin Daniel (Museums and Heritage Officer, Penwith District Council).

31. **APOLOGIES**

Councillors D Nebesnuick, J Parkin, TE Williams

Absent without apologies: Councillor F Granger

32. **PROTOCOL FOR DEALING WITH DISTRICT ARTEFACTS, MEMORABILIA, INSIGNIA AND ITEMS OF CIVIC PRIDE OR REGALIA**

Tamsin Daniel and Alison Bevan had been working together to review the status of assets currently owned by Penwith District Council after the demise of the District Council on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009.

On 1<sup>st</sup> April all assets will transfer to Cornwall Council unless a prior arrangement is in place for transfer to another body. With regard to the museum artefacts in Penlee House currently owned by PDC, it was understood that Cornwall Council would agree to an agency agreement unchanged to that currently in place with PDC which includes a five year notice period if Cornwall Council subsequently decided it no longer wished to continue with the agreement. It could be possible to include a caveat to the agreement that all the articles must remain in Penlee House and that, if the agreement comes to an end, Penzance Town Council would have first option to purchase the articles, although the majority of the artefacts had been given to the town's museum in trust and should therefore be transferred to the Town Council without charge. If the Town Council decided it would prefer to take ownership of the articles as from 1<sup>st</sup> April, Ms Daniel pointed out to members that this would involve considerable expense for appropriate care and maintenance for which funding would be need to be found and with the immediate loss of the Agency Agreement.

With regard to the assets currently within St John's Hall (including the coat of arms in The Guildhall), it was felt that the Town Council would be best placed as the custodian of these very important historical and traditional items and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that, in respect of Penlee House, a continuation of the current Agency Agreement with the new Council should be supported (but to include the caveats as listed above) and that Penwith District Council should be asked to transfer the assets within St John's Hall to the Town Council (inventory to be provided).

33. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

34. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 2<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER 2008**

Having been circulated, it was

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

35. **REPORT OF DIRECTOR**

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

The Director reported that the visitor numbers for December were the third highest ever at 1503 against 1713 in December 2007, 1042 in December 2006 and 876 in December 2005. Figures for January were so far doing well and the Director reminded members that January 2008 had been an exceptional month owing to the success of the Jack Pender exhibition.

Shop takings at the end of the current day stood at £92,166 against £97,151 at the end of January 2008 and at the end of December had stood at £89,470 against £91,084 at the end of December 2007 which had been an exceptional year.

The Director went on to report that total takings at the end of the current day had reached £126,414 over £132,035 at the end of January 2008, and stood at £123,299 at the end of December against £125,317 at the end of December 2007.

The current exhibition was 'A Village in Focus: Newlyn' running until 14<sup>th</sup> March and included photographs, objects prints and paintings depicting the social history of Newlyn and it was

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

(b) **Forthcoming exhibitions**

The next exhibition, starting on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2009, would be 'Wild Cornwall' in celebration of Charles Darwin's 200<sup>th</sup> birthday and this would be followed by the summer exhibition 'Brotherhood of the Palette' and it was

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

(c) Exhibition Sponsorship

The Director reported that the newly appointed insurance company, Ecclesiastical, had offered to sponsor the summer exhibition in the sum of £7,000 and it was

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

(d) Heritage Lottery Fund Bid re Social History of West Cornwall Project

A bid for funding towards the cost of the planned Social History gallery had now been submitted and the initial response had been positive and it was hoped that work could commence in March and it was

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

(e) Proposal to write book re Art in Cornwall – The Director

The Director had been approached by a publisher to write a small booklet on ‘Art in Cornwall’ and was seeking permission from the Town Council to undertake this commission in her own right rather than as an employee of the Town Council and it was

**RECOMMENDED**: that the Town Council agree to this request and wish the Director ‘good luck’ with her work.

(f) Summary Report of Environmental Audit on Penlee House

The Director had contacted an organisation in respect of conducting a survey of Penlee House in order to look at ways of reducing the carbon footprint and utilities bills. The Environment Agency had agreed to support this initiative and a subsidised rate of £70 per day (3 days work) had been agreed and it was

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

(g) Artefact

The latest edition of Artefact had been distributed and it was

**RECOMMENDED**: that receipt be noted.

(h) Agenda and Minutes for Friends of Penlee House Meeting – 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008

The agenda and minutes for the Friends of Penlee House meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December having been copied out to all members it was

**RECOMMENDED**: that receipt be noted.

- (i) Resolution to exclude the press and public

Due to the confidential nature of the next item it was

**RESOLVED**: to exclude the press and public.

- (j) Salaries Review – Front of House Staff

See confidential Appendix ‘A’.

- (k) Resolution to re-admit the press and public

It was

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

36. **REPORT OF TOWN CLERK**

- (a) Acquisition of machinery

The Town Clerk informed members that by 2010 all park machinery would need to comply with the hand/arm vibration legislation coming into force. Discussions had taken place with officers of Penwith District Council about the measures they had undertaken and investigation had revealed that remedial measures on current machinery were not effective and therefore new machinery would need to be purchased and the contingency fund would need to be utilised for this purpose and it was

**RECOMMENDED**: that the Council approve the necessary expenditure, details of which would be provided in due course.

- (b) Improvement works - drainage

A complaint had been received from a resident of Rosevale whose garden lay below the park boundary and had been flooded during heavy rainfall. Although it appeared that the main cause of this problem could be coming from St Mary’s School playing field and the leat that bordered the field, the park staff had now installed a ‘French drain’ to alleviate any problems that may be caused by water running off the park fields and it was

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

- (c) Improvement works – lower terrace to Orangery

The work on this project was now scheduled to commence in March and at the same time a new awning would be purchased for the existing terrace and it was

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

(d) Car park charges in the light of downturn in revenue in Local Authority car parks in Cornwall

The Town Clerk reported that there was a shortfall in car park revenue across Cornwall and recommended that, instead of the rise in car park charges that had been discussed at previous meetings, an increase of 10% in line with the triennial review should be incorporated this year. The Town Clerk also informed members that interest on the savings account currently held at Barclays Bank was now very low and this increase in car park charges would help offset any deficiency in the Council's overall income target for 2009/10 and it was

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

(e) Formation of 'Friends of Penlee Park'

The Chairman had initiated the setting up of a 'Friends of Penlee Park' group, similar to the group that already existed in Morrab Gardens. The Morrab Group had already been successful in obtaining funding towards new planting and the renovation of the greenhouse and a Penlee Group would be ideally placed to apply for funding towards improvements in the park. There had been a good response from local professionals and the Town Clerk would put together a constitution with the Town Council being the accountable body. The Chairman was discussing the various bid options with officers at Penwith District Council and a master plan would be formulated and it was

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

(f) New gates - Trewithen

Members were informed that the gates at the Trewithen Road entrance to the park were in a very poor state of repair and a quote of £1,700 had been received for gates that would be in keeping with the surrounding railings. The Town Clerk would identify funding for the acquisition of new gates and it was

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

(g) Orangery Franchise

The Town Clerk reminded members that the franchise for the Orangery Café was due for renewal and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the franchise be renewed for a further two years.

(h) Pictures of Park from a painting in 1949 from Cllr Nebesnuick

Councillor Nebesnuick had forwarded photographs of a painting of the park from 1949 and these photographs had been distributed to all members for information and it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that receipt be noted.

(i) **Report of structural investigations of Memorial Chapel in Garden of Remembrance**

The Town Clerk reported that the mundic block survey had been negative and a report on the status of the foundations was still awaited as it could be that poor drainage was causing the problem with the structure of the building. The roof timbers were rotten and would need replacing and it was

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

37. **FINANCIAL POSITION**

The committee considered its financial position to the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008 and it was

**RESOLVED:** to note the position.

The committee also considered payments made in the months of October, November and December 2008 and it was

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

8:35pm

Chairman  
3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009