

MINUTES OF THE PENLEE HOUSE AND PARK COMMITTEE MEETING held in Committee Room No. 3, St. John's Hall, Penzance on Tuesday 3rd March 2009 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT

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

Councillors MR Cotton
JH Dixon
RM Lawrence
RA Mann
D Nebesnuick
J Ruhmund

ALSO PRESENT

Alison Bevan (Director, Penlee House Gallery & Museum)

38. **APOLOGIES**

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

39. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

40. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 20TH JANUARY 2009**

Having been circulated, it was

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

41. **REPORT OF DIRECTOR**

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

The Director reported that total take for the period to the end of February stood at £136,660.74 which, although significantly lower than the same period in 2008 (£140,346.21) still represented a steady increase over preceding years. Shop takings for the financial year to date stood at £99,415.51 against £103,433.83 at the end of February 2008.

Visitor figures for the financial year to the end of February stood at 36,062 which represented one of the highest visitor numbers on record and the Director pointed out to members that income figures were sometimes influenced by provision of a catalogue or other merchandise to accompany an exhibition.

Councillor Nebesnuick asked if a written report could be provided for members and also requested evidence of how successful individual exhibitions were and how this success is measured. The Director offered to provide an annual report to the committee at the first committee meeting of the council year and it was suggested that Councillor Nebesnuick should put in writing what further information he would like receive and then discuss the feasibility of providing this information with the Director and it was

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

(b) Forthcoming exhibitions

The brochure for the forthcoming year would be ready for distribution by Easter and the next exhibition would be 'Wild Cornwall' (21st March to 13th June 2009) in celebration of Charles Darwin's 200th birthday and this exhibition had been sponsored in the amount of £2,500 by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The summer exhibition would be 'The Brotherhood of the Palette: Newlyn School paintings 1880-1900'.

The Director also provided members with a short description of forthcoming exhibitions throughout the year and requested that admission to the Christmas exhibition 'Penlee Inspired' (running from 5th December 2009 to 9th January 2010) be free of charge to encourage local visitors and promote the idea of using Penlee House as a springboard for creativity and it was

RESOLVED: to make admission to the Christmas exhibition free of charge.

Councillor Dixon informed members that 2010 would be the 20th anniversary of the Golowan Festival and suggested that an exhibition to celebrate this event could be arranged and the Director agreed that a show in the museum could be organised and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

Councillor Nebesnuick wished to place on record his thanks to Katie Herbert, Curatorial Officer of Penlee House for her recent assistance regarding the purchase of a print and also suggested that Penlee House could stage a 'Penzance' exhibition in the future and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(c) Update re Environmental Audit on Penlee House

The Director confirmed that the environmental audit had taken place but a report had not yet been received and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

- (d) Verbal report re lack of funding opportunities for proposed Eco-education/Theatre Building

Unfortunately, it appeared that there were very few funding opportunities available for the proposed eco-education building, partly due to the huge amount of funding being taken up by the Olympics 2012 and also due to the current economic climate. The project did not fulfil the criteria set out by the Heritage Lottery Fund but the Director was still pursuing other avenues and was awaiting the publication of the new criteria to be set out by the Big Lottery Fund in April. The total cost of the project was estimated to be £750,000 which it was felt seemed very high and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted and that the Director would provide a break-down of the costs for the next meeting of the committee.

- (e) Agenda and Minutes for Friends of Penlee House Meeting – 9th March 2009

The agenda and minutes for the Friends of Penlee House meeting on 9th March having been copied out to all members it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

42. **REPORT OF TOWN CLERK**

- (a) Improvement works – lower terrace at The Orangery

The Chairman provided a brief outline of the work involved in the project and informed members that the stonework to the raised beds that had now been completed incorporated historical granite blocks that had already been present in the park. It was agreed that these blocks were better placed and more secure in their new position and Councillor Ruhrmund offered to supply an inventory of the granite blocks that had originally been in Morrab Gardens and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

The Chairman also informed members that the new 'Friends of Penlee Park' group had now been set up and it was hoped that the group would be in a position to apply for funding for various projects throughout the park, one of which was the proposed opening up of the disused side gate to the Memorial Garden and the replacement of the existing wooden gate with a metal 'trellis' style one and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

- (b) Dedication of Sensory Garden

Due to the lack of time now available to organise this event and the ongoing work on the terrace area of the café, it was

RECOMMENDED: that the dedication of the Sensory Garden be postponed to Friday 19th June 2009.

(c) Acquisition of new machinery from general contingency

The Clerk reported that she and the Head Gardener had met with a representative of Cornwall Farmers who would be compiling a quote for all the new machinery required in the park and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(d) Triennial review of car park charges

As recommended at the last meeting of the Penlee House & Park Committee, car parking charges would be increased by ca.10% effective from 1st April 2009 in line with the triennial review of charges. This would result in a daily ticket costing £1.50 and a monthly ticket would cost £22.50 and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(e) Report re structural investigations of the Memorial Chapel – Garden of Remembrance

The Clerk reported that a structural investigation of the Memorial Chapel had been carried out at the beginning of January and, although a report from this investigation had now been received, the recommendations of the structural engineer were still awaited and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(f) Urgent tree works

Two large Monterey pines had been earmarked for felling on health and safety grounds following the report of three independent tree surgeons and, due to the size and prominence of these trees, an article would appear in the Cornishman to explain to the public the reasons for the removal of the trees. The stump of one of the trees would be left at a height of approximately 10 feet for a potential sculpture and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted and that the felled wood should be retained in the park for future use as, possibly, rustic benches.

(g) Correspondence re Memorial Garden for Workers Memorial Day

A request had been received from a local resident who wished to have an area of the park dedicated as a separate memorial for 'Workers Memorial Day' that would be commemorated on 28th April.

Members felt that as the whole park is a memorial to the war dead it would not be appropriate to have a separate area within the park dedicated to a separate group and it was

RECOMMENDED: that a letter be sent to the resident concerned suggesting a bench or tree dedicated to the Workers Memorial Day would be more appropriate and also offering the use the Open Air Theatre area for a service on the day and this letter should be copied to Julyan Drew.

43. **FINANCIAL POSITION**

The committee considered its financial position to the 31st January 2009 and it was

RESOLVED: to note the position.

The committee also considered payments made in the month of January 2009 and it was

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

8:40pm

Chairman
19th May 2009