

## **LISKEARD TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES** of the **MUSEUM MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held in The Council Chamber, West Street, Liskeard on Tuesday 28 July 2015 at 6.45 pm.

### **PRESENT**

The Mayor, Councillor Phil Seeva Ex-Officio

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Jane Pascoe Ex-Officio

Councillor Ian Goldsworthy - in the Chair

Councillors, Anne Purdon Sue Pike and Hella Tovar

Old Cornwall Society Representative; Duncan Mathews

Cornwall Council Museum Representative, Stephanie Meads

Town Clerk Steve Vinson

Minute Clerk Stuart Houghton

The Chairman advised those present of Housekeeping matters

### **195/15      OPEN SESSION**

No Parishioners were present.

### **196/15      APOLOGIES**

An apology was received from Councillor Rachel Brooks

Apologies were also received from the Stuart House Representative, David Howard and the Museum Volunteers

### **197/15      ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE**

Councillor Pike nominated, and Councillor Purdon seconded, that Councillor Tovar be elected as Chairman of the Committee; Councillor Tovar accepted the nomination.

There being no other nominations Councillor Tovar was duly elected as Chairman of the Museum Management Committee for the ensuing year.

Councillor Goldsworthy thanked the Committee for the support it had given him over the years.

Councillor Tovar then took the Chair and thanked the Members for their confidence in her, she would endeavour to ensure it was well placed.

## **198/15 ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE**

The Deputy Mayor nominated, and the Mayor seconded, that Councillor Pike be elected as Deputy Chair of the Committee; Councillor Pike accepted the nomination.

There being no other nominations Councillor Pike was elected as deputy Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

## **199/15 REPORT ON THE RECRUITMENT OF A MUSEUM CURATOR**

The Town Clerk reported that the position had been advertised twice, initially locally and then much wider, but a suitable candidate had not been identified. Interim arrangements had been made for the daily management of the Museum

Discussions had been made about the lack of success and it was thought that the job description and salary were not compatible with the Councils expectations for the position. The advice of Stephanie Meads had been obtained.

## **200/15 OPTIONS PAPER BY STEPHANIE MEADS**

The paper prepared by Stephanie had been circulated and is attached to the minutes.

She explained the rationale behind the three options she had listed;

Option 1 would be to employ a full time Curator at a salary of £25 to £30k, plus on costs. If this option was accepted the position would have to be re-advertised and the cost could be too much for the Council to afford.

Option 2 would be to continue down the same path and re-advertise for a part time Curator. This has failed twice to produce the required result; there is no guarantee that it would be successful this time.

Option 3 would be to establish a volunteer management team for the Museum and employ a freelance professional to ensure the accreditation standards are adhered to. This method is successfully in operation at several Museums in Cornwall.

At present the volunteers have the skills and knowledge, but there is no framework for them to understand how the processes and procedures fit together. This limits their achievements and they could become disillusioned and possibly move on.

The Chairman thanked Stephanie for her presentation, she liked the idea of volunteers managing the Museum, the number of volunteers had recently increased from 5 to 10, but she thought that a realistic number of volunteers would be 25. She added that Stephanie had already met with the volunteers to provide advice at no cost to the Council.

Councillors comments included;

- There would be meetings this week with the volunteers to seek their opinions and to obtain information that could be used to produce a management plan
- Current freelance Curators costs are about £1550 per month as a part time Museum Development Officer. A daily rate for professional help would be between £60 and £150
- A training schedule would be needed for the volunteers
- The volunteers are managing the museum, at present, but need a framework to be completely effective
- Following the meetings this week Stephanie would prepare a costed brief to detail what was needed and how to achieve it to be presented prior to the next meeting on 8 September 2015 so that a recommendation could be made to the Town Council on 15 September 2015.

Councillor Goldsworthy proposed, the Deputy Mayor seconded and the Committee **RESOLVED** that Stephanie Meads would prepare a brief that would form the basis of a tender to fulfil Option 3 of the Next Steps options paper prepared by her. The brief would be presented for agreement at the next Committee meeting on the 8 September 2015.

### **201/15 LEAFLETS**

The Chairman stated that all leaflets for the Museum had been used; she was concerned that there were none available at this, the busiest time of the year. She asked the Committee if a quick limited number should be produced for the summer and to design a new leaflet for a general distribution in the future.

The distribution of the leaflets at caravan parks, stations and attractions was discussed. It was suggested that the Town Clerk would investigate the use of the display units thought to be operated by South West Distribution. A suggestion was that the leaflets could be distributed to other Museums when attending meetings.

The Committee agreed that a leaflet should be produced now for distribution for the summer.

### **202/15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Museum Management Committee will be at 6.45 pm on **TUESDAY** 8 September 2015

## Liskeard and District Museum.

### **Proposal.**

There are three options

1. The Council employ a full time professional Curator - the salary range for a professional is £25,000 -£30,000 plus on costs.

This is a big ask at a time of Local Government cutbacks and would need to be judged against other Council priorities.

2. Re advertise again for a part time curator either a professional or person with an appropriate skill base.

At present there is a core of volunteers who have gained a certain level of knowledge and skills. Because of the lack of a working framework they are presently struggling to carry out tasks and to understand how the processes and procedures fit together. This in turn limits what they can presently achieve. If something is not put in place to help support the volunteers there is a possibility they will move on and offer their services elsewhere.

3. To consider establishing a volunteer museum management team

To use existing funding to bring in a museum professional to build the volunteer team to support Accreditation standards

The professional's tasks would be -

- To establish a cohesive team of key volunteers with responsibilities for maintaining the accreditation standards
- To carry out an assessment of present procedure and processes and to test and assess the strengths and weaknesses against the Accreditation standards
- To assess through discussion with the volunteer team their own strengths and weaknesses in relation to carrying out the tasks required as part of accreditation.
- To set up the framework in which the standards procedures and processes are delivered and maintained
- To deliver in-house training to develop the team's confidence and knowledge base to carry out the tasks and duties required.
- To review and test the systems and working practices on a monthly basis initially
- To maintain a 6 month watching brief and report to Council.

There are within the south west and in Cornwall especially a considerable number of volunteer run museums. Some are owned by the local council and are managed at arm's length by volunteer teams. Bodmin Museum is such a museum and has for the last twenty five years been managed in this way. Bodmin Town Council, remaining the governing body and own the collection.