

SUMMARY OF MEETING HELD 8 December 2016 at Liskeard Museum, between the Museum Management Team and Liskeard Town Councillors.

Present:

Bryony Robins; Cornwall Museums Partnership (CMP) – Facilitator

Museum Management Team (MMT) – Jayne Buchanan, Tina Hitchings, Stephanie Meads, Amanda Soady, Gordon Stokes

Liskeard Town Councillors – Rachel Brooks, Ian Goldsworthy, Sally Hawken, Roger Holmes, Jane Pascoe, Sue Pike (also volunteer/MMT), Anne Purden, Phil Seeva, James Shrubsole, Lorna Shrubsole, Hella Tovar (also Volunteer/MMT), Christina Whitty.

Liskeard Town Council – Steve Vinson; Town Clerk, Yvette Hayward; Support Services Manager

## MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT

This is a national initiative, funded regionally, to help museums meet national standards required. Cornwall, uniquely, has the CMP, an additional layer in the structure, whose success is being closely followed by the Arts Council.

LISKEARD & DISTRICT MUSEUM – Jayne Buchanan

Highlights of the last year:

- Exhibitions – existing collections have been revitalised, and toys lent by a local collector. Training has been undertaken to understand visitors and how data is collected.
- Volunteers – numbers have increased, and growing confidence of existing volunteers has had a cumulative effect. A particular success is a 6<sup>th</sup> form student who undertook work experience and then became a volunteer.
- Training – lots of free training has been undertaken, this has increased the volume of knowledge, and enhanced the volunteers themselves and the museum.
- Visitor Numbers – approximately 4,400 this year the highest since 2012 (Olympic year – 4,000). This is also the first year of winter closure, so this figure has also been achieved in 10 months.
- Increased Visibility outside Liskeard – now have a web presence on the Cornwall Museums site, this is maintained centrally and therefore allows the museum to have a website without needing specialist knowledge, ensuring it is future proofed.
- Community – the museum is being taken out into the community by the use of memory and schools boxes, and attendance at the recent RIO event.
- Documentation - lots of work has been done on this for the accreditation process.

## MUSEUMS TODAY; CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

It was recognised that the increase in visitor numbers was a great achievement against a backdrop of falling numbers at national museums. Engaging with people is an Arts Council priority, and a big challenge for the future.

A group SWOT session built on the comprehensive work already undertaken for the draft Forward Plan. Some further opportunities suggested were: develop story telling sessions

and additional children's activities, consider the idea of a 'Pop-up' museum, develop further third party relationships, maximise the World Heritage Site partnership, develop alternative funding sources i.e. grants, regular donations, legacies, consider forming a 'Friends of ...' charity.

#### LISKEARD & DISTRICT MUSEUM FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan is based on a template from the Arts Council, and also fits with the Cornwall Museums Strategy, which aims to bring cohesion to all the museums in the county. It was noted that it also fits very closely with the 6 Liskeard Town Council aims undertaken by the Communications and Engagements committee (C&E). It was recognised that some exhibitions / displays do not fit with a 3 year plan, and some aims will take much longer to achieve.

Draft Terms of Reference supplied by Bryony were circulated and discussed. A new version updated by Bryony at the meeting is attached for consideration at the C&E meeting on 3 January 2017 at 7pm.

#### QUESTIONS & FURTHER THOUGHTS

Is it possible to explore full cost recovery? This would involve a lot of work, but different models could be looked at. There may be grants available to test these models. Museums nationally are public funded, but it may be necessary in the future to ask what people want money spent on. Data from Museums Matter shows that every £1 from the public purse generates £3 of economic benefit.

Agreement on the Museum logo is needed, the current one in use was for temporary purposes.

The structure of the MMT currently including two councillors was raised. The usual structure would be for a member of MMT to sit on the C&E, but not the other way around. The MMT is a ground level committee and all members should be volunteers. The governance in this situation is not clear as some volunteers are also councillors. There could be a conflict of interest between these roles, members will need to declare non-registerable interests where appropriate.

#### FUTURE WAYS OF WORKING

It was recognised that this was a valuable session for informal discussion and should be repeated on a regular basis.

Other ways of joined up working should be considered e.g. does the recently adopted Town Council Communications Policy apply to the museum? Is it currently suitable, or could it be amended to be suitable? What other policies etc. may this apply to? It would be useful if the MMT were made aware of all Council policies and amendments that impact the Museum and its activities.

Governance Training is available at a subsidised cost of £20 per person for all those interested – details available from Bryony (see attached).

CLOSE

Thank you to Bryony for all her help, support and guidance.