

**JOINT COMMITTEE FOR THE NORTH OF ENGLAND  
OPEN-AIR MUSEUM**

At a Meeting of the Beamish Joint Committee held in the Collections Study Room, Regional Resource Centre, Beamish Museum, Beamish on **Friday 20 September 2013** at **10.00 am**

**Present:**

**Councillor C Marshall (Chairman)**

**Members of the Committee:**

Councillors A Batey, J Bell, J Blakey, C Carr, P Conway, S Iveson, I Jewell, J Lethbridge, O Milburn, J Shuttleworth, D Stoker and R Todd (Durham County Council), Councillor J Wallace (Gateshead MBC), Councillors Richard Bell (Sunderland City Council), John Kelly (Sunderland City Council), Dennis Richardson (Sunderland City Council), John Scott (Sunderland City Council) and Alan Ashburner (Friends of Beamish)

Co-opted Members (Non-Voting)

*Friends* – Mr A Ashburner

**Apologies:**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Bell, J Buckham, D Hicks, J Maitland, S Morrison, P Oliver and T Pemberton (Durham County Council), Julia Jackson, Bob Goldsworthy (Gateshead MBC), Linda Green (Gateshead MBC), F Cunningham, Nancy Maxwell (South Tyneside MBC), Jill Fletcher, Peter Walker (Sunderland City Council), Malcolm Dix (Friends of Beamish), Simon Gray, Edna Hunter (Beamish Development Trust) and Sarah Stewart (Beamish Development Trust)

**1 Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 July 2013**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**2 Museum Update**

**The Joint Committee received a report from the Museum Director that gave an update on Museum business (for copy see file of Minutes).**

Performance – The Museum were 16% up on visitor numbers and admissions income from the previous year. Visitor numbers were strong in August and performance continued to do well in September with 45-50,000 visitors expected. The Museum were on target to receive 500,000 visitors by the end of the financial year. Evening tickets for winter events were already being sold.

The Museum Director highlighted the following:-

- Celebrating Community Heritage Project- project comes to an end in September and plans on how to support schools in future years and to continue to develop community participation was to be considered
- Creative People/ Places – continues to develop
- Business Plan – to be finalised in November. There was a risk in terms of raising money. Partnership support was very important as the competition for funding was fierce. Talks had taken place with the Treasurer from Sunderland City Council to secure a guarantee for the shortfall as this would strengthen the bid and the Museum needed to show that they were in a position to deliver.
- Short term HLF projects – to be discussed under a separate Capital Projects Report on the agenda
- Review of Governance – waiting for Local Authorities to comment on the proposals, the Charities Commission had approved the change of name to Beamish Museum, dropping the Limited from the title, there would be an overlap between Regional Stakeholder Group and the Joint Committee. The date of the first meeting has been agreed for the Regional Stakeholder Group of 25 October.

**Resolved:-**

That the report be noted.

### **3 Development and Engagement Plan 2013 - 2025 Summary**

**The Joint Committee received a report and presentation from the Museum Director giving a summary of the Development and Engagement Plan 2013-2025 (for copy see file of Minutes).**

The Museum Director presented the summary of the plan that had been approved in January 2013 highlighting the three guiding principles. Early priorities included collecting John's Café in Wingate, a 1920's building.

Members were happy with the report and thanked the Museum Director for summarising the lengthy document into key points.

Resolved:-

**That the summary document be noted.**

#### **4 Proposal to establish a Regional Stakeholder Group**

The Joint Committee received a report from the Museum Director that gave an update on the proposal to establish a Regional Stakeholder Group (for copy see file of Minutes).

The first meeting of the group had been arranged for 25 October 2013 and would discuss the terms of reference and the Museum's plans for 2014. Members were concerned that the meetings should be worthwhile attending and not just a talk shop. The Museum Director said that information would be given at the group and discussions sessions would take place on specific projects and areas of development. He felt that it was important for the group to focus on practical project delivery for particular themes.

Resolved:-

That the report be noted.

#### **5 Audited Statement of Accounts 2012/2013**

The Joint Committee considered a report of the Treasurer outlining the communications received from the External Auditors concerning the Annual Return for 2012/2013 and to provide the Audited Statement of Accounts for 2012/2013 (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Treasurer informed Members that the external auditor had provided an unqualified audit opinion of the Annual Return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 and also that the Statement of Accounts 2012/2013 had required no amendment from those previously presented to the Committee in June. No major issues had been identified by the External Auditors.

The Treasurer informed the Committee that discussions were taking place with the External Auditors regarding what could be the final year of Audit

with the disbanding of the Joint Committee. There was a possibility that the final accounts could be amalgamated with Beamish Museum Company accounts. Details would be presented to Committee in due course.

**Resolved:**

*(i) That the unqualified audited Annual Return from External Auditors, BDO LLP (Chartered Accountants), be noted.*

*(ii) That the Audited Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2013, be approved.*

**6 Exclusion of the public**

**Resolved:-**

That under Section 100 A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the said Act.

**7 DEP Capital Projects Report No 1**

The Joint Committee received a report from the Museum Director that provided an update on the variations and funding for Capital Projects (for copy see file of Minutes).

**Resolved:-**

That the recommendations within the report be approved.