

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

**At a Meeting of the Joint Committee for the North of England Open-Air Museum held in the Collections Study Room, Regional Resource Centre, Beamish Museum on Friday 21 September 2012 at 10.00 a.m.**

**PRESENT:**

**Members of the Joint Committee**

Councillors J Bell, Iveson, May, Morgan, Naylor, Shuttleworth, Thomson, Todd, Wilkinson and Wright (Durham County Council) Mortimer (North Tyneside MBC), Cunningham (South Tyneside MBC) and R Bell, Fletcher, Kelly, Scott, Trueman and Walker (Sunderland City Council)

**Co-opted Members (Non-Voting)**

*Friends* – Mr A Ashburner

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bailey, Blakey, Carr, Farry and C Marshall (Durham County Council), Goldsworthy, Green and Wallace (Gateshead MBC), Maxwell (South Tyneside MBC) Richardson (Sunderland City Council), Mr Gray and Mrs Stewart (Beamish Development Trust) and Mr Dix (Friends)

**1 Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 July 2012**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2012 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 - visitor numbers had increased and were 20% up on budget and 3% up on the previous year figures, with more repeat visitors attending. The Fish and Chip shop were doing well and sales were up on budget. The Paralympic event had been successful and the Museum had worked with a number of outside agencies to deliver a relaxed family event. The Agriculture festival was running well with

events planned until the beginning of October. The forecast of visitor numbers for the year end was between 500,000 and 520,000. Business Plan Review/ Update - £200,000 capital had been released to re-invest in current capital projects such as Town Bakery, Band Hall and Dunrobin.

Fundraising – a campaign was underway to increase the Friends membership and included selling at the Main Entrance.

**Resolved:-**

That the report and fundraising priorities, be noted.

### **3 Statement of Accounts**

The Joint Committee considered a report of the Treasurer outlining the communications received from the External Auditors concerning the Annual Return for 2011/2012 and to provide the Audited Statement of Accounts for 2011/2012 (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 2012 and also that the Statement of Accounts 2011/2012 had required no amendment from those previously presented to the Committee in June. No major issues had been identified by the External Auditors although a small matter, that was not considered material, was highlighted in their audit report for the attention of the Committee. The Treasurer reported that this minor issue could be dealt with in future by adding a note to the accounts.

**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 2012, be approved.

### **4 De-accessioning of Items in the Collections**

The Joint Committee considered a report from the Museum Director that requested the de-accessioning or transfer of items in the Museums Collections (for copy see file of Minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the de-accessioning and transfer or disposal of listed items be approved.

## **5 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.

## **6 Business and Operational Improvement Plan – Capital Programme Project Report No. 11**

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.

## **7 Long Term Plan Update**

The Museum Director gave a detailed presentation outlining the short, mid and long term plans of the Museum (for copy of presentation see file of Minutes). Key decisions were being made and an outline plan would be available for the Joint Committee in January 2013.

### **Resolved:-**

That the report be noted.

## **8 Update of the HSE Investigation**

The Museum Director updated the Joint Committee of the progress of the investigation following a tragic accident in July 2012.