

**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 23 November 2012 at 10.00 a.m.**

**PRESENT:**

**Members of the Joint Committee**

Councillors Bailey, C Carr, Davidson, May, Morgan, Naylor, Stoker, Thomson, Todd and Wilkinson (Durham County Council), Goldsworthy, Green and Wallace (Gateshead MBC), Mortimer (North Tyneside MBC), Cunningham and Maxwell (South Tyneside MBC) and R Bell, Fletcher, Kelly and Walker (Sunderland City Council)

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

*Friends* – Mr A Ashburner

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Bell, Blakey, Iveson, Shuttleworth and Wright (Durham County Council), Richardson and Trueman (Sunderland City Council), Mrs Stewart (Beamish Development Trust) and Mr Dix (Friends)

Mr Ashburner informed the Committee of the death of Robert Atkinson, former member of the Friends of Beamish. The Committee placed on record their thanks to Mr Atkinson for his contribution to the Museum and wished to pass on their condolences to his family.

**1 Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 September 2012**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**2 Arts Council England Major Partner Museums and Creative People and Places Bid**

The Joint Committee received a presentation from the Head of Community Participation, Helen Barker about local community work and a bid for Creative People and Places funding through the Arts Council England.

Members were informed that with ACE funding the team have been able to develop joint working with partner Museums such as the DLI, Bowes and Killhope and offer them advice and support. Celebrating local history in the community had also developed with events such as Silksworth Evictions and Felling Pit Disaster and gave people a chance to share their experiences.

The bid for Creative People and Places would allow up to £3m to be spent in encouraging people in East Durham to participate in the Arts. East Durham was found to be the 5<sup>th</sup> area nationally and the lowest in the North East where people participate in the Arts. Beamish are leading a consortium including East Durham Trust and East Durham Area Action Partnership to look at ways in which to engage the local community with a range of accessible activities. Ms Barker added that there is already a lot of activity taking place in East Durham such as Dance, Music, Musical Productions and that these informal settings could be developed and connections made with artists. It was appreciated that there must be a balance between what people relate to and excellence. The definition of Art would be broad and must reflect how local people define themselves. The Museum Director said that the bid would need to fit the needs of East Durham and evidence would need to be provided to the Arts Council showing that activities would reach the community.

The Joint Committee thanked Ms Barker for a very informative presentation.

### **3 New Attractions for 2013 – Hetton Band Hall and Town Bakery**

The Joint Committee received a presentation from the Museum Curator, Jim Rees about new attractions for 2013.

Hetton Band Hall – the community were keen to protect the history of the band hall and have been involved in fund raising through a number of events to help demolish and restore the building. Hetton Band amalgamated with Durham Colliery Bands and are keen to play in the hall once open. The building would remain as a community building and would be used for a variety of events including school activities. The Museum Director added that he would be attending an event in Hetton whereby the Museum would receive the money from the sale of land of the former site of the band hall. Mr Ashburner reminded Members that the Friends of Beamish had a target of £50,000 to raise money for their ‘Buy a Brick’ campaign, with £10,000 being raised so far.

Town Bakery – a replica bread oven and shop front are being restored, a modern kitchen has been erected at the rear of the building and a stained glass window (from a South Shields bakery) was being restored and fit into the shop entrance. Members were aware that there had been many problems with the existing building and repairs have been carried out carefully and slowly to ensure the building is fit for purpose and looks the part. Members were assured that this was cheaper than demolishing the building and rebuilding a new one.

The Joint Committee thanked Mr Rees for a very informative presentation.

#### **4 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 - a good start to the Christmas season was reported with 2 of the 3 Christmas nights already sold out, and thanks were given to the RAF for delivering Father Christmas to the Museum in a helicopter. Figures showed that the Museum were ahead of budget on visitor numbers for November and they were on track for receiving 500,000 visitors for the year. Admissions income was slightly down but still ahead of forecast. The fish and chip shop was producing a surplus of £100,000 and creating 9 jobs. Bonfire Nights was very successful and attracted 3,500 visitors – thanks were given to the Police and Fire and Rescue Services for their support.

Business and Operational Improvement Plan Capital Developments - Update – unselective collecting would be taking place from February half term. Asbestos removal from Kelly's store through the Arts Council Designated Funding Scheme would allow all objects required to be treated and moved to the Museum for storage – the building would then be returned to Durham County Council. Further work is needed to continue with Eston Church and Dunrobin. The Apprenticeship Programme is being developed whereby experienced craftsmen and engineers would work alongside a manageable number of apprentices. An application to the Heritage Lottery Fund's 'Skills for the Future' would help support this new way of working.

Arts Council England – Major Partner Museum Update & Bid for Creative People & Places Funding as part of a consortium in East Durham – as discussed in the Head of Community Learning's presentation.

**Resolved:-**

- (i) That the key performance indicators for the 2012/13 year to date be noted.
- (ii) That the Business and Operational Capital Programme be approved.
- (iii) That the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund 'Skills for the Future' fund to develop training and apprenticeships at Beamish and other partner sites, be approved.
- (iv) That the work with ACE as part of the Major Museums programme be noted, and a bid for Creative People and Places funding in a consortium for East Durham, be approved.

**5 Beamish Future Plan 2013-2025 - Update**

The Museum Director updated Members of the Future Plan. The HLF had been approached with an application for funding support for the 1950's development and the continued development of the Pit Village. They had suggested to bid for phases of work and apply again in 2013. Therefore a bid of £5m would be submitted in February for the first phase of work that would continue developments in the Colliery, Pit and Village including plans for a double bricked terrace with allotments and conversion of Home Farm for adult learning. The second phase would be a much larger bid of £14m that would cover the 1950's area, Homes for Memory and development of the 1820's area.

**Resolved:-**

That a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the first phase of work be approved.

**6 Cycle of Meetings 2013**

The Joint Committee considered a report of the Secretary outlining the dates of Joint Committee meetings for 2013 (for copy see file of Minutes).

It was suggested that the annual meeting in July be changed to 5 July 2013.

**Resolved:**

That the cycle of meetings be approved with the annual meeting in July being changed to 5 July 2013.

## **7 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.

## **8 Update on Partnership Review – Working Group and Regional Advisory Panel**

The Museum Director updated the Joint Committee of the forthcoming meeting of the Regional Advisory Panel and its objectives. Meetings of the working group are progressing well and an update would be provided at the January 2013 meeting.