

**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 R Bell, J Kelly, D Richardson, J Scott, D Trueman and M Turton (Sunderland City Council)

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), B Goldsworthy and L Green (Gateshead MBC), Councillors F Cunningham and N Maxwell (South Tyneside MBC), J Fletcher, J Jackson and P Walker (Sunderland City Council) and Malcolm Dix (Friends of Beamish)

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 2014. Plans were being developed to outline how Beamish will sustain its support for schools and community participation in future years
- Creative People/ Places – project continues to develop with partners in East Durham
- HLF Bid for major capital development– bid to be finalised in November. There was a risk in terms of raising match funding for the project. Partnership support from Local Authorities was very important as the competition for funding will be fierce. Talks had taken place with the Treasurer from Sunderland City Council to secure a guarantee for the funding shortfall of up to £4.5 million as this would strengthen the HLF bid and the Museum needed to show it was in a position to deliver.
- Short term priority projects for 2013/14 and 2014/15 – to be discussed under a separate Capital Projects Report on the agenda
- Review of Governance – waiting for Local Authorities to comment on the draft 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 the first Regional Stakeholder Group and the current Joint Committee meeting. The date of the first Regional Stakeholder meeting will be 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 from Wingate and reconstructing a Chemist/Photographer's in the 1900s Town.

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 out to the group in advance and discussions 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 31st 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.