

**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 15 November 2013** at **10.00 am**

Present:

Councillor C Marshall (Chairman)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors A Batey, J Blakey, I Jewell, J Lethbridge, O Milburn, S Morrison and R Todd (Durham County Council)

Councillors J Wallace (Gateshead Council), A Cowie (North Tyneside Council), F Cunningham and N Maxwell (South Tyneside MBC), J Jackson, D Richardson and P Walker (Sunderland City Council)

Co-opted Members (Non-Voting)

Friends – Mr M Dix

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Bell, R Bell, Buckham, Carr, Conway, Hicks, Iveson, Maitland, Oliver, Pemberton, Shuttleworth and Stoker (Durham County Council), Goldsworthy and Green (Gateshead Council), R Bell, Fletcher, Kelly, Scott, Trueman and Turton (Sunderland City Council), Mr Ashburner (Friends) and Mrs Stewart (BDT).

The Museum Director also gave his apologies for the meeting as he had been called away on urgent Museum business.

2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 September 2013

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Museum Update - Report of Museum Director

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

Performance – The Museum were 17% up on visitor numbers and 15% up on admissions income from the previous year up to the end of September 2013. Visitor numbers were very good in October despite the poor weather and on 2 November 2013 the Museum passed the milestone of 500,000 visitors. A review of catering and retail is taking place. Attendances had been excellent at the Halloween and Bonfire Night events with all evenings sold out. All evenings for the Christmas event had also sold out.

The Assistant Director highlighted the following:-

- 2014 Opening Times and Events List
- IIP has been awarded following a review on site
- 0-37 hour contracts – a review has taken place with managers & team leaders trained to distribute hours fairly. The Assistant Director advised the Committee that the Board had agreed a new rate of pay for manual workers and as their skills developed their pay would increase on a points system
- Review of Governance – waiting for Local Authorities to agree the revised memorandum/ articles of association. The first Regional Stakeholder Group was held on 25 October with good participation from across the region. Apologies were given to Mr Dix as he had not received an invitation to the meeting. The Chairman said that the membership of the group was not set in stone and would be flexible to respond to the needs of the Museum and the culture of the region.

Resolved:-

That the report be noted.

4 'Remaking the Living Museum 1820-1950' HLF Project Application November 2013 - Presentation from the Museum Director

The Assistant Director, Engagement gave a detailed presentation entitled 'Remaking the Living Museum 1820-1950' HLF Project Application November 2013 (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Assistant Director summarised the key points from the plan for each area of development that will form the Heritage Lottery Fund Bid to be submitted at the end of November. The Chairman added that work was underway to secure the guarantor from local authorities that would support the application. It was felt that this would be critical to the bid as

competition was extremely fierce. Senior Financial Managers from Sunderland City Council and Durham County Council have been approached to share the £4.5m risk. The Chairman added that he was confident this would be in place, if not at the end of November, by January 2014.

Resolved:-

That the HLF bid for the Development Plan be endorsed.

5 Development of Beamish's Learning Programmes for Schools - Presentation by the Head of Learning

The Head of Learning gave a detailed presentation regarding the Development of Beamish's Learning Programmes for Schools (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Head of Learning summarised the work carried out for Engagement and Learning Activities including projects for:-

Puffing Billy – community and school work carried out in Wylam to commemorate the introduction of steam;
Immersion work with evacuees programme of events;
WW1 – work with secondary schools about the motivation to 'sign up' using real stories.

Major Partner Museums – all partnership work was progressing well:-

DLI Museum – training elements offered and next steps explored;
Killhope Museum – developed 'Boom or Bust' project and next steps explored;
Bowes Museum – developed KS1 delivery – waiting for feedback & will roll out.

Members suggested that local history for Beamish is used for learning purposes when the timing was right. The Head of Learning agreed and said that all learning projects used real stories so that students could research and become immersed into the story telling.

In relation to a question about youth project work, the Head of Learning explained that the Museum do work closely with Youth Groups. He suggested that it might be advisable to invite youth group leaders to the Museum to show what they could offer as not all youth groups will be aware of the projects taking place.

Following a suggestion that the Museum may want to become involved in a project about the 'First Lady Banner', the Assistant Director advised that she would pass the information to the Head of Community Development.

The Head of Learning concluded that the Museum would continue to develop learning and community programmes through the development plan, bringing together the skills required and through working together.

The Committee thanked the Head of Learning for a very enthusiastic and detailed presentation.

6 Dates of Future Meetings

The Chairman advised that dates for future meetings would be agreed in consultation with the Museum Director and circulated in due course. He added that it was likely that the last Joint Committee meeting would be held in March 2014.

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 Capital Project Report No. 2 November 2013 - Report of the Museum Director

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.