

BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL

MUSEUM SUB-COMMITTEE

MEETING ROOM, BLAKE MUSEUM, BRIDGWATER

HELD ON MONDAY 18 MAY 2009 AT 11.30AM

PRESENT: Councillors Granter (Chairman), Smeed, and Turner.

Also present: Alan Hurford, Town Clerk and Dr Peter Cattermole, Honorary Museum

Co-ordinator and Bryan Gillard (Chairman) representing the Friends of Blake Museum

09 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON 2 MARCH 2009

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 March 2009 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

10 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON 02 MARCH 2009:

The Town Clerk confirmed the signing of the engrossment of the Transfer and Agreement

on Friday last, and confirmed the position with the transitional funding provided by Sedgemoor District Council for the next 4 years (at £40000 for the first year, and £25000 annually for the following 3 years). The Sub-Committee recognised the Town Clerk's efforts in negotiation with Sedgemoor District Council, together with the contribution of the Museum Co-ordinator. It was asked if Sedgemoor would be able to regain a degree of control of the running of the Museum by providing "continued funding" in the future. It was indicated that this would not be the case, as an agreement has been entered into outlining the payments made, which has been signed by all parties involved. A future controlling body or Trust would determine the management and operation regardless of funding. There was also recognition of the fine work done by volunteers at Blake Museum.

11 NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FRIENDS AND MUSEUM SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON 25 MARCH 2009: received.

## 12 VISIT AND ASSESSMENT OF THE MUSEUM PRIOR TO RE-OPENING:

The Sub-Committee were given a tour of the building, led by Dr Cattermole and Bryan Gillard. The Committee were reminded that the project was still working progress, and were invited to point out any problems they saw which could be a danger to the public upon opening. A snagging list was created to enable the prioritisation of these issues so that urgent matters could be dealt with, and a list circulated at the Friends meeting on Tuesday. The lists most important items included uneven flooring, warnings on steps, protruding nails and unanchored objects (such as an unstable clock) would be dealt with

prior to the opening date.

RESOLVED 1: That with adequate safety procedures the accessible parts of the Museum be re-opened to the public on 20 May 2009 from 10am;

2: That this unanimous decision be confirmed to the Friends of Blake Museum and Trustees at their meeting on 19 May 2009, and the report of the Museum Co-ordinator be approved for submission to that meeting.

3: That the prioritised snagging list be referred to the Friends and Volunteers.

## 13 APPOINTMENT OF CURATORIAL ADVISOR:

RESOLVED: That Natalie Watson be confirmed as the Curatorial Advisor and the Town Clerk and Museum Co-ordinator authorised to settle details of the appointment.

## 14 STATEMENT OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE BUDGET:

The Museum Co-ordinator presented the current budget statement, considering the work done on the Museum to represent value for money in comparison with paying for professionals to do the work rather than volunteers. He referred to the use of the contingency to pay for £1300 of flooring in the Meeting Room, following the discovery of dry rot. He was still awaiting a statement to confirm the budget expenditure on electrical work. Councillor Smeed was concerned what would happen to any funding should the Museum underspend. Dr Cattermole replied that all funding would be used to benefit the Museum, and that the agreement with Sedgemoor was framed so that any unused money would be accumulated. There was a suggestion to review the contingency plan, allowing diversion of funds to other areas, such as "new items". Money which had been spent before 31st March this year would be viewed as an advance grant enabling fund, and would figure in the audit for 2008/9. It was understood there was a sum of £1600 donated through the Homberg Twinning, which was to be used for the restoration of the Old Mill - working with the Friends, and

as requested by the Town Council, the whereabouts of this donation given for a distinct purpose was being followed up.

#### 15 SAFETY POLICY AND CODE OF PRACTICE FOR VOLUNTEERS:

The draft safety policy was circulated to the Sub-Committee by Dr Cattermole, and members were asked to read through the document on an individual basis and to bring any comments/issues to the attention of the Museum Co-ordinator or Town Clerk. The final version, with any alterations, will be completed by the end of the month. A Safety Supervisor, rather than a Safety Officer, would be assigned, and deal with training and upkeep of all Health and Safety related issues.

#### 16 CORRESPONDENCE:

i) LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BRIDGWATER AND DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY - The Chairman had written congratulating the Town Council and Friends on the transfer from Sedgemoor District Council to Bridgwater Town Council. The letter also suggested the setting up of an advisory board, including members from several local groups, including the Civic Society, Archaeological Society and Sedgemoor District Council. The Sub-Committee welcomed the views of the Friends of Blake Museum on the future management arrangements, but were anxious that this should not become excessively bureaucratic. The Town Clerk would respond fully once the views of the Friends were known, and the Town Council had considered future arrangements.

ii) The Town Clerk referred to an email concerning the use of secure storage space at the Brick and Tile Museum, suggested by Tony Woolrich as an alternative to Colley Lane. This was referred to the Town Clerk and Museum Co-ordinator.

17 A.O.B: Bryan Gillard asked if there was any possibility that Bridgwater Town Council would provide car park passes for volunteers at the Museum, to enable them to leave their cars in Dampiet Street while working in Blake Street. The current passes provided by Sedgemoor District Council were set to expire in 2010. The Town Clerk replied that it was likely that any car park passes would have to be paid for out of the Blake Museum budget.

The Meeting finished at 1.10pm