

**MINUTES OF THE PENLEE HOUSE COMMITTEE MEETING** held in The Orangery, Penlee House, Penzance on Monday 23 July 2018 at 7.00 pm.

**PRESENT**

Councillor                D J Axford (Chairman)  
                                  P Young (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors               K M Baker  
                                  A L Bates  
                                  N C Broadhurst  
                                  S M Cordel  
                                  J H Dixon

Also present: L Connell (Director, Penlee House), K Herbert (Curator/Deputy Director, Penlee House) and S Paternotte (Administrator, Penlee House).

**9. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor R B Cliffe

Absence without apologies: Councillors J M How and S J Reed

**10. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None received.

**11. TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted **Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960**.

There were no confidential items on the agenda to be discussed.

**12. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON Monday 4 June 2018**

Having been circulated, it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** that the Chairman should sign the Minutes as a true and correct record.

Cllr Cordel abstained as he was not present at the meeting held on 4 June 2018.

**13. REPORTS FOR DECISION**

(a) To approve the siting of a slate memorial plaque to Maria Brontë and Elizabeth Branwell

This request had come in a letter from a private individual, via the Town Clerk. Penlee House was built in the 1860s for JR Branwell, the second cousin twice removed of Maria and Elizabeth. JR Branwell was born in 1823, two years after Maria's death. Although the Branwells of Penlee House were proud of their Brontë heritage, it is not a direct line of descent. Penlee House was built after the sisters had passed away and they had no physical connection to the site. It was therefore thought that the link was a little tenuous and siting a plaque at Penlee House would be misleading to the public. It was suggested by Councillor Cordel that the request be passed to the Plaques Committee.

It was unanimously

**RESOLVED** that the request is passed to the Plaques Committee with a recommendation that it is not approved.

(Proposed: Councillor Axford; Seconded: Councillor Broadhurst)

#### 14. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

(a) Penlee House Director's Report

The Director's written report on the following items, had been circulated previously and now appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes.

- Exhibitions
- Events and Education
  - Staff
  - Income
  - Groups

The Director summarised her report, highlighting the number of educational projects and events Penlee is undertaking at the moment, and asked if there were any questions or comments. She also pointed out that the '*Stanhope Forbes: Father of the Newlyn School*' book had won the Gorsedh Kernow's 'Holyer an Gof' publishers award, in the illustrated publication category.

(b) Staff Secondment Report

The Director said she hoped all councillors had had a chance to read the Curator/Deputy Director's report on her recent placements, funded by a Jonathan Ruffer Curatorial Grant. Councillor Dixon remarked on the number of additional staff these other venues had, compared to Penlee House, to provide very similar services.

(c) Finance Report

The Director summarised the report explaining that many of the figures in red were due to grant claims pending, as well as some seasonal spending which would balance out in the winter. Councillor Dixon remarked on the business rates figure being over budget. Councillor Cordel asked if we knew how much income the Coach House generated. The Director replied that the RFO would know, however she explained that the hire fees charged were nominal as the

venue had very basic facilities. A refurbishment plan was in the pipeline, so the charges may be reviewed in the future.

Overall figures were set to balance, with shop income being over budget.

(d) **Update from Committee Chair on Strategic Planning**

The first of the Penzance Town Council Strategic Planning workshops took place on 14 July 2018. It was attended by councillors and staff with an aim to produce an agreed strategic plan to focus PTC activities over the next 2 – 4 years. There would be a second event on 18 August, after which a full report would follow.

**15. MATTERS ARISING FOR REPORT ONLY**

Councillor Broadhurst proposed a vote of thanks to the Director. On behalf of the Committee, Councillor Axford thanked Louise for all her hard work over the past 5 years and wished her the best of luck in her future ventures. He noted that, until a new Director was appointed, Katie Herbert, the Curator/Deputy Director, would be stepping up as Operational Director. Any strategic decisions would be taken by the Town Clerk.

The Meeting closed at 7.42 pm

Chairman  
17 September 2018