

**STAMFORD TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MUSEUM COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY, 04 JULY 2022 AT 6.00PM**

PRESENT

Councillor Shaun Ford (Chairman)
Councillor John Dawson
Councillor Mrs Elaine Hooper
Councillor Ms Amanda Schonhut

ALSO PRESENT

Councillor Mrs Amanda Wheeler (Vice-Chair). Attending on-line.
Jim Grevatte, Museum Development Consultant. Attending on-line.
Civic Officer – Mark Murtagh
One member of public in attendance
Two members of public viewing virtually

97. To Receive public representation in respect of the business on the agenda (Point 1)

No members of the public wished to speak.

98. Apologies and reasons for absence (Agenda Point 2) - *Committee to receive and resolve reasons for absence in accordance with the requirement of the Local Government Act 1972*

Councillor David Taylor (Mayor), Councillor Andrew Croft and Councillor Mrs Joanna Winterbourne submitted their apologies, and these were noted.

Proposal 1 – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Elaine Hooper, seconded by Councillor John Dawson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the apologies for absence are accepted

99. Declaration of Interest (Agenda Point 3) - *Committee to receive declarations of interest in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, and to consider any applications for dispensations in relation to disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests.*

Councillor Elaine Hooper declared a Personal Interest as she is a member of the Stamford & District Local History Society.

Councillor Amanda Schonhut declared a Personal Interest as she is a member of the Civic Society.

100. To Confirm The Minutes -(Agenda Point 4)

The Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday, 04 April 2022 had been confirmed at the 26 April 2022 Town Council meeting and would be signed in due course.

101. Action Points: - (Agenda Point 5)

- a. *Feedback on Spirit of Stamford consultation and expanding consultation using a QR Code-*
The Chairman invited Jim Grevatte, Museum Development Consultant, to give an update on the action points. Jim informed the committee that good progress had been made since the last meeting, the second session of participants visiting the store and selecting objects was completed and 10 objects have been chosen, there is now a waiting list of people who wish to be involved. 44 questionnaires have been recorded as been received, both online and hard copy which has generated rich feedback. The project itself, The Spirit of Stamford'

is devised to encourage participation in establishing a new museum. The next stage will be a public vote of the selected items which will be assisted by the scanning of a QR code.

A series of events will be held over August starting with a market stall in the style of an old circus tent, the public will be able to vote on the chosen objects with, perhaps a Punch and Judy performance which would attract people to the stall. Participation in this whole process is key and really understanding what people want from their museum.

- b. *Production of graphics for publicity for promotion* – The initial plans for the circus tent are underway and will be effectively, a full of wonders for participants to vote on, Jim wished to work with Stuart Jackson from Frank Newbon given their heritage in the area, we want to set precedents of working with talented, enthusiastic and innovative organisations and companies. There is an outline budget to make all these things happen culminating at the Autumn Fair hopefully attracting many people. The Chairman added that the Discover Stamford Exhibition has been dismantled in the library and it might be a good idea to utilise the space with a display explaining what is being planned with regard to setting up the new museum. Funding had been applied for from MDEM (Museum Development East Midlands).

Proposal 2 – It was proposed by Councillor Ford, seconded by Councillor Schonhut and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Committee agrees with the design of printed material, posters etc to facilitate the public consultation in August.

- c. *Designing the Town Hall Cellars as Crime & Punishment Exhibit* - Jim Grevatte explained that whilst we are looking at a new museum for Stamford it is sensible to also look at what the Town Council could offer within the whole project, an interpretive plan is being developed which would explain how areas of the town hall including the cellars could be part of the Crime and punishment exhibit. This project would feed into the museum accreditation plan.
- d. *Explore the potential of a Crime & Punishment Escape Room event* – The Chairman informed the members that he would relay the notes from Councillor Wheeler on this topic. Some time ago the cellars were proposed as being a part of the new museum but due to too many climatic issues this was not practical, this led to the idea of setting up an escape room. An escape room is where victims pay to be temporarily imprisoned for about an hour and look for clues made available by the organiser to enable them to escape. If the Town Hall were used as an escape room four or five groups could be booked in per day. Rather than starting from scratch we would like to draw upon the services of two professional experts in this field. The first is a gentleman called Sasha Coward, he would visit and assess the venue for an initial charge of £400, to assess the whole project, including equipment and publicity material etc. The second expert in this field is Tessa Angel, the difference between the two is Tessa would set up the room and this would be part of her portfolio, this would mean that the venue would share the profits with the company running the escape room. Councillor Schonhut was aware of an escape room in Grantham and would try to find out the profitability of the venture.

Proposal 3 – It was proposed by Councillor Dawson, seconded by Councillor Elaine Hooper and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Committee agrees that Sasha Coward and Tessa Angel are invited to visit and assess the potential of an escape room. It was noted that a £400 fee would be payable to Sasha Coward.

e. Preparation of the drafting of the Museum Offer

The Chairman asked Jim Grevatte to explain the transfer of museum assets from Lincolnshire County Council to Stamford Town Council. Jim Grevatte explained that he has been pulling together information that will effectively show Lincolnshire County Council how we are planning to run the museum. This needs to be clear for the funding applications and partnership negotiations. A final draft should be completed by the end of August which can be taken to full Council, once approved it can then be submitted to LCC for formal negotiations in October.

102. Budget and Funding Opportunities – (Agenda Point 6)

a. Funding application to Museum Development East Midland – The Chairman revealed that interim funding had been submitted to MDEM. who wanted to know how our project addresses the Arts Council investment criteria of ambition and quality, particularly dynamism, environmental responsibility and inclusivity. The Town Clerk has responded, and we expect to hear about this funding imminently. Another funding source is TownsWeb Archiving who sponsor physical projects such as satellite exhibitions, and other offerings such as escape rooms etc which we would be looking for funding. Townsweb is a Northamptonshire based digital organisation that digitise charters, scan photographs etc, they do have a beneficent arm which give their service for free. A proposal has been set up for funding. The Chairman went on to say that other funding could be sourced from environmental waste companies that could fund community projects. Councillor Schonhut suggested that The Heritage Lottery Fund would be another good source of funding, Jim Gravette agreed and stated that this is the key and most obvious funder, however they would not really consider you unless accreditation has been taken seriously. The same principles would apply to the Arts Council Lottery. Jim Gravette was involved in developing a similar funding plan for another project and a number of aspects would be the same. The next stage will be putting together a funding plan for Stamford. It was noted that any funding had to be matched by the Town Council or an external partner. One cannot match Arts Lottery with Heritage Lottery grant funding.

b. Review Museum Budget – The Chairman explained that we are in the initial stage of our work, beyond that the budget needs to be used for many different purposes, later in the process we need to identify where the main interest of spending will be, such as funding the curator post, display cabinets, lighting, audio visual equipment etc. Jim Gravette added that establishment costs would all be contained in the interpretation plan.

103. Evaluate status of Timeline towards Accreditation submission – (Agenda Point 7)

a. Consultation Opportunities March – October 2022- The Chairman outlined the fact that the Museum Committee was formed in November 2021 and an initial vision, ideas and aspirations for the museum has been formed, following consultation of the public. All information will be consolidated, and the budget will be reviewed for presentation to the council.

b. Prepare Museum Budget, September 2022 – The Chairman reported that in September the draft budget will be submitted to The Finance Committee for consideration and then to full council.

c. Redrafting Museum Offer, October 2022 – In October 2022 the redrafting of the museum offer will be considered and ratified by Town Council and then submitted to for Lincolnshire County Council. Following the County Council approval transfer arrangements will be put in place and Stamford Town Council would take possession of the Collection Store, Museum Collection and Discover Stamford.

d. Drafting advert for Heritage Officer / Curator, November 2022 – The recruitment for this role is planned for November 2022, by this time a much clearer detail of the specification and the vision will have been determined.

e. Preparation for Museum Accreditation submission, April 2023 – It is anticipated that all arrangements in respect of the Collection will be in place and the post of curator filled. At this stage the curator would be able to contribute their vision for the museum.

104. Any other business

Councillor Dawson wished to commend the Museum Committee on their robust research and for development process achieved. He congratulated the members on operating in a coordinated manner. Everything is moving forward in line with the timeline set by the committee. The Chairman thanked Councillor Dawson for his feedback.

Councillor Schonhut enquired how long it took to achieve full accreditation. It was noted that following submission, The Arts Council would visit the site, before making a final decision. The whole process could be 6 to 8 months.

The Civic Officer enquired whether separate accreditation would be required for satellite exhibits. Jim Gravette said that once accreditation had been achieved for the Museum at the Town Hall the process would be much simpler to get another site accredited as all the foundation documents would be in place.

Councillor Hooper asked where the exhibits from the Discover Stamford Exhibition were currently held. The Chairman confirmed that they are being held in the museum store.

105. Date of next meeting ((Agenda Point 8) – Monday 01 August 2022 at 6pm

The Chairman
closed the meeting at 7.10pm