

PEMBROKE DOCK TOWN COUNCIL.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOURISM COMMITTEE HELD IN THE WARRIOR ROOM, PATER HALL, PEMBROKE DOCK ON TUESDAY 29th JANUARY 2008 COMMENCING AT 1030HRS.

Present: Councillor Mrs P E George (Chairman)
Councillors Mrs V M J Roach
Councillor R Watts
Councillor P Weatherall
Mr Don Earl (Pembroke Dock Summer Festival Committee)

Apologies: Mr Andrew Johnstone (Pembroke Dock Web Project)

In attendance: Mr Ian Jones (Town Clerk)

27. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27th November 2007.

It was proposed by Councillor P Weatherall and seconded by Councillor R Watts that the minutes as previously circulated be accepted as an accurate record of business. All were in agreement.

28. Matters arising.

Councillor Mrs P George welcomed Mr Don Earl to his first meeting as the representative of the Festival Committee.

There were no other matters arising which would not be dealt with elsewhere in the agenda.

29. “Wash up” session on the Christmas Festivities 2007.

Councillor Mrs P George stated that the Friday event involving the arrival of Father Christmas was very well attended; in fact it was the best for more than 5 years. The attraction of the Ice Rink and Fair also helped increase in numbers. The Town Clerk stated that on the Friday the attendance at the rink was 186 people and the Saturday was 125. The sum of £1141.72 plus £400 fee from the Fair was taken giving £1541.72 as income for the two days. As previously reported sponsorship was received from the Port Authority in the sum of £1000, Chevron / Texaco £500, Dragon LNG £100. LBS Builders £25 (£1625 in total). The Chamber of Trade / Parfitts Carpets had created some interest from Primary School pupils by way of a competition with some 40 youngsters winning the opportunity of a free ½ hr on the rink. This would provide a further income of £120 once the invoice the Town Clerk had issued had been paid. The Ice rink had cost £4162 (excluding VAT which was recoverable) leaving on the face of it a deficit of some £875 which had been met from the Town Council. There were additional costs for advertisements, cost of closing the Western Way Car Park etc but this was similar to expenditure for the previous Winter Carnival events. Given that in the past we had spent some £2000 on fireworks for the Carnival there had been a saving on the total outlay for the festivities. Councillor Mrs George thanked those who had helped with the setting up and running of the “Rink” especially Town Council Staff and their families who had carried out the task without pay. Mention was made of the Town Clerk acting as unpaid Security Guard overnight when the rink was closed.

The Lantern Parade was a new feature to the arrival of Father Christmas and the consensus was that this had also helped increase numbers. Mr D Earl reported that over 100 children had attended the workshops which created the lanterns and this would also have helped increase the numbers attending. It was agreed that a letter be sent to the Festival Group to thank them for their support in running the workshops and getting young people involved. The money for this part of the event some £6000 in all was met by a grant from the Social Risk Fund which was managed by the Festival Committee.

Looking at what went well and what did not it was agreed that the cold weather on the Saturday and the lack of an additional attraction on the Saturday had kept down numbers. The Fair believed that they only broke even on the Saturday. The Committee believe that we will need to increase the number of fair ground attraction if the event was to be repeated in 2008. There was also a discussion on the provision of charity stalls etc which would provide Christmas Fayre etc. This year we had asked the Fair to provide refreshments but in 2008 it may be better to involve local groups. The times of opening the Rink were discussed and it was agreed that the times for the Friday i.e. 1500 to 2200hrs was appropriate but that on the Saturday we should consider earlier start and end times e.g. 1200 to 1900hrs or 1100 to 1800hrs. The question of whether we should go for a larger rink would be deferred until the next meeting once some costings had been received from the contracting company. There was also a discussion on whether the venue for the rink should be changed to Lower Meyrick Street with stalls / fair ground attractions located in Middle Meyrick Street. Again this would be discussed at the next meeting. Another alternative site was the Car Park area just below Job Centre Plus or using part of the Car Park at Tesco Stores. The Committee believed that the event should be kept in the centre of the town if at all possible.

Members were asked to think about further improvements in the meanwhile so that we were in a position to build on the 2007 event.

30. Additional Christmas Illuminations for Queen Street.

The Town Clerk advised members that the final area to have new illuminations was the lower part of Queen Street. The representative of Blachere Illuminations had visited the town on 15th January and had suggested 7 suitable displays which would “link in” with the remainder of the displays. In addition there would be a further 2 illuminations for Lower Meyrick Street. These new illuminations together with the cost of brackets were £3561.00 (excluding VAT). The Town Council budget could accommodate this expenditure. It was agreed that this sum should be spent.

The Town Clerk also stated that Blachere’s also had a “Creative Kids” promotion in which children in Primary schools took part in a competition organised by a community to design a Christmas illumination. The cost was £500 for a one metre square design. If we were interested then we could obtain the appropriate literature and involve children in the early Summer term to design such a display. It could then be put together in September with the display then being switched on by the child on the day Father Christmas arrived. It was suggested that such a design could be sited in Lower Meyrick Street. It was agreed that such a design competition would be worth while especially if we could get sponsorship. The Town Clerk will obtain the information and try and locate an appropriate sponsor e.g. RWE npower who were to give a presentation to the Town Council next week about the proposed Power Station at Pembroke. He would report back to the next meeting. In addition he stated that in 2007 the “Christmas Tree” option of renting to Chamber of Trade Members had not been a

success as there had been problems in securing the use of the “Cherry Picker” on days when the electrician was available. He believed that our current contractor for hoist operations was stretched with the work he carried out over the Christmas period and it was necessary to discuss alternatives to current arrangements. These would be raised later in the meeting. The Chamber of Trade needed to be involved with the provision of the lights and some town councils look for a contribution from businesses towards the cost.

31. Arrangements for fixing the Christmas Lights in 2008.

The Town Clerk explained that as part of his duties he was required to look at value for money initiatives. This year we had spent some £3300 for the hire of a “Cherry Picker” for the erection and dismantling of the Christmas Lights. Pembroke Town Council contract for their lights was in need of renewal this year and the current contractor had indicated he would not be re-tendering. Provisional enquiries he had made indicated that we could hire a “Cherry Picker” from a reputable Municipal Contractor for a fraction of the cost e.g. less than £500 per week. We would need to train members of staff to operate the vehicle properly and he had written to two training bodies for details of their charges. Our current electrical contractor already had the appropriate licence to operate such a machine but he needed assistance to fix the motifs etc hence the need to have at least two more people trained. On this basis we could jointly work together with Pembroke to Hire a vehicle and train/use staff from both councils. Mr Pickering had indicated that he was prepared to consider assisting in the erection of lights within Pembroke but he would need to have more information about the number of motifs to be displayed etc. The Town Clerk had already written to the Municipal Hire Company and two training organisations to ascertain costs. He would now liaise with the Town Clerk of Pembroke to put together a robust case for changes in the way we carry out this task.

32. Summer Festival and Sea Fair Haven Events June 2008.

Mr Earl stated that the Summer Festival Committee were to meet on Monday next (4th February) to discuss plans to mark the event. They had already put together a bid for funds to the Port Authority but there now appeared to be some slippage in determining the number of vessels who had signed up to come to the event. At present Hobbs Point was being considered as a mooring area for some of the vessels (40/50ft yachts) and West Wales Maritime Trust Boatyard in Front Street being used for the “Old Gaffers” and Rowing Boats. There were plans to hold a Pig Roast at Hobbs Point on the Saturday and a Civic Reception at Front Street on the Thursday. Both events would have some form of music with a marquee. The results of the bid to the Port Authority will be known in March. Members were reminded that the Council Budget for the 2008/9 year took into account extra expenditure to support sea Fair Haven events. It was agreed that Mr Earl would keep members informed of what was happening.

33. Any other business.

Councillor Ron Watts update members on the enquiries he was making about the possibility of Military style events coming to Pembroke Dock to support the towns 200th birthday. He had drafted a letter to the Kings Troop Royal Horse Artillery to see if they were available during that year. He was working with the Town Clerk to put together a programme of events which would take place throughout the year and which could be costed.

Councillor Watts reminded members of the visit of the German Sailors to Pembroke Dock in May of this year. The programme for that visit was currently being finalised. It was suggested that the group may wish to place a wreath at the memorial in the Military Cemetery to German Sailors who lost their lives.

The Town Clerk read over to members the contents of a letter he had received from the Air Training Corps who this year had not acted as “escort” to Father Christmas on his arrival in the town. It was agreed that a letter in response be sent which would set out the position as the Committee saw it. It was not accepted that only the ATC had acted as escort in the past. The Town Clerk’s draft response would be agreed with this Committee’s Chairman.

The date of the next meeting was fixed as 4th March 2008 at 1030hrs in the Pater Hall.

The meeting closed at 1215hrs