

THE LETCHWORTH SETTLEMENT

MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2016 AT 11.00AM

MINUTES

Mrs P. Burn (PGB) (Chair)
Mr N. Carrick (NC) Vice Chair (From 11.30am)
Mrs C. Twomey (CT) (Hon. Secretary)
Mr R. Thorogood (RT)
Mrs R. Bird (RB)
Mr P. Chapman (PC)
Mrs S. Halfpenny (SH)

In attendance:
Mrs S. Weston (SW)

1. APOLOGIES and WELCOME

1.1. Apologies were received from Ms R. Lawrence Hyde (RH-L), Mr J. Bird (JB) and Mrs E. Barber (EB).

1.2. PGB welcomed Sarah Halfpenny (SH) to the Management Committee.

2. MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 17TH NOVEMBER 2015

The minutes were agreed.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising

4. CHAIR'S UPDATE

4.1. The Digswell Arts Trust – Fenner's Building

PGB has yet to receive a response from Fenner's following recent discussions about partnership working with The Settlement. She will contact Fenner's again.

4.2. Heritage Foundation - partnership

PGB advised the Committee of the new opportunities that are arising for The Settlement to work in partnership with The Heritage Foundation:

4.2.1. The new Gallery and Studios (on the former Arts Centre site), managed by Laura Dennis, will open in February. Its first exhibition, opening 22nd February 2016, will feature work by Richard Smith - a Letchworth born "pop art pioneer" artist now working in the United States.

ACTION

PGB

The Settlement has been asked to look at offering a lecture by James Willis on “pop art pioneers” perhaps followed by a private viewing of the Richard Smith exhibition with drinks and “nibbles”.

4.2.2. Laura Dennis has a number of ideas about future working with the Settlement and these will be discussed in the coming months.

4.3. Permanent Bar License

PGB advised that there has been no progress and that she is pursuing the matter.

PGB

4.4. Heritage Foundation

4.4.1. PGB advised that she is now a governor at the Heritage Foundation and has attended the induction process. In addition, both she and NC have been offered places on the Arts Forum Steering Group. PGB advised that she sees her new appointments as supporting The Settlement in its work and aims.

PGB/NC

4.4.2. The Management Committee welcomed the development of a much closer working relationship with the Heritage Foundation. It agreed however that:

- it was important that The Settlement should be seen as a separate and independent organisation catering for a much wider area than Letchworth.
- the increased workload that could result from greater partnership is monitored and managed.

The Management Committee also welcomed the greater openness displayed by the Heritage Foundation in recent years. PGB advised that it was clear on her recent induction at the Foundation that the Settlement is well known and that both internal and external communications within the Heritage Foundation are good.

4.4.3. The Management Committee recorded its thanks to the previous chairman, Carola Garvie, for the part she played in building the partnership with the Heritage Foundation.

4.5. Fund Raising

PGB advised that the quiz night had raised £1100. The next fund raising event is the Da Vinci talk by Francis Wells that will now take place on 29th April 2016.

4.6. Car parking

4.6.1. PGB informed the Management Committee that a memo had gone out to members advising that the proposal for additional car parking on the Network Rail land adjacent to The Settlement would not be going ahead due to the high cost of the work. She has not received any comments from members on this decision. The Committee thanked RT and NC for the work they had undertaken

on the proposed car park extension. RT was asked to write to the three tenderers to advise them of the decision.

RT

4.6.2. The lease with Network Rail requires the Settlement to maintain the land. It was agreed that the Property and Development Group should look at employing a suitable company to clear the land prior to it being made available for other uses as discussed at the Awayday.

4.7. Spinks and Cruse Rooms

It was agreed that these rooms are in need of upgrading and are a priority for funding.

4.8. Exhibitions

4.8.1. PGB advised that the Community Museum in the Arcade offers opportunities for gallery space for some Settlement work later on in the year. There may also be a number of further opportunities in the near future in the new Gallery itself.

4.8.2. A discussion followed during which the following points were made:

- Some of the work produced by Settlement members is “brilliant” and “stunning” and worthy of being exhibited.
- If the exhibited work was “for sale”, it could be labelled appropriately.
- There could also be demonstrations by Settlement members as part of an exhibition.

5. MANAGERS REPORT (including the ‘finance report’)

SW introduced her report. She drew attention to the following:

5.1. Administrator job vacancy

129 application packs have been requested for this post and 50 completed applications have been received to date. Interviews are planned for Tuesday 22nd January.

5.2. Staffing

Ivor Davies has now taken on the gardening work.
The cleaner is leaving and the job will be advertised.

5.3. Finance Report

SW introduced the report. It was agreed that it was too early in the financial year to draw any conclusions from the current financial position.

6. AWAYDAY OUTCOMES/2016 WORK PROGRAMME

6.1. It was agreed that the awayday had been a useful day at a “tranquil and pleasant venue”. PGB advised that some of the work agreed at the awayday

had already started. The proposed approach is to start work on the “quick wins” whilst considering plans for the longer term projects.

Pat Large had kindly agreed to take notes at the awayday. These summarise the discussion and set out the ‘Key priorities for short/medium/long term’ and the ‘next steps to achieve objectives’. The notes were agreed as a true record of the discussion. Pat Large was thanked for taking the notes which will be used to plan the future of The Settlement over the next five years.

6.2. A discussion followed regarding the work programme for 2016.

- 6.2.1. It was felt that there is a need to demonstrate that the Settlement is responding to the recent surveys. Enhancing the Common Room and the Spinks and Cruse rooms were identified as a priority.

It was agreed that a working group comprising NC, SW, SH and RB should be set up to take a critical look at these and any other areas it identifies and develop a coherent plan for improvement. PB will then seek grant support from appropriate sources

NC/SW/
SH/RB

PB

- 6.2.2. PGB has promised DB that a new treasurer will be sought who can take an active role on the Management Committee and she has identified some possible candidates.

- 6.2.3. Two of the major proposals emanating from the Awayday and the surveys are the use of the building by others and the creation of new courses which will attract younger members.

SH agreed to look at existing courses etc. for children and younger people to ascertain where there are gaps in provision that could be filled either by or through the Settlement, for example:

SH

- Courses that were previously offered by Surestart family centres but had been “cut”;
- School holiday events
- Dot-to-dot in The Wynd (provides art events/parties for children but has very little space)

6.3. Portfolio Groups for 2016

Following a discussion, the following portfolio groups were agreed for 2016:

Corporate Management - responsible for corporate issues, legal matters, human resources, finance, information technology, public relations and marketing.

Membership – PB (lead), CT, SW, RL-H, SH

Property and Development - responsible for the management, maintenance and development of The Settlement’s property and health and safety.

Membership – RT (lead), PB, NC, Michael Andrews

Programme – responsible for developing The Settlement’s academic, arts and crafts, and new offerings following on from research to be undertaken.

Membership – PC, SW, EB, SH

It was agreed that the Events Coordination/Fundraising portfolio group should be replaced by a revised process within the Settlement office. It was noted that all Committee members and other volunteers are expected to take part in their organisation of events and fundraising.

SW

- 6.4. PGB reported that work on some of the priorities agreed at the awayday had already started. CT agreed to draft the 2015/16 medium term plan document and to incorporate the ‘key priorities’ agreed at The Management Committee’s awayday held on 2nd December 2015. The Medium Term Plan would be used as a reminder of what had been agreed at the awayday and for monitoring progress.

CT

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD BY MRS PAM BURN, CHAIR, 15 MARCH 2016