

Bexhill Heritage Trustees. Minutes for the extraordinary meeting held on Thursday 15th July 2021

In attendance: Raymond Konyn, Steve Johnson, Simon Allen Alexis Markwick

1. Apologies and declarations of interest

No apologies received. RK declared that he is a trustee of the Bexhill Old Town Preservation Society.

2. Approval of previous minutes.

As this was an extraordinary meeting, the minutes of the meeting on 19th April were not approved. Those minutes will be considered at the trustee's next scheduled meeting in October.

3. Purpose of the meeting

- To discuss issues or workload and moral
- To discuss and resolve tensions and misunderstandings
- To agree ways forward

4. Matters arising

The meeting of 19th April had been used, in part, to start a discussion of the matters in item 3 above. Consequently trustees considered matters arising from that item from the 19th April agenda.

Action points linked to matters not covered elsewhere in these minutes include:

- a. SJ had revised and circulated an updated data protection policy together with a summary for members. This would be considered at the August committee meeting.
- b. Trustees would let RK know in advance when they were unavailable and post an 'out of office' message on Google.
- c. Trustees would continue the search for an additional trustee ... preferably female.
- d. AM would record key aspects of the charity's IT operation so that others could 'pick things up' if necessary. He would also continue to train JS and RK in appropriate aspects of the IT operation.

5. Managing workload and improving morale

It was agreed that it was important for trustees to support each other and be respectful of others' privacy, dignity, mental health, other commitments and family life. A team ethos would be essential for the future success of the charity.

It was also agreed that workload had become overwhelming or unrealistic at times, and that this had caused frustration. It was further agreed that Zoom meetings had done little to encourage a collegiate approach and that Covid had restricted opportunities for practical work. Administrative work, though, seemed to be abundant.

Action points:

- a. The charity would close for two weeks over Christmas / New Year and for two weeks during the summer to give officers a complete break.
- b. Officers would identify days / times when they would normally be available for Bexhill Heritage business.
- c. SJ would be responsible for project liaison with local authorities, businesses and sponsors / grant-givers. SA would continue in his role of overall project management.
- d. SJ would be responsible for the organisation of members' meetings and for appropriate notice to be given for those meetings. He would liaise with AM over this.
- e. Trustees would review the project plan to reduce the list of pending projects by delegating tasks to outside contractors as appropriate.
- f. When dealing with substantial new enquiries / proposals, the 'default position' would be to discuss them at a committee meeting rather than attempting to respond immediately. (This would reduce workload and pressure as well as encouraging a more professional level of decision making.)
- g. Trustees would seek to meet informally and would first do this on 5th August at 5pm.

6. Improving communication and delegation

Trustees explored the difference between delegating responsibility and delegating authority. SJ suggested that there should be more delegation of authority so that officers with an agreed role or task should be allowed to get on with it. Officers would be expected to brief the committee on progress in writing and answer questions but not to respond to 'random' communications.

Action point:

John Swap's recommendations on the management of committee meetings would be adopted in full.

7. Improving communication – email

Action point:

SJ's paper on email etiquette would be adopted in full. RK would circulate the paper to committee members.

8. Agreement on outcomes and actions

It was agreed that SJ would circulate the draft minutes as soon as possible so that trustees could agree and reflect on the outcomes.

9. Date of next meeting

Monday 25th October 2021 7pm.