

## Bexhill Heritage Trustees. Minutes for the meeting held on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2021

**In attendance:** Raymond Konyon, Steve Johnson, Simon Allen Alexis Mark wick

### 1. Apologies and declarations of interest

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

### 2. Minutes for the April and July meetings.

These were approved.

### 3. Matters arising

#### April Meeting

#### a. Charity Commission Registration

Our application had been submitted on 11<sup>th</sup> July, but the Charity Commission were now reporting a 5 month waiting time for applications that go beyond the provisions of the Charity Commission's own template as ours does. On that basis our application would be determined in November or December.

#### b. Vulnerabilities and agreed actions

Trustees discussed the points raised and progress on actions agreed at the April meeting

- Trustees and committee members do not always reply to messages in a timely fashion and are sometimes unavailable without reasonable notice. This places undue pressure on the Chair and hampers organisational efficiency.
- RK reported that this had improved. Trustees were letting RK know when they were unavailable.
- Actions agreed at meetings are sometimes not completed.  
Circulating action points with minutes had helped to address this problem. RK was reminding the minutes secretary to circulate minutes within seven days.
- Data protection requires attention so that our members can be reassured that the charity is compliant with all relevant legislation.  
A revised policy had been written and issued.
- There is an over-dependence on one person for the efficient use of IT in the support of the charity's work.  
Ways of mitigating this risk had been agreed.
- We should try to achieve a more balanced group of trustees that reflects the gender composition of members.  
Approaches had been made to female members but without success so far. Other names were mentioned. All committee members agreed to 'sound out' potential trustees to determine whether they might be interested if approached formally.
- More effective email and communication protocols should be introduced that allow colleagues reasonable time to respond, especially in relation to important decisions. (Such decisions should, in any case, be discussed in committee or by trustees rather than decided by email.) There was also concern about the risk of officers becoming overwhelmed by emails.  
Trustees agreed that the situation had improved and that the new email protocols were being followed. Committee members and trustees were being encouraged to upload documents to the shared drive if something needs to be shared. A document folder had been created for website items and another would be created for agenda items. A higher proportion of emails were being targeted rather than being copied to everyone.

### 4. Matters arising

#### July Meeting

Trustees discussed actions arising from the extraordinary meeting in July that had been called to resolve issues connected with workload and morale.

Actions agreed in July were noted and it was felt that significant progress had been made.

Four further points were agreed to operationalise those actions:

- There would be a 'holiday' for officers from 20<sup>th</sup> December to 3<sup>rd</sup> January (inclusive). Out of office messages would be posted on the website and members notified. The agreed Christmas pop-ups would still go ahead as would any agreed project work.
- Members' meetings would be 'triggered' by the Vice Chair two weeks before the meeting date. Members would receive minutes, an agenda and details of venue and time and/or a Zoom link. AM would send this out and follow this up with a reminder three days before the meeting date.
- We would continue to encourage officers to send 'papers' out with agendas to enable meetings to be more informed and more focused.
- Agendas would prioritise the most urgent or important items and be shorter.

#### **5. Nominating additional trustees**

See item 3 above.

#### **6. A base for the charity**

It was agreed that the search for a base had been frustrating. None of the 'solutions' had proved ideal for one reason or another.

It was agreed that the West Station had the potential to provide space for a store, workshop, meetings and administration. We would investigate with a site visit in November. At the same time 'Bow Ties' could offer a good venue for our information point if we moved to Mondays. RK agreed to investigate further. Combined with Bandstand pop-ups, we would be in a much better position than currently.

#### **7. Review of Project Development Plan**

Trustees focused on the Royal Sovereign Light Lantern Tower. Concern had been expressed over Bexhill Heritage becoming legal owners of the tower. After careful consideration and debate, trustees agreed unanimously that Bexhill Heritage should not become legal owners of the tower but that other potential owners be approached. Owners would have responsibility for siting the tower as well as for maintenance and insurance. Trustees also agreed that the idea of establishing a linked trust for the stewardship of the light tower be considered in the future should that be appropriate. It was noted that the Lantern Tower Working Group would continue to meet.

#### **8. Any other business**

It was agreed that the East Parade Interpretation Board be opened on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> December. SJ would check this date with the sponsor and RDC representatives.

#### **9. Date of next meeting**

The provisional date for the next meeting is Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January.