



Minutes of Friends of Pittville Executive Committee Meeting – 10 January 2012

1 Members present

Hon Chairman Judy Langhorn (JL)
Hon Secretary Fiona Clarke (FC)
Chris Archibald (CA)
Judie Hodsdon (JH)
David Richards (DR)
Henry Williams (HW)
Ward Cllr Diane Hibbert (DH)
Ward Cllr Tim Cooper (TC)
Desmond Fitzgerald (DF)

Apologies

Hon. Treasurer Frances Gabriel (FG)

The items were not taken in agenda order as JH had apologised in advance for a late arrival and it was important she was there for key items.

2 Minutes of Executive Committee (ExComm) meeting – 16 November

The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved as being a true record of that meeting.

3 Matters arising

These were covered by items 9-11 below.

4 Gloucestershire Police Male Voice Choir concert, Saturday 31 March 2012 – HW reported that Gloucestershire Police Male Voice Choir needs access to St Matthew's Church before the concert; this is only available from 5pm as there is another event at the church in Clarence Street.

Eight committee members and/or others are needed on the night to collect tickets, serve refreshments at interval etc. Raffle tickets will be sold before the concert started and drawn at interval. One substantial prize has already been offered; others will be sought from shops in Prestbury Road which had offered already. **Action: JL**

HW circulated a draft ticket, flyer and poster for comment. It was agreed to have the brightest poster for notice boards and shop windows. An initial list of locations was

drawn up; to be finalised and circulated with the posters and flyers to ExComm members. This list can be added to as necessary. **Action: FC**

All ExComm members will be given a set of numbered tickets to sell. **Action: HW and FC**

The concert will be advertised to Friends, featured in the December newsletter and on the website. **Action: FC**

Radio and press publicity will be important nearer the time, and tickets will be available for sale on the night. **Action: DR**

HW had been able to obtain sponsorship for the cost of venue hire and the choir from a company, Mark Benson Building Services, which would not be tendering for any part of the Gates project. This very generous offer was much appreciated.

This might be the opportunity to approach Barclays Bank for their matching funds sponsorship. **Action: JL**

The local MP is able to come, but not the Mayor or Deputy Mayor; invitations to the police chief and to the church's Rector, Tudor Williams and his wife, still need to be issued. **Action: FC and JL**

5 Community Pride 2011 purchases

FC reported that display panels, brochure holders, folding tables and chairs, LCD projector, and some collection boxes had been purchased and were in her flat. However, an alternative storage location was required as space is at a premium! (this has now been found). The gazebo will be ordered in the next few weeks.

Action: HW, who has kindly donated the three folding tables.

Work on the banner design will start once the 'community bridge' is completed as it is important to have this in the general banner. These will be produced by a Cheltenham company suggested by TC. **Action: FC and others**

HW suggested a logbook be kept of who has taken equipment out, where and when. **Action: FC**

It was agreed not to insure the equipment, and there was some discussion about the need for a PAT (portable appliance test) for the projector. It was agreed that if required by a venue it would be done. **Action: relevant ExComm member to organise if necessary**

6 Christmas cards

FC thanked those ExComm members who had taken 20 cards to sell to friends and family. The cost of 500 cards (300 with a Christmas message and 200 blank) in two designs had cost £213.60. We have made a profit of £93.40, with just 100 cards to

sell (mostly blank ones) during the year at events. The profit would be transferred to the Gates fund in due course.

Action: FC

We will have a competition among the Friends for the 2012 cards which may be judged at the AGM in October. Timing may be an issue, as we need to have the cards available three weeks earlier than on 2011.

7 Memorial plaques, seats and flowers

CA noted that almost every time he went to the park there was a new memorial seat. This was to be applauded, but he was concerned that there might be a trend to more floral tributes being attached to the seats and to memorial trees. Once these had faded they looked tatty. There was also an instance of one tree with almost a garden around it, and two urns. Pittville Park is not a memorial garden.

DH informed ExComm that there is a blueprint of where seats go, and probably one for trees. There was a charge for these and DR said it was a good way of ensuring more seats and trees.

It was agreed that the matter would be raised at the next FOP/CBC meeting on Monday 27 February 2012.

Action: DH

8 Woodland Trust grant and plantings

FC reported that FOP had applied to the Woodland Trust for a Diamond Jubilee 'Wildlife pack' of 420 varied saplings, with help from CBC. These should arrive at the end of January and be planted early February, in the west side of the park near Dunalley School. DR is adding about 70 plants from his collection.

We may have some extra volunteers through the Volunteer Centre. JL had suggested we ask St Paul's Residents' Association to help. **Action: FC to follow up**

It was agreed it would be good to publicise the planting day(s). **Action: DR and FC**

JH arrived at this point and Agenda items 7-10 were discussed as together. These were a continuation of the discussion during item 6 at the last meeting, 'Proposed ice rink in Pittville Park'.

JL reminded ExComm members that they had been invited to continue the discussion by e-mail and DF, CA and FG had circulated their thoughts. She invited DF and CA to speak and to add anything to what they had written.

9 Relations with organisations requesting our support or involvement, and ExComm relations with the public, councils and other bodies

DF said that ExComm had not looked into the causes of the situation which arose over the ice-rink and it was necessary to learn from the experience. CA was concerned that FOP's 'supportive words' were taken out of context. DH noted that FOP did not have the full picture about the proposed ice-rink when it was discussed at the 29 September meeting. It had been agreed at earlier meetings that ExComm

would not take a committee view on planning applications or on issues that were likely to be controversial. DH said that the committee could reverse this in the future if it was felt necessary. It had not done so on this occasion, but those present said an ice rink, in principle, could be a good idea subject to proper procedures and consultation. Finally, Friends of Pittville is concerned with the well being of the park and Pittville Estate but does not necessarily represent the views of the residents of Pittville.

10 What we want to take place in Pittville Park and other green spaces

JL said that the park and other green spaces were rather like an outdoor home - there were quiet times and there were party times. JH thought that all the interests have to be balanced, including those of the public and the people who live nearby. One of FOP's aims is to promote use of the park and a lot more used to happen in the past. DH said that it was not for FOP to make decisions about what happens - that is the responsibility of the Borough Council. They are the ones to consult residents through the appropriate channels.

11 Relations with commercial organisations

JL thought that FOP would want to work with different commercial organisations in a variety of ways. For example, for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations FOP might ask Central Cross Cafe to host a joint event. We will be seeking sponsorship for the Gates project and already accept sponsorship and raffle prizes from local businesses. FC said that the next printed newsletter may carry an advertisement rather than a sponsorship statement.

DF suggested, and it was agreed, that the Executive Committee draw a line under the current discussion (as set out in paragraphs 9-11 above) and move on.

12 Queen's Diamond Jubilee event(s)

JL said that Pittville School was not planning anything. An event in Pittville Lawn near the Gates, such as a 'Big Lunch', would be difficult to achieve because key local residents, although enthusiastic, did not have the time to organise it. FC thought it probably wasn't such a good idea to 'piggy back' on another event such as the one planned in Prestbury. There had been no ideas or offers to help put from members after the December newsletter.

It was agreed that something small and manageable would be best, bearing in mind that there will be much TV coverage of events in other parts of the country and a large TV screen in Montpellier. **Action: FC, JL, HW and DR**

FC mentioned that CBC may be involved with a Gloucestershire-wide series of beacons and she'd been asked to a possible meeting in the new year. **Action: FC**

JH wondered if something could be done at Pittville Gates relating this 2012 Diamond Jubilee to Queen Victoria's in 1897, when electric lighting was extended beyond Winchcombe Street to Pittville Circus along Prestbury Road and the arc lamp over the Gates, with the new overthrow, was installed.

13 Pittville Gates Restoration Project update

JH reported that we now had about £5000 from our own efforts, with the addition of a £1000 grant from Cheltenham Civic Society. With the successful grants that we cannot go public on just yet we are nearly half way to having enough for Phase 1.

She is preparing applications to the Leche Trust and the Wolfson Foundation, and another three this month. She thanked CA for his offer to help with the HLF Your Heritage application.

It is now time to appoint a project manager (probably a company but perhaps an individual who/which can offer the full range of services required). It was agreed to approach three - the architectural firm which had provided drawings and plans for the public launch in April, and two quantity surveyors whose names had been provided by CBC. We have already talked in some detail with another company, which has provided a bid.

Action: JL and FC

JH reported she and FC had met representatives of Cheltenham Civic Society on 9 January. They will write a letter of support for the HLF application and we are exploring other ways in which we can co-operate.

JL reported that the auctions had not been very successful as the market may be depressed. She was very grateful to those members who had kindly donated items.

JH is investigating whether FOP should apply for Charity Commission charity status. Once we have over £5000 in the bank we may be required to. Registration does not seem to be that difficult as we have the required documentation, but the necessary annual financial reporting may be more complex.

Action: JH

HW suggested asking someone not on ExComm to look at the accounts.

14 Any other business

14.1 JL reported a very generous donation from ex-ExComm member Andy Hopkins towards the Gates project for £500. Andy is leaving Cheltenham this week.

14.2 FC will be away for two months in the spring and JL will act as Secretary in her absence. This has worked well before, but extra help from other ExComm members will be appreciated,

15 Date of next meeting

This was agreed for Wednesday 22 February at 6.30. **Action: DH to book room**