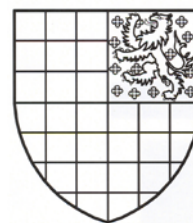


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**LEWES
TOWN
COUNCIL**

MINUTES

of the meeting of the **Working Party** formed to consider commemoration of significant events, held on **Wednesday 5th February 2014**, in the **Yarrow Room, Town Hall**, Lewes at **11:00am**.

PRESENT Cllrs L Allsobrook; S Catlin (Wischhusen); M Chartier (*Chairman*); R Murray; Cllr R O’Keeffe; Dr M Turner.

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); Mrs F Garth (*Civic Officer/ Asst TC*).

CmemsWP2013/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: There were none

CmemsWP2013/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: Cllr Allsobrook noted, with regard to discussions on the 40th anniversary of town twinning with Waldshut-Tiengen, that she was Vice-Chairman of Lewes Twinning Association.

CmemsWP2013/20 QUESTIONS: There were none. (No members of the public present.)

CmemsWP2013/21 MINUTES:

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd December 2013 were received and signed as an accurate record.

CmemsWP2013/22 BUSINESS OF THE MEETING:

1 The meeting welcomed Ms Helen Glavin, who was composing the commissioned choral work to commemorate the Battle of Lewes, and John Hancorn, her musical collaborator on the performance of the work, and music director of Eastbourne Choral Society and The East Sussex Academy of Music “Academy Voices”.

2 *Battle of Lewes 750th anniversary:* Cllr Chartier brought everyone up to date with the programme being developed by the Battle of Lewes Action Group (BLAG); noting that this continued to evolve and that recent publicity was likely to evoke new schemes, albeit May was rapidly approaching. Some of these might warrant Council support, and Members should remain open to suggestions. There was a very worthy scheme in prospect, working with young people from Sussex Downs College, which had already attracted interest and financial support from the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA), and it was suggested that a small contribution (around £300) by the Council would be enormously helpful.

Ms Glavin and Mr Hancorn related their progress on the choral work, and ideas for the presentation of it as part of a wider evening’s entertainment on Tuesday 13th May 2014. A suggested programme, with a Battle theme would include Troubadors; “Academy Voices”, and other music students. They were happy to develop a programme; an offer which Members gratefully accepted, and there was some discussion on the possibilities of audio and/or video recordings; use of graphics from the commemorative tapestry; help from Sussex Downs College with lighting, and a potential link with Lewes, Delaware (USA). The Mayor of Lewes, Delaware had responded very enthusiastically to a notification of the event, and the suggestion of some form of communication link or duplicate performance.

There had been some misunderstanding over performance of Cllr Turner’s specially-written medieval mystery play at Lewes Castle, and Cllr Chartier would intercede to ensure this was agreed.

3 *100yrs since commencement of 1st World War:* A letter received from the Society of Friends had suggested interest in the scheme to create a peace-garden near to the town centre feature known as the “Magic Circle”, adjacent to Castle Banks, being discussed with the Friends of Lewes. It was considered that this would be most appropriately developed towards 2018, being the year the war ended. Collaborations might be fruitful on such aspects as poetry readings during the suggested event at the All Saints Centre. Ms Glavin and Mr Hancorn had begun to develop ideas and music for such an event, with a theme arising from a Wilfred Owen poem, and offered to integrate this with - and assume responsibility for - the coordination of the Council’s programme. This also was gratefully accepted. Members discussed general issues around the theme, and agreed to pursue any areas of potential collaboration with such bodies as the Sussex Regimental Association; British Legion; church authorities, *etc.*

4 *Celebration of town Twinning anniversary:* There was no further detail available as to plans evolving in Waldshut-Tiengen, but there was always open communication with their Council and more would be reported to a future meeting. It had already been acknowledged that the main celebrations would be during the annual *Chilbi* festival in August.

5 *150th anniversary of the Seaford – Lewes rail link:* The commemorative events were planned for Saturday 7th June 2014, and the programme for Lewes was reported to be “settling well”. The Town Council had been acknowledged by the Community Rail Partnership as generous supporters, and Harveys Brewery were also engaged. The main event was hoped to be the arrival of a steam locomotive, and Norman Baker MP had been approached to lend his support to the request for Network Rail to expedite necessary engineering checks. There was some urgency to the task, as there was a standard 12-week process required to be followed before approval could be given. It was suggested and agreed that a joint letter would be sent from the Mayors of Lewes; Newhaven; and Seaford, to the Managing Director of Southern Rail (who must initiate the process), urging prompt attention to the request. TC offered to draft this and coordinate signatures and delivery.

6 *Anniversary of the closure of Lewes Racecourse:* There were plans to commemorate this closure in some way, and it was expected that there would be opportunities to participate, as the Council jointly-owned (with Lewes District Council) the adjoining land at Landport Bottom.

7 *Commemorative sculpture, Lewes Priory Grounds:* Lewes Priory Trust had well-advanced plans for refurbishment of the sculpture on the Priory site (known colloquially as “The Helmet”) to coincide with Battle of Lewes commemorations. This sculpture had been erected for the 700th anniversary, and was in need of repairs and surface re-patination. The Town Council owned the site, having taken it over from Lewes District Council (LDC) in 2001, and when a lease had been granted to the Trust, the primary intention had been to facilitate the major building and parkland conservation project at the site, and the sculpture was merely an adjunct to that. There was, it was considered, some moral responsibility upon the District and Town Councils to assist in the refurbishment of this important and highly-visible feature, as it had been “passed-on” in a poor state. The Trust had obtained advice and estimates for refurbishment from the original foundry; the estate of the original sculptor, and others, and full repairs and re-finishing, together with replacement of missing panels and the addition of a new commemorative plaque (to note the 750th anniversary and the contributors to the refurbishment) would cost £8,185. Pledges had been received from several sources for financial contributions amounting to £4,300; including a significant sum from the South Downs National Park Authority and a contribution from LDC. Fundraising efforts continued, but the present shortfall was £3,885. TC advised that there was £3,060 currently held in the approved

Reserve fund earmarked for expenses at the Priory, and there was scope for Council to draw from the General Fund or to vire funds, as the year-end approached, from any budget where demand this year had been unusually low, such as grounds maintenance/responsive repairs budgets. It was suggested that the Town Council should offer a maximum contribution of £3,000, and it was agreed to recommend this to Council.

CmemsWP2013/23 **RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL:**

Council is to be asked to agree the following recommendations:

That a sum of £300 be granted to the Battle of Lewes commemoration project being created by Sussex Downs College students, drawn from the Commemorations Reserve.

That a contribution of up to £3,000 be made towards the restoration of the Battle of Lewes sculpture sited within the Lewes Priory site, drawn from the financial reserve earmarked for expenses related to the Priory site.

CmemsWP2013/24 There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed, and thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions.

The meeting closed at 12:15pm

Signed.....

Date