

Notes of an Executive Meeting of the Chepstow Society
held on Thursday 27th August 2020 via Zoom

Present: Geoff Sumner (Chair), Keith James (Vice-Chair), Guy Hamilton, Sallie James, Angela Middleditch, Harry Middleditch, David Nicholls, Chris Penrose, Marian Thomas

Also attending – 11 Society members

Apologies for absence: Trevor Evans MBE (President), Henry Hodges, Anne Rainsbury

1. Geoff welcomed everyone present, including those members not on the committee.

2. **Notes of previous meeting on 9th July 2020**

These had been circulated and were agreed, subject to correcting the date of the previous meeting to 13 February.

3. **Arrangements for A.G.M. and member meetings**

- The Charity Commission had advised that Annual General Meetings should be held before the end of September if possible. The Society's constitution required that 28 days' notice be given.
- It had previously been agreed that the formal A.G.M. business, including the appointment of officers and approval of accounts, could be dealt with expeditiously at the start of an ordinary meeting, if the technology would allow that. As it appeared that members would be able to access Zoom by one means or another, this would allow the A.G.M. to take place in advance of a regular meeting.
- It was agreed that Guy would send out an email to all members to that effect, advising of the date and seeking nominations, and would agree the text in advance with Geoff. *Action: Guy, Geoff*

4. **Drill Hall**

- The Drill Hall committee were hoping to hold some events in October with social distancing and other measures, and had circulated a survey form seeking views on how events should be arranged.
- In general discussion, it was felt that it would be premature to come to a view, in advance of any changes in Welsh Government guidance. It was felt that it would be difficult to arrange online booking for Society events, especially as there would be difficulties over coordinating bookings.
- It was agreed that Geoff prepare a response to the survey on the Society's behalf. *Action: Geoff*

5. **Museum**

- The Museum's management had circulated a survey form asking for views on how its services could be improved in coming years.
- There was general agreement that the museum's exhibitions were excellent, but it was felt by some that insufficient resources were being devoted to responding to requests, for instance in providing access for local researchers to archived material. It was suggested that the Society draw up a "wish list" of improvements that it hoped could be achieved. *Action: All*

6. **Treasurer's report**

David Nicholls and David Barber arranged to meet to resolve any outstanding issues. There was a need to update the list of signatories, which needed to be arranged with Lloyds Bank.

Action: David N, Geoff

7. Subscriptions

- It was agreed that, because of the exceptional circumstances, no subscriptions be sought for the current year.
- For the few members that had already paid a 2020/21 subscription by standing order, it was agreed that they be informed that they would not be required to make any payment for next year, 2021/22.

Action: Marian

8. St Kingsmark Plaque

This had still not been installed, as the plaque needed to be corrected by Ned. Progress would need to be checked.

9. Excursions

- Keith reported that arrangements were still in hand for the postponed Belgium trip in April 2021. There were a small number of vacancies, but it was agreed that these not yet be publicised until there was greater certainty over numbers and arrangements.
- Sallie suggested that, when possible, the Society should reintroduce more local trips to places of interest. However, these would require time and resources to arrange, and there was a need to avoid duplication with other groups such as the U3A, perhaps through closer liaison if that could take place.
- It was agreed that a piece be put in the next bulletin to canvass members' views on what sort of trips, and specific places, members would like to visit as part of a group.

Action: Sallie

10. Town walks

In view of the difficulties arising from the need for advance booking, social distancing, and the leader giving out information in a loud voice, it was agreed that no walks be organised this year.

11. Tourist Information Centre

There was no update on this.

12. Publications

Guy reported that some £90 had been raised recently by selling donated books.

13. Gwent Local History Council

Chris reported that a journal had recently been published.

14. Civic and amenity issues

- Geoff reported that Henry wished to remain on the committee but could no longer commit to providing civic and amenity reports as in the past.
- It was agreed that this remained an important function of the Society, and it was suggested that the responsibility could be shared between several members if that would help secure its continuation. It was agreed that volunteers again be sought at the AGM, and a suitable notice would be sent to members.

Action: Geoff, Guy

- Keith suggested that the Society should support initiatives to link the proposed cycle path at Tidenham with the town. Keith would seek further information on the position.

Action: Keith

15. Date of next meeting

It was agreed that this would be held on Thursday 1st October, again via Zoom.