

Notes of an Executive Meeting of the Chepstow Society
held on Thursday 25th November 2021 via Zoom

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

Apologies for absence: Simon Maddison, Angela Middleditch, Anne Rainsbury

1. Geoff welcomed everyone present.

2. **Notes of previous meetings on 30th September and 4th October 2021**

- These had been circulated and were agreed.
- Guy noted that the issues with the website had been resolved.

3. **Treasurer's report**

- David had circulated updated accounts, which showed that income from subscriptions and publications sales were holding up well in the circumstances of the pandemic.
- The list of the Society's trustees needed to be updated. It was agreed that Trevor Evans and Marian Thomas be removed from the list. *Action: David*
- There was discussion over the advantages of the Society purchasing a small bank card reader, for processing sales etc., especially in the Drill Hall. It was agreed that Guy and David look at the various options provided by companies such as Zettle and SumUp, and make the necessary decision on purchase. *Action: David, Guy*

4. **Membership Secretary's report**

- Angela's report had been circulated. The current membership stood at 125.
- Angela suggested that the Society introduce a Christmas gift offer of membership through to April 2023, at the usual annual rate. This would be publicised in the bulletin and publicly. This was agreed. *Action: Angela, Guy*

5. **Future monthly meetings**

- Geoff had circulated a list of speakers through to the AGM in May, which included both local speakers who could attend in the Drill Hall, and remote speakers.
- There was discussion over whether it was worthwhile continuing with Drill Hall meetings for remote speakers, as there was still uncertainty over the pandemic and the likelihood of members wanting to go out to winter meetings when many could access them via Zoom – balanced against the desire of some members for social interaction. It was agreed that the current programme be maintained but be kept under review on a meeting-by-meeting basis until the situation became clearer.

- The talk in January would be given by Guy, on the subject of the war memorial. It was agreed that this be publicised to non-members, as a one-off free event though donations would be welcome. Refreshments would be available. As a public event, Guy would ask Ned to publicise it in Drill Hall material, with advance bookings if possible. *Action: Guy*
- It was agreed to revert to a 7:15 start time for future meetings, with speakers from 7:30.

6. **Civic and amenities matters**

- It was agreed that the response on the Future Chepstow place plan prepared by Guy with inputs from Nicky and others be submitted as the Society's response. *Action: Guy*
- Guy reported that there were moves for greater cooperation between the town and county councils, over integrating the county's suggested "masterplan" for the town centre with the place plan.
- The suggested date for the next civic and amenities meeting with councillors and others was Wednesday 2 February. Guy and Simon would arrange the details. *Action: Guy, Simon*

7. **Publications**

- Guy had circulated a draft of a booklet to commemorate the centenary of the unveiling of the town's war memorial, which would take place on 8 January. There was support for publishing the booklet.
- Quotes had been received from Whitehouse Press for printing up to 250 copies (at £2.00 cost per copy), but it was agreed that a quote for a higher number also be obtained. It was agreed that Guy progress this, and make the final decision on the number to be printed and the sale price. *Action: Guy*
- Guy reported that the newly-formed Friends of the Priory Church were seeking donations for a Christmas raffle, and suggested that some Society publications could be donated. This was agreed, up to a cost of £50. *Action: Guy*

8. **William Marshal statue**

- Geoff reported that he had not yet had a reply from Cadw in response to his initial enquiries. Keith Underwood was working on a maquette of a possible statue. *Action: Geoff*

9. **Excursions**

- Keith reported continuing progress towards the trip to Kent in April.
- At Tim Ryan's invitation, a group of members had seen the work on restoring the *Severn Princess* ferry boat earlier in the month. This was very interesting and successful, and had helped raise money for the project.

10. **Commemorative plaques**

- Guy reported that the almshouse trustees had agreed in principle to the James Stephens plaque being placed on the end wall of the Montague Almshouses. Ned Heywood was now working on a design, before a formal application for listed building consent would be submitted to the county council. *Action: Guy*

11. **Gwent Local History Council**

- Chris reported that the first meeting for some time had been held, via Zoom. The notes of the meeting were awaited and would be circulated. *Action: Chris*

12. **Secretary's report**

- Guy reported that, earlier in the month, there had been a successful and enjoyable presentation of the commemorative plate to Henry, at a tea room in the town. Ned had now invoiced the Society for the work on the plate.
- Guy and Keith had attended the very interesting annual Chartist Convention in Newport earlier in the month, where interest was shown in the Society's display. Guy had prepared a short summary leaflet on James Stephens, and a number of publications were sold.
- Guy reported that, at a town council meeting, the Society had been invited to nominate a representative onto a new "health care exploratory group" for stakeholders, set up to advise the health board on services to be provided at the community hospital. After some discussion it was agreed that nominations be sought from the wider membership, particularly of members with health service experience, who could report back to the Society. *Action: Guy*

13. **Christmas event**

- Geoff suggested it may be possible to organise a Christmas-themed Zoom event for members in December. It was agreed that Geoff investigate possibilities, and report back. *Action: Geoff*

14. **Date of next meeting**

- The next meeting of the committee was arranged for Thursday 3rd February 2022, at 7 pm.
NOTE: Because of a clash with a meeting of the Chepstow Archaeological Society, this has now been rearranged for Thursday 10th February.