

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF JOHN MASEFIELD MEMORIAL WORKING PARTY HELD ON FRIDAY, 4 AUGUST 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Furlonger, Morris (Chair) and l'Anson

Non-Councillors - Christine Tustin, Tim Keyes (Tower Captain Church Bell Ringers), Dr Jane Mee, and Chris Noel

Via Zoom – Sue Moseley – Age UK

ALSO PRESENT: Angela Price –Town Clerk

JM82 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Dr Philip Errington, Councillor Phillip Howells, Lesley Ingram, Caroline Magnus (Great Niece of John Masefield and Member of John Masefield Society), Justine Peberdy, Nina Shields, and Robert Vaughan.

JM83 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

JM84 ELECTION OF NON-COUNCIL MEMBERS TO THE JOHN MASEFIELD MEMORIAL WORKING PARTY

RESOLVED:

That Dr Jane Mee be elected as a non-council member of the John Masefield Memorial Working Party

JM85 TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE JOHN MASEFIELD WORKING PARTY HELD ON 9 JUNE 2023

The Clerk reminded members that at the previous meeting it had been agreed that they would provide information on their skills and knowledge that could be useful to the group, advising that only two members had done so to date.

Councillor Morris advised that he had contacted the RSC and would update about this in the Chairman's report.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the minutes of the meeting of The John Masefield Working Party held on 9 June 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record of the meeting.**

2. **That the Clerk provide members with a form to provide details of their skills and knowledge.**

JM86

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members were provided with a copy of the current Terms of Reference of the Working Party.

Dr Mee asked how 1(a) fits with the role of paid staff and contractors, asking how the relationship between the Clerk and any paid members of staff and the committee would work. The Clerk confirmed that any paid member of staff, whether they are council staff or contractor would be responsible to the Clerk as the Head of Paid Services and that they would provide progress reports via reports to the committee, with any written reports being submitted to the Clerk for inclusion on agendas. Instructions could then be given to the project manager (for example) via the committee however they would be expected to refer all correspondence through the Clerk and not directly to members of the committee.

Tim Keyes noted that there is a lot more to this project than just a memorial and suggested that they may wish to consider a change to the title of the project to fit better with the overall sense of the project and the following was suggested:

“John Masefield Commemoration Working Party”

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **That when putting the specification together for any future project manager their relationship with the Clerk and the working Party will be made clear.**
2. **That members give consideration to the name of the Working Party, and it be considered further at the next meeting.**
3. **That a definition of what the project is about be added to the Terms of Reference.**
4. **That the Terms of Reference be included on all future agendas of the Working Party.**

JM87

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

To note that the next meeting of the John Masefield Memorial Working Party is scheduled for 2.00pm on Friday, 29 September 2023, with a further meeting being scheduled for Friday, 3 November 2023.

JM88 CHAIRMANS REPORT

The Chairman provided a verbal update report on progress of the project. He advised that he had been having discussions with people generally on how the project is progressing, and it seems to have good support.

He asked whether Council should be given the opportunity to scrutinise what the Working Party does by way of a report once every six or twelve months. The Clerk advised that the minutes of the Working Party are to be submitted to both the Environment & Leisure and the Planning, Economy & Tourism Committees, who should be scrutinising the work of the working Party. However, it would be acceptable for a more in-depth process to be undertaken via a report being provided to Council on a six-monthly basis.

Tim Keys raised concerns about how PR and publicity would be done. The Clerk advised that there are two members of staff in the council who have responsibility for publicity materials and advised that there are some councillors who have experience in this field who it would be useful to make use of.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the report provided by the Chairman be received and noted.**
- 2. That this be discussed at the environment & Leisure and Planning, Economy & Tourism Committees to gauge their opinions.**

JM89 UPDATE ON CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME MEETING

Members were provided with an update on the meeting with the Cultural Partners. Councillor Morris advised that he felt this meeting had been inspiring, however he did not believe that they came away from the meeting with anything concrete agreed, however he believed there had been a further meeting, but he had not received any further information about this.

The Clerk advised that it was unfortunate that Chloe Garner was not at the meeting as it would have been good to have some feedback about the community engagement plan that the Poetry Festival were putting together for September with schools and young people and intergenerational work.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the notes of the meeting with the cultural partners be received and noted.**
- 2. That the Clerk contact Chloe to ask if there is any progress that she can provide in relation to the community engagement plan for September.**

JM90 NEXT STEPS

i. Funding Application

Members were provided with a draft funding proposal which had been prepared by the project manager, in consultation with the cultural partners and an enquiry form provided by Dr Mee with suggestions on ways in which the funding agreement could be amended.

It was noted that in the draft application provided by the project manager the sum being requested was £10,000, however the sum proposed by Dr Mee within the enquiry form was higher and she had asked the Working Party to consider the level of match funding for the project, assuming that the NLHF usually expect 10% for the level of funding likely to be required, which she had estimated to be in the region of £235,000 for the total project.

It was noted that the whole application information had not yet been provided, and that it was hoped that this would be provided before the project manager goes on annual leave.

Dr Mee advised that she was suggesting a different approach to that of a direct funding application, she was suggesting that the Council submit an enquiry form a, which has a longer turn-around time. She advised that her proposal is not that different to the draft submitted by the project manager, it is just a matter of scale. She outlined that the project was a multi-generational community engagement project, based around activities that would engage these audiences and to hopefully ascertain an idea of what a future memorial might look like. The work that the partners would undertake would inform a brief which would then go out to a commissioned artist to create the memorial.

Jane felt the concept of the bid was fine, however she did feel that there was a weakness in the draft application in respect of what they are going to do, e.g., types of activities to be carried out and how these will bring the different generations together, and how will they capture the information to inform the brief for the artist. She also advised that the lottery expect something to be included about evaluation, i.e., what are the measures of success and have you achieved them? Plus, what the outcomes will be and how these will be met, i.e., the mandatory outcome will be that at the end of the project a wider audience has to be engaged, and she did not feel that there was anything in the bid that highlighted other outcomes.

A further question that she raised was how the Lottery would feel about the main outcome of the project was to create a brief for a memorial and to support fund raising. She advised that more information needs to be included, and the Clerk reiterated that the

project manager had advised that there was more input anticipated from the cultural partners.

ii. Partnership working

Members were requested to consider how they wish to proceed with the cultural partners and/or any other likely partners. They were advised that the project manager had built a good relationship with 2Faced Dance, Red Earth Arts, and the Poetry Festival and that it was important to continue these relationships.

Dr Mee advised that two of the partners were natural successive owners of the project, but it was important that this working partnership is investigated at an early stage and a clear plan of partnership working is established.

Jane felt that there is an excellent opportunity to work with partners and community groups on this project. She informed members of the Working Party that by submitting the enquiry form, this will open up a dialogue with the Lottery and will help inform provide feedback on what the final application should look like.

Christine Tustin advised that the bottom line is that they want Ledbury to be indelibly associated with John Masefield, whereas at the moment this is not so well known. "we want to bring that heritage alive."

Jane advised that the Working Party may want to consider two phases to the funding application, the first phase could be the community engagement, advising that a further application will be submitted for phase two, and it may be that the Lottery will like this approach. However, she reiterated that the dialogue that can be entered into via the enquiry form will enable wider parameters for the BID.

Councillor Furlonger asked whether the group had spoken to Becky Shaw of the Poetry Festival. The Clerk advised that they had, however the politics of Ledbury Poetry meant that it was Chloe who was their representative on this committee. Councillor Furlonger advised that the Ledbury Traders are working with the Becky Shaw on a project that may well clash with this groups aims and ambitions. The Clerk advised that Susie McKechnie of the Traders Association had been invited to the meeting, however she had not received a response.

Councillor Morris advised that the Poetry Festival were restructuring, and he advised that there had been meetings were Becky had been present and those present had been very impressed with her motivation and had said that whatever happens with the

restructuring of Ledbury Poetry he would like to have Becky as part of this Working Party.

Councillor Furlonger stated that he felt Becky has a very clear vision from her side of things based upon a similar exercise that exists in Ireland, and that has inspired the formulation of her own planning for this.

Councillor l'Anson highlighted a video that had been created by John Masefield High School students "Masefield Matters" which was available on u-tube.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptqKti_mORI

Councillor Morris asked if the application was modified and 100% right with no admissions, would it jeopardise the enquiry that Dr Mee was proposing? Dr Mee advised that this would be the case as they were doing the same thing, but on a different scale. She reiterated her belief that the enquiry form is the way forward as it opens up a dialogue with the Lottery.

Christine Tustin asked what the situation with the current project manager, the Chair advised that this was something that this committee needed to consider and advised that his preference would be that this Working Party continue working with the draft application provided by the Project Manager and if the committee do not feel this is the appropriate way forward that Dr Mee's proposal of an initial enquiry form be pursued.

Following further discussion it was agreed that the next step should be that Dr Mee meets with Chloe Garner to establish where she and the project manager were heading with this partnership and how many community groups have been spoken to about this project.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Dr Mee have a discussion with Chloe Garner about the participation of Ledbury Poetry in this project.**
- 2. That when the Clerk meets with the new Chairman of Ledbury Poetry she asks whether it would be possible for Becky Shaw to work with the Working Party going forward.**
- 3. That Dr Mee be introduced to Councillor Simmons, Ledbury Ward Councillor.**
- 4. That the outcome of all the above conversations be reported back to the next meeting of the Working Party.**

5. **That Dr Mee be asked to provide the information to be included in the enquiry form, for submission as soon as possible, by the Town Clerk.**

JM91 POSSIBLE JOHN MASEFIELD PROJECT PATRON

Members had been provided with a report advising of a possible Patron for the project.

The Clerk advised that she had not yet written to Ms Joanna Lumley's agent, however she hoped to do this in the following week, subject to the Working Party agreeing that this be done.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk write to Ms Joanna Lumley's agent to ask whether she would be interested in either becoming a Patron of the Project or willing to offer her support to the project in other ways.

JM92 LAUNCH EVENT – DECEMBER 2023

Members discussed the launch event being held in December 2023. Councillor Morris was concerned that the public need to be informed about what the Working Party is doing and felt that the planned launch in June could have been a vehicle for this. He advised that he believes there are other ways that this could be done such as the website and social media platforms, and that this will be a lengthy conversation which should be had once the National Lottery Heritage funding enquiry form had been submitted and a dialogue entered into with the Lottery, as this will help shape the project.

RESOLVED:

That this item be deferred until such time a dialogue has been started with the Lottery, and that in the meantime, the Community Development Officer be asked to meet with Jess to discuss how the School could help with a launch event.

JM93 UPDATE ON WEBSITE

Members were advised that the John Masefield Memorial Project Page on the Council's website had now gone live.

RESOLVED:

That a link to the John Masefield page on the Council's website be published on the Council's Facebook page and a report be provided at the next meeting of how many people have clicked on the link.

JM94 PROJECT MANAGER

Councillor Morris felt that this had been covered in previous discussions in the meeting, however he advised that the current project manager role had not used all of the funds available and that the group would be guided by the feedback from the dialogue with the Lottery Fund as to how the remaining funds could be best used.

Dr Mee provided members with a number of ways in which they may wish to consider promoting the project:

- Annual Schools Reading Challenge – to read John Masefield story
- British Library
- Museum of Stories at Newcastle and Oxford
- Grayson Perry – artwork

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk investigate the above projects and ways in which they could support the John Masefield Memorial project.

The meeting ended at 2.25 pm.

Signed **Dated**