

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF JOHN MASEFIELD MEMORIAL WORKING PARTY
HELD ON FRIDAY, 9 JUNE 2023**

PRESENT: Councillor Morris, Caroline Magnus (Great Niece of John Masefield and Member of John Masefield Society), Christine Tustin, Jessica Locke (Librarian at JMHS), Tim Keyes (Church Bell Ringers), Councillor l'Anson (Town Mayor) and Councillor Chowns

Via Zoom Dr Philip Errington, Dr Jane Mee, Lesley Ingram

ALSO PRESENT: Angela Price –Town Clerk
Olivia Trueman – Community Development Officer (CDO)
John Burns – Founder of the Poetry Festival

JM70 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Nina Shields, Chris Noel, and Catriona Cole

JM71 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

JM72 TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE JOHN MASEFIELD WORKING PARTY HELD ON 31 MARCH 2023 AND 12 MAY 2023

The Town Clerk advised members that if the minutes were not approved, the Committee would not be able to move on with the work and recommendations the Committee had proposed.

Based on the Town Clerk's advice, the Committee agreed to accept the minutes as a true record and noted the work that Riah Pryor had put in her presentation.

Caroline Magnus noted that it was not recorded that Riah Pryor attended the meeting on Friday, 12 May via zoom and asked that it was amended accordingly.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of The John Masefield Working Party held on 31 March 2023 and 12 May 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record of the meeting.

JM73 RESIGNATION OF PROJECT MANAGER

Members were advised that Riah Pryor had resigned as Project Manager for the John Masefield Memorial project. A report on page 29 detailed the tasks that she would complete prior to her departure in order to ensure project continuity.

The Chairman asked Members whether they would like to continue working with Riah to complete phase 1 and part of phase two of the John Masefield Memorial Project.

Members were confused as to why the project manager had resigned and asked the Town Clerk to provide a copy of the resignation. The Town Clerk advised members that due to a lack of clarity around the role of the working group and concern for resources available to support the project, Riah Pryor felt the project manager role, as advertised, was not feasible. It was made clear by the Town Clerk that it would not be appropriate to provide Members with a copy of the resignation letter.

Members noted that Riah Pryor had completed much work on the project and felt it was a shame that she had resigned. They agreed that it was imperative that the next Project Manager feels supported and that they would address this as a Working Party.

Dr Jane Mee joined the meeting via zoom at 14:24.

Members agreed that community engagement would play a big part in this project, in particular offering opportunities to residents to explore John Masefield so they can be informed before making decisions.

Councillor Chowns joined the meeting at 14:30.

After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that the Working Party would continue to work with Riah Pryor in order to complete phase 1 and most of phase 2, noting that the Working Party look as seeking a new Project Manager. It was also agreed that any communication with staff would go through the Town Clerk and not the Members of the committee, to ensure efficient communication.

It was agreed that Councillor Morris would meet with Riah Pryor to discuss the next steps, particularly focusing on a community engagement programme. The Clerk felt it would be beneficial for the Community Development Officer to also be present at the meeting. Councillor Morris advised Members that he would take a copy of the Community Day programme to the meeting, which he felt would be useful for Riah when creating a community programme.

Going forward, members agreed that prospective candidates for the Project Management Role should be invited to the Working Party and asked to provide a small presentation.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Members note the resignation of the current Project Manager, Riah Pryor.**

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That a recommendation be sent to Full Council that a new Project Manager is appointed for the John Masefield Memorial Project, noting that candidates should be invited to meetings and asked to provide a short presentation.**

JM74 COMMUNICATIONS FROM DR JANE MEE

Members agreed to bring agenda item 7 forward.

The Chairman welcomed Dr Mee to the meeting and asked her to provide information on her previous work and experience as a head of Museum Services, and how she could contribute to the John Masefield Project.

Dr Jane Mee advised members that she was head of Museum Services for 25 years and that she had extensive knowledge and experience on applying for funding, in particular Lottery Funding. She explained that most successful funding was awarded to those who could provide evidence of community engagement and that she would be happy to work with the Community Development Officer to provide engagement projects and help apply for funding, as a volunteer. It was noted that Dr Mee lived in North Yorkshire and would in some cases need to attend face to face meetings, therefore expenses would need to be covered.

Caroline Magnus agreed with Dr Mee's points, in particular working with the younger generation to explore the life and work of John Masefield. It was noted that Riah had already contacted cultural partners and community groups, and that there have been discussions around working with the local theatre in Ledbury to showcase a production – as one of the engagement projects.

The Chairman thanked Dr Mee for her time and advised that the Working Party would discuss her proposal and get back to her accordingly.

RESOLVED:

That the Working Party accept Dr Mee's proposal to help with engagement projects and funding for the John Masefield Project.

JM75 ROLE OF COMMITTEE

Members were provided with a report prepared by the Town Clerk regarding the role of the committee.

The Clerk advised members that the work of Council Working Parties is often undertaken by Members of the Working Party, rather than the staff at the Town Council.

It was agreed that the Community Development Officer would email a copy of the Council's Terms of Reference to all Members of the Working Party. Members were encouraged to send suggestions to the Town Clerk via email before Friday, 4 August so a draft Terms of Reference can be adopted at the next meeting. Members agreed that this would provide a clear understanding of the roles of Members and the Working Party and would be beneficial for the next project Manager.

Tim Keyes felt it would be beneficial for the Working Party to produce an audit of Members skills and experience to make it easier for work to be distributed. It was agreed that Members would email the CDO with information on their background, including experience and skillset so she could produce an audit for the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

- 1 That the CDO email a copy of the Council's Terms of Reference to all Members, noting that any suggestions be sent to the Town Clerk via email, before Friday, 4 August.**
- 2 That Members email the CDO with information on their background including skills and experience.**

JM76 POSTPONED PHASE 2 LAUNCH

The Chairman reminded Members that the event, which was supposed to be held on Thursday, 1 June (145th birthday of John Masefield) was cancelled due to not having sufficient contact details to invite.

Councillor Chowns left the meeting.

The Community Development Officer advised Members that the Traders Association's theme for this year's late night shopping event during Christmas time was 'Box of Delights' and asked whether it would be a good idea to work with the Traders of Ledbury to do a large event. The Clerk suggested contacting the BID to ask whether there could be any funding opportunities.

Jessica Locke suggested using the Theatre at John Masefield and involving the students. She advised members that there are 220 seats available and that she would be happy to organise some entertainment, on the provisory

that she is given to go-ahead from the Working Party no later than September.

Councillor Morris also advised members that the Royal Shakespeare Company were also doing a production of John Masefield's 'Box of Delights' from October 2023 – January 2024, and suggested contacting the RSC to explore the possibility of working together.

The Clerk suggested inviting the Chairman of the Traders Association to the next John Masefield Working Party to discuss collaborative working.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the Chairman of the Traders Association is invited to the next John Masefield Working Party on Friday, 4 August 2023.**
- 2. That Members agree to holding a launch event in December, working with John Masefield Secondary School and The Traders Association.**
- 3. That Councillor Morris contact the RSC to explore the possibility of working together.**

JM77 UPDATE ON CULTURAL PARTNERS

Members were provided with an update on Cultural Partners.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Morris, Riah Pryor and the CDO meet with the Cultural Partners on Tuesday, 13 June 2023.

JM78 INVITE LIST

Members were provided with a database of useful contacts, mainly local businesses, and organisations, that would be invited to future John Masefield Events.

The Clerk advised Members that the Town Council Administrator is currently working on a database. She asked Members to send any further contacts directly to the CDO, who will ensure the contacts are added to the database for the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Members review the current database of contacts, noting that any additional contacts are emailed to the CDO.**

JM79 WEBSITE CONTENT

It was noted that there were some difficulties accessing the John Masefield page on the Town Council’s website. It was agreed that the CDO would send an email to members with a link with direct access to the John Masefield Page. It was noted that any comments or suggestions must be sent to the CDO via email.

RESOLVED: That Members send their comments and suggestions to the CDO regarding the John Masefield page, noting that the Clerk will review all changes on her return from Annual Leave before going live.

JM80 ADVERTISING AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

Members agreed to use social media to raise awareness of John Masefield and the Memorial Project. The CDO suggested posting a poem or fact about John Masefield every Friday to increase engagement.

RESOLVED:

That any advertising be uploaded to the Town Council’s Facebook and other social media platforms.

JM81 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of the John Masefield Memorial Working Party be held on Friday, 4 August at 1:00pm.

Signed **Dated**