

Rayleigh Heritage Centre Working Party

Minutes of meeting held at Rayleigh Town Council Chamber at 10.00am 30th January 2014.

1. Attendees:

Mike Davies, Sue Smith, Viv Irvine, Cheryl Roe, Kerry Cumberland, Tony Harvey, Peter Waghorn and Eddie Dray.

2. Apologies for Absence:

Spencer Welsh, Gemma Smith. David and Suzanne have decided to stand down from the Working Party, due to work commitments.

3. Minutes of last meeting held on 3rd January 2014

Agreed by Eddie Dray. Seconded by Tony Harvey.

4. Matters Arising:

We watched the first draft of a promotional DVD for the Heritage Centre. Subtitles etc. need to be added.

5. Project Update:

Mike and Viv (thanks to Viv for attending) met with the Heritage Lottery Fund on 28th January. Several aspects were discussed. The HLF were more favourable to the option of purchasing the leasehold of Kingsleigh House, as apposed to leasing, (minimum lease would be 25 years, which is acceptable, although a 99 year lease would be preferred) as this would give the Heritage Centre some revenue in the way of rent (at present £20,000 from 2 tenants) and security for the HLF. Mr Todman has stated a willingness to consider selling us the freehold at £500,000, but the time scales may be against us. The HLF asked for letters of support from Mr. Todman, Rayleigh Town Council and also from possible groups whom would support and use the Centre. There were concerns that a Vice Chairman had not come forward.

The HLF asked if there was a need for another museum in Rayleigh. It was explained that the Windmill had no room for expansion, little space to exhibit all the artefacts and limited opening times. It was pointed out that Kingsleigh House is in an excellent position in the middle of the town, with a good choice of eateries/shops/market etc. nearby. The HLF also asked how many visitors we could expect, if we estimate 50 @ day that would equate to 7,500 a year. HLF stated that retail income is almost impossible to calculate. The HLF require more details about the contents and lay out of each room.

The costings were looked at, and the HLF have stated that fixtures and fittings etc. must be of the highest quality. We mustn't under estimate the cost and need for technology.

We would be in a more favourable position if the building and collection were at risk, which they are not at the present time. The HLF have £2million in the pot, which other groups are also applying for. The HLF are aware of RTTLG and have advised that if a grant is applied for, it will give us a "track record"

6. The Way Forward:

Phase 1 needs to be in place by 19th May, with the planning application (change of use and the lift installation) applied for. The cost of this will be £800 to be met by RTTLG. The architects have quoted £12,000 for the structural surveys etc. (Kerry asked if Mr Todman would be willing to pay this amount, but as he is already paying £20,000 towards the lift, Mike thought this unlikely). We need to know if the architects would be willing to hold their fee until we receive the funding? If we don't get the funding how will we pay the architects?

If we received Phase 1 of the funding it does not guarantee we will get Phase 2 (which will not be until May 2015)

We need to apply to become a registered charity as soon as possible; the cost of this will be £100.

It would be useful to contact other Heritage Centres for information. Mike has been trying to contact Waltham Forest Heritage Centre, but has not received a reply.

7. A.O.B.

Mike thanked everyone who had given ideas for S.W.O.T.

RAVVS have contacted Mike with details of 2 possible volunteers for the working party.

8. Date of next meeting:

Tuesday 4th March 2014 at Raleigh Town Council Chamber.

Meeting closed at 11.00am.