



## **WISBECH TOWN COUNCIL**

### **WISBECH CASTLE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**2 JULY 2018 – 7.30 pm**

#### **MINUTES OF MEETING**

**Present:** Councillor Tierney, Chairman; Councillors Balsevics (from 7.40 pm), Lynn, Oliver, Miss Oliver, Rackley (from 7.35 pm) and Tibbs.

**Apologies:** None (all members were present).

The minutes of the meeting of the Wisbech Castle Management Committee held on 3 April 2018 were confirmed and signed.

#### **W1/18 Election of Chairman**

On the proposal of Councillor Tibbs, seconded by Councillor Lynn, it was decided that Councillor Tierney be elected as Chairman of the Wisbech Castle Management Committee for the municipal year 2018/19.

#### **W2/18 Public Participation - naming of rooms at Wisbech Castle**

A parishioner, who stated that he is very impressed with the amount and quality of work which had been undertaken to Wisbech Castle, expressed the opinion that the formal naming of rooms at Wisbech Castle should be a matter for the public and not only the members of this committee, to ensure that rooms are given the names of people who are deserving of such an honour.

Members decided that the comments of the parishioner be noted and taken into account when discussing, at minute W7/18, the proposed naming of one of the rooms.

#### **W3/18 Election of Vice-Chairman**

On the proposal of Councillor Tierney, seconded by Councillor Lynn, it was decided that Councillor Rackley be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Wisbech Castle Management Committee for the municipal year 2018/19.

#### **W4/18 Refurbishment and enhancement of Wisbech Castle**

Further to minute W4/17, the Chairman updated members on progress which had been made regarding the refurbishment and enhancement of Wisbech Castle (the main building, the outbuildings and the garden).

The Chairman reported that numerous works had been undertaken, including:

- door locks had been repaired or replaced as necessary. Padlocks with no keys had been removed and replaced with new padlocks with a “master” key
- a significant amount of gardening had been undertaken at the front of the property; paths had been cleaned and drains had been cleared
- a light (which works on a day/night timer) had been installed above the main gate
- the rear garden had been completely transformed
- The Bothy had been completely cleared of rubbish and painting works had been undertaken



- within the main building, a considerable amount of re-decoration had been undertaken, floors had been waxed, rubbish had been removed from rooms, extensive cleaning had been undertaken
- various electrical works had been undertaken
- with regard to the Pump House, wood had been repaired where possible, the building had been painted inside and out and a temporary “shelter” had been installed to the rear
- the fountain in the rear garden had been cleaned and investigations are underway in terms of achieving it operating as a fountain once again
- a shed had been located in the grounds, for the storage of tools etc.

The Chairman provided each member of the committee with a report, which he had produced, showing suggested works/projects which are required, the estimated cost of each element of the works and potential contractors. He made the point that all quotations received would be referred to this committee for consideration/acceptance. Quotations for some of the works would be considered by this committee at minute W5/18.

The point was made by the Chairman that, in addition to the works to the main building, the outbuildings and the garden, it would be necessary to commission a condition survey of the trees within the grounds of Wisbech Castle, both from the point of view of health and safety and the impact that they could be having upon the listed structures (such as the boundary wall) on site.

The Chairman expressed the opinion that the council would be able to achieve the refurbishment of Wisbech Castle well within the financial sum that Cambridgeshire County Council had loaned to Wisbech Town Council for that purpose.

Members decided that the information reported by the Chairman be noted.

### **W5/18 Quotations for works to Wisbech Castle**

The Chairman invited members to consider quotations that he had obtained for the undertaking of a number of works at Wisbech Castle.

Members decided that

- (1) the quotation for undertaking repair and maintenance works (to include decking, repairing woodwork, paving, painting concrete works) to the front courtyard area, in the sum of £600 (plus materials), be accepted;
- (2) the quotation for creating an “enchanted den” in the garden, in the sum of £600 (plus materials), be accepted;
- (3) the quotation for undertaking groundworks to the “driveway” to the pump house, in the sum of £400 (plus materials), be accepted;
- (4) the quotation for re-painting the garden gate which faces Ghost Passage, in the sum of £100 (plus materials), be accepted;
- (5) the quotation for the supply of carpets for the top floor, in the sum of £550, be accepted;
- (6) the quotation for the fitting of carpets, supplying and installing a new kitchen and the supplying and fitting of vinyl floor covering in the kitchen, in the total sum of £1,450, be accepted;
- (7) they would consider the quotation received in respect of wall papering and painting of the “study”, in the sum of £250 (plus materials), and, subsequently, inform the Chairman, by e-mail, of their opinions regarding acceptance of the quotation.



### **W6/18 Proposed use of the top floor of Wisbech Castle**

The Chairman reminded members that the original idea for use of the top floor of Wisbech Castle had been to rent out the rooms to businesses as “permanent” offices (with each hirer having unsupervised access to the building); however, having given such a proposal further thought, there are concerns regarding certain operational aspects of such an arrangement, including the potential detrimental impact upon the security of the building and an adverse impact upon the refurbishment programme. The latest thinking is that a better arrangement would be to take individual “managed” room bookings.

In addition, the Chairman reported that he had been approached by a representative a local charitable organisation which may be interested in renting a number of the rooms on the top floor of Wisbech Castle on a daytime basis

Members decided that works to complete the renovation of the rooms on the top floor be undertaken as a matter of priority and that they be made available, as soon as possible, for hire on a “community” basis.

### **W7/18 Proposed naming of one of the rooms at Wisbech Castle**

The Chairman invited members to consider giving a name to the large room on the lower floor of Wisbech Castle and suggested that the room be named the Clayton Room, in recognition of what Peter Clayton does, through volunteering tirelessly, for Wisbech; the Chairman considers Mr Clayton to be a friend to both Wisbech Castle and the town itself.

Members decided, on the proposal of Councillor Tierney, seconded by Councillor Tibbs, that the large room on the lower floor of Wisbech Castle be named the Clayton Room.

### **W8/18 Creation of role of “Voluntary Caretaker” for Wisbech Castle**

The Chairman invited this committee to create a role of Voluntary Caretaker and to “appoint” to that role Mr D Topgood. The Chairman commented that Mr Topgood is, in effect, already performing such a role and that it would be beneficial to “formalise” the situation; Mr Topgood had been issued with a set of keys to Wisbech Castle and he spends many hours on site, both undertaking work on a voluntary basis and letting people in and out of the building and its garden.

Members decided, on the proposal of Councillor Tierney, seconded by Councillor Tibbs, that a role of Voluntary Caretaker for Wisbech Castle be created and that Mr D Topgood be “appointed” to that role.

### **W9/18 Arrangements for the use/rental/ hire of rooms/space at Wisbech Castle**

Members considered possible arrangements, including the setting of fees and charges, for the use/rental/ hire of rooms/space at Wisbech Castle.

Members are of the opinion that fees and charges in respect of the hire of space at Wisbech Castle need to be at a level which would generate an appropriate level of income to support the operational costs associated with Wisbech Castle but, at the same time, be competitive when compared to the charging rates of other community buildings In Wisbech.

Members decided that

(1) the rates for hire of space at Wisbech Castle initially be:



- Medworth Room: £20.00 per hour
- Large “meeting” rooms: £15.00 per hour
- Small meeting rooms/offices: £10.00 per hour;

- (2) charging concessions or negotiated rates could be offered for multiple bookings by a single group/organisation;
- (3) officers would examine the need for the council to levy VAT in respect of its charges;
- (4) the charges be kept under review;
- (5) hire documents and booking forms be produced.

**Meeting finished at 8.00 pm.**

Signed.....

Dated.....