

Observatory Group Meeting

19-03-2019

Present :- Richard Young (RY), Joan Brame (JB), Roy Proctor (RP), Linda Harper (notetaker)

1. Welcome

RY welcomed everyone

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Margaret Charlesworth, Lloyd Hughes and Phil Leigh

3. Notes from last meeting 15/2/19

Agreed as an accurate account, to be uploaded to website.

4. Matters arising other than those on Agenda

Nothing to report.

5. Licence Agreement with the Borough

Update – RY has still not been able to contact Damien Parker so no further discussion has been possible. Major problem remains that of the length of the licence.

Fire Risk and Evacuation Plan – within 1 month of signing the agreement the group has to produce a Fire Risk and Evacuation plan, this must be done in conjunction with a member of WSC.

Need to consider where the risk of fire is/could be – it is a wood structure so must be no smoking and no combustable materials left in Observatory.

Evacuation Plan – if the proposed works are carried out then access to the dome will be restricted, needs to be consideration given to who is able to access the dome along with how they would be able to get down in case of emergency.

RY will investigate what conditions are in place at other venues such as the Cathedral Tower, Norman Tower and possibly Ickworth House.

Management Plan and Risk Assessment – as the AAA will be the guardians of the Telescope. For management purposes RY suggested that someone be appointed to lead on the management and use of the Observatory using

the title Director together with a small management team.
Risk Assessment – the Observatory Hatch is the most dangerous aspect of the dome, the screw fitment is still being sourced but its point of anchor will be very important to prevent the hatch blowing shut. RP suggested using an Anemometer so that wind speed can be measured and that above a certain speed the hatch cannot be opened.

6. Heads of Agreement

RY gave an update, RP has met with Paul Tatum (Treasurer of Town Trust) and put forward a draft Heads of Agreement document. Although the Town Trust are the means to getting the project underway and do not want recognition John Popham, a trustee of the TT is keen to be involved particularly in seeing the works to be done to the structure of the building. The agreement needs further work.

7. Updates

Entrance Work – on hold until RY has met with Damien Parker

Dome – Still waiting for the written quotation for work to be done from Millwrights. Need to know does it include painting the interior of the dome.

Hatch – screw fitment still to be purchased.

Telescope – RY and Mike Kirkham have written to Chris Roper accepting his quote for the restoration but also advising him it could be several months before he will be able to start the work.

Camera and link to Reading Room – need to put together a quote of what equipment is needed. Various options need to be explored with those members within the AAA with the necessary skills/knowledge and outside providers such as Widescreen Centre in Ely.

8. AOB

Sarah Williams – fundraiser , she is unable to start work until all written quotes have been received but also it will not be possible to get people to fund the project unless there is some formal understanding in place that the licence/ contract will extend further than the 2 years identified in the proposed licence.

9. Date and time of next meeting:- Friday 26th April 2019 at 7.30pm.

