

Observatory Group Meeting

10 - 12 - 19

Note The meeting scheduled for 29 - 10 - 19 had to be cancelled

Present: Richard Young (RY) Tony Box (TB) Roy Proctor (RP) Joan Brame (JB) Lloyd Hughes (LH)
Margaret Charlesworth (MC) Bury Town Trust Representative

Apologies: Phil Leigh (PL) Linda Harper (LH)

1, Welcome

RY Welcomed attendees to the meeting

2, Notes from last meeting 27-09-19

These were agreed as an accurate account with the proviso that TB be described as having “experience” rather than “extensive experience” in project management.

3, Chairmanship of Group

RY requested that he relinquish the Chairmanship of the Group and this role be taken by TB as Project Manager. All agreed. RY will act as note taker for this meeting. RY will continue in his role as “Astronomy Advisor”.

4, Meeting with Damien Parker

TB and RP met with Damien Parker. They discussed the proposed Licence Agreement relating to the Athenaeum Observatory and Telescope. Issues arising include:-

4a The length of tenure. The Licence ending on 31st March 2021 is insufficient. It was proposed that the period of time be extended to mesh in with the sequence of contracts offered to other parts of the Athenaeum Organisation. This would give a five year contract with an option of extending for a further two years. Further to this compensation should be paid to AAA in the event of the contract needing to be terminated prematurely.

4b A subsequent informal meeting was held with Sarah Williams (Fund Raiser). Sara confirmed that an arrangement such as described above, written into a new Licence Agreement, would enable her to begin fund raising.

4c The issue of having a manager on site when the Observatory is being used was discussed. This would involve a cost to the AAA. The question was raised as to whether a members of the AAA could be trained to act as manager in the absence of an Athenaeum manager.

5, Management below Damien Parker

We understand the following to be the case. Damien is Service Manager Operations (Leisure and Cultural). Mr Leeks works to Damien in respect of Buildings. Mr Samson works to Mr Leeks in respect of the Athenaeum.

6, Solicitors and Architects

It is considered to be in our interests to ask a solicitor to look over a revised Licence Agreement and to ask an architect to express an opinion about any works needed on e.g. the Observatory access staircase and the Observatory dome. Suitable people have been identified and have expressed interest in the project.

7, Filming

AAA have been contacted by Mark Archer who is involved in a proposed TV programme about the building of an Observatory. They want to film ours. In investigating what we would need to do to get permission to do this RY came across Screen Suffolk who work for Bury Council and can apparently give the go ahead. The proposed filming has now been put on hold but if we get contacted again we have got the contacts.

8, Continuation of the Observatory Group

We have talked about the possibility of merging the Group with the main AAA committee as there is a considerable overlap of membership. We put this to the vote and there was an unanimous decision to continue meeting as a group.

9, Donation

The Bury Society has kindly made a donation to the Restoration Project of £5,000. This is to be put on hold until we can demonstrate that the project is viable.

10, Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 22nd January 7.30pm at 15 Albert Crescent Bury St Edmunds