



Shropshire Hills Discovery
Centre Advisory Board

3 December 2009

10.00am

Item / Paper

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Public

NOTE OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 13 AUGUST 2009

10:00 am – 11.30am

Responsible Officer Tim Ward

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PRESENT:

Members

Shropshire Council	Mr S Charmley
Craven Arms Town Council	Miss J Hoskins
South Shropshire Tourism Association	Mr L Chapman
Craven Arms Community Centre/ Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership	Mr D Gibbon
Secret Hills Network	Mr N Stephens

Officers

Shropshire County Council	Ms Z Griffin	(Centre Manager - Secret Hills)
	Mr A Lee	(Arts Manager)
	Ms A Patrick	(Tourism Officer)
	Mr T Ward	(Committee Officer)
	Mr A Williams	(Library Service Manager South)

The Centre Manager welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked them to introduce themselves.

Election of Chair

1. The Centre Manager asked for nominations for the post of Chair. It was proposed by Mr Chapman and seconded by Mr Charmley and duly **RESOLVED** that Mrs Motley be elected Chair of the Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre Advisory Board for the for the coming year

Apologies for Absence

2. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D Evans (SC), Cllr Mrs H Kidd (SC), Cllr Mrs C Motley (SC) Tim King (Tourism Officer SC) and Ms Lezley Picton (Head of Arts & Heritage SC)

Appointment of Vice Chair

3. It was proposed by Mr Chapman and seconded by Mr Charmley and duly **RESOLVED** that Mr Stephens be appointed Vice Chair of the Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre Advisory Board for the for the coming year

In the absence of Mrs Motley, Mr Stephens took the Chair

Note of Previous Meeting

4. The note of the meeting held on 5 November 2008, as circulated, was confirmed as a correct record.

Performance and Developments at Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre for the Period April 2008 to January 2009

5. A report outlining performance and developments at the Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre for the period April 2009 to June 2009 had been circulated. The Centre Manager also distributed a table showing performance for the period and also the results of a satisfaction survey which had been carried out.

The Centre Manager informed members that use of the library continued to increase with overall book loans rising 10%. She went onto say that the library continued to support 4 local reading groups and that the 2 Rhyme Time sessions for under fives continued to be well supported. The Centre Manger informed the meeting that an event had been held as part of the South Shropshire Literary Festival which had been very successful and which would be repeated. She added that the next event to be held was the Summer Reading Challenge and that several events were being held. Ms Patrick commented that there may be scope for working with the Shrewsbury Children's Book Festival.

The Centre Manager reported that the number of people visiting the exhibition or taking part in the various led activities was up around 20% on the previous year. She went on to say that total receipts remained similar to the previous year which given the current economic climate was very pleasing. She went on to say that following an inspection the Centre had retained its Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme award. Members congratulated her on this achievement.

The Centre Manager informed the meeting that following the granting of a small grant from Adult & Community Education a term long series of forest school activities had been held between April and July which had proved very popular and that the monthly Dads & Kids sessions would continue to run. She went on to say that several schools had used the forest school site for various activities.

The Centre Manager informed the meeting that the work parties in the meadows had continued and that some joint working had taken place with the Shropshire Outdoor project. She went on to say work had been carried out to install wheelchair accessible, livestock proof kissing gates on the Meadows and to improve the paths through the Community Garden.

The Centre Manager informed members that the review of walks from the Centre had been completed and that 4 new leaflets had been published. She went on to say that the route of the Shropshire Way had been amended so that it now ran through the Onny Meadows and passed the Centre and that work had been carried out with the Shropshire Way Project Officer to improve staff knowledge of and promotion of walking opportunities. Mr Chapman asked whether the new leaflet had been distributed to accommodation providers in the area. The Centre Manager advised him that a charge was made for the leaflets at the Centre so this may be difficult to administer.

The Centre Manager informed members that the from the beginning of April the Customer Service Point (SCSP) had been available 5 days a week and that the trained advisor was able to offer information on a wide range of councils services. She added that the number of enquiries was increasing as the awareness of the services offered grew.

The Centre Manager informed the meeting that the advertising focus had been altered with less advertising to the coach group market and more aimed at families. She added that a large mail shot had been done prior to the start of the summer holiday period. She went on to say that the Passport to Craven Arms scheme had continued this year following receipt of funding from South Shropshire District Council who had also contributed to updating the Craven Arms Town Leaflet, the production of which would be co-ordinated by the Centre. She added that the Shropshire Hills Event Brochure had been very successful with the original print run being distributed in 3 months and that the AONB had financed an additional print run.

The Centre Manager then took the meeting through the proposed events and activities programme for 2009 which included: -

- Easter: Seeing is Believing – make a kaleidoscope of natural things
- May Bank Holiday: Wind, Rain, Shine! – can you become a weather forecaster?
- May half-term: A special Geocaching trail round the meadows
- Summer holidays: Puzzling Palaeontology; Dinner Time; Three Little Pigs; Meadow Creations week;
- September 10th – 13th Heritage Open Days
- September 12th Craven Arms ArtWalk
- October half-term: The World's Biggest Pop-up Book?

- The Gallery has had a number of very successful shows this year, including “House of Cards” and “Four Plus Two” both of which saw good sales. Bookings for the Art Cafe Summer Festival workshops are the best ever.

Members commended the Centre Manager on the wide range of event and activities that were organised.

The Centre Manager updated members on progress with the Craven Arms Learning Centres project, stating that the focus of the project had shifted to the agreed outputs of business assists and employment support. She added that by the end of the year targets set would be exceeded.

The Centre Manager informed the meeting that the Centre continued to work with and support Community Groups such as the Local History Group and Cave and that the Farmers Markets continued to be well supported. She added that work had been carried out to encourage additional people to attend the markets and that musicians had been invited to attend.

The Chair thanked the Centre Manager for her report and commented that he was particularly excited by the comments in the last paragraph. He went on to thank all the staff at the Centre for all the work that they do.

Other Business

6. The Centre Manager informed the meeting that she had received a phone call from Mr Bodenham who had received complaints about the ragwort that was growing on the roof of the Centre. It was agreed that this should be removed and the Centre Manager agreed to look into the best way of doing this.

Date of Next Meeting

7. It was agreed that the dates of the next meeting would be:-

Thursday 3 December 2009

Thursday 4 February 2010

All meetings at 10.00am

CHAIR.....

DATE