

NORFOLK JOINT MUSEUMS & ARCHAEOLOGY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting Held at County Hall, Norwich on 26 June 2013 at 2.00pm

Present:

Norfolk County Council

Mr A Grey
Mr H Humphrey
Mr M Kiddle-Morris
Mr M Sands

Mr M Storey
Mr J Ward (elected Chairman during the Meeting)
Mrs M Wilkinson

Breckland District Council

Mr P J Duigan

South Norfolk District Council

Dr C Kemp

North Norfolk District Council

Mrs L Brettle

Norwich City Council

Mr D Bradford
Mrs C Brimblecombe

Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk

Mr E Nockolds

Broadland District Council

Mr J W Bracey

Great Yarmouth Borough Council

Mrs K S Robinson-Payne

Co-opted Members (Non-Voting)

Museums in Norfolk Group

Ms S Potts

Museum Friends

Mr J Knight

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr E Foss and Mr R Parkinson-Hare.

It was noted that since the despatch of the agenda papers, Mrs M Wilkinson had replaced Ms J Brociek-Coulton as a Member of the Joint Committee.

2 Election of Chairman

Resolved (unanimously)

That Mr J Ward be elected Chairman of the Joint Committee for the ensuing year.

(Mr J Ward in the Chair).

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting those Members who had been appointed to the Joint Committee since the County Council election in May 2013 and Steve Miller

whom was attending his first meeting since his appointment as Head of Museums and Archaeology.

3 Election of Vic-Chairman

Resolved (unanimously)

That Mr J W Bracey be elected Vice-Chairman of the Joint Committee for the ensuing year.

4 Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 April 2013 were confirmed by the Joint Committee and signed by the Chairman subject to it being noted at minute 6 that the review of the NMAS had been discussed by Members of the Great Yarmouth Borough Council.

5 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

6 Matters of Urgent Business

There were no matters of urgent business.

7 Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

8 Political Representation on the Joint Museums and Archaeology Committee – Appointment to Sub-Committee for 2013/14

The annexed report (8) by the Secretary of the Joint Committee was received.

Members received a report that set out the political representation on the Joint Committee and asked for appointments to be made to the Accounts Approval and Urgent Business Sub-Committee for 2013/14.

Resolved –

- (a) To agree that the political composition of the Joint Museums and Archaeology Accounts Approval and Urgent Business Sub-Committee for 2013/14 be as follows:

Conservative	4
Labour	2
UKIP	1

- (b) That the following Members be appointed to serve on the Joint Museums and Archaeology Accounts Approval and Urgent Business Sub-Committee for 2013/14:

Mr D Bradford (Labour)
Mr J W Bracey (Conservative)
Mr A Grey (UKIP)
Mr H Humphrey (Conservative)
Dr C Kemp (Conservative)
Mr M Sands (Labour)
Mr J Ward (Conservative)

9 Annual Internal Audit Report 2012/13

The annexed report (9) by the Head of Finance was received.

Resolved-

- To note the Norfolk Joint Museums and Archaeology Committee Annual Internal Audit Report for 2012/13, and the key message, based on an analysis on the audit work carried out and reports issued, meant that Norfolk Audit Services could assure the Joint Committee of the adequacy and efficiency of internal control, including the arrangements for Risk Management during 2012/13 was “acceptable” and therefore considered sound;
- To note that the system of internal audit, including the arrangements for Risk Management, were adequate and effective during 2012/13 for the purpose of the latest Regulations;
- To note that arrangement for anti-fraud and corruption were adequate and had been reviewed and;
- To note the content of the 2013/14 Audit Plan for the Joint Committee as set out in the Annual Internal Audit Report.

10 Norfolk Joint Museums and Archaeology Service – Performance and Finance Act – Report for 2012/13

The annexed report (10) by the Acting Head of Museums and Archaeology was received.

Members received a report that outlined the latest service performance, together with the NMAS revenue budget, reserves and provisions and capital programme based on the out-turn position for 2012/13. The report also provided the Joint Committee with an update on 2012/13 service plan targets.

During discussion, the following key points were noted:

- NMAS had achieved a break-even position at the year end.
- Satisfactory progress had been made with NMAS Service Plans during 2012/13.
- The Chairman drew the Joint Committee's attention to the introduction on a trial basis of the Norwich Museums Summer Season Rover Ticket. It was noted that the ticket would offer unlimited visits to the three Norwich museums (Norwich Castle, Bridewell Museum and Strangers' Hall) for a one month period from the date of purchase and be on sale from early July 2013 until late September 2013.
- Performance with the 2012/13 capital programme was satisfactory.
- Members asked a question concerning the Gressenhall Shop relocation which

was part of the 2012/13 NMAS capital programme. The project was completed in 2012/13 with an over spend of £4,000 which was covered by the revenue budget. The additional costs were incurred due to the District Conservation Officer requiring a revised specification for an automatic door. This resulted in a redesign and requirement for bespoke joinery. The project had seen the shop moved to a more central position on the former workhouse site in order to attract more customers and improved sales.

- Members were pleased to note the good joint working arrangements between the NMAS and the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk for improving interpretation and public access to the King's Town Hall complex, through a major HLF capital project.
- Members also supported the development of Museum Youth Forums throughout the county.

Resolved –

- (a) To note progress with performance and service plans during 2012/13.
- (b) To note progress with the revenue budget, capital programme and reserves and provisions out – turn positions for 2012/13.

11 Annual Review of Visitor Performance

The annexed report (11) by the Acting Head of Museums and Archaeology was received. The report analysed the numbers of visits made by members of the public to the museums operated by the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service for the financial year 2012/13. Over 357, 500 visits were made to NMAS museums during that period. After taking into account museums refurbishments, this represented a standstill position compared to 2011/12. Of the total number of visits to NMAS museums, 42,783 visits were made by school children in organised groups, almost matching the strong performance in 2011/12 (43,353).

Members asked to be supplied with an analysis of organised school group visits for NMAS museums across the county and for this information to be made available in time for the next meeting of the Joint Committee. Members particularly wanted to know which schools were taking part in organised visits and the average numbers of children per visit.

It was noted that all three NMAS sites at Great Yarmouth were participating in a new heritage pass set up by the Great Yarmouth Tourist Authority to promote the town's museums to visitors during the summer period.

It was noted that the negative impact of major sporting events in 2012 and the continued effect of the recession were outweighed by the reopening of the Bridewell Museum and the loan of the Titian painting to Norwich Castle, generating significantly increased visits. The October and February half terms also saw good levels of visits.

It was suggested that the new Commercial Manager for the NMAS should be asked to review the research work undertaken some two years previously on the postcodes of visitors to NMAS museums and look to bring this information up to date. It was also suggested that the Commercial Manager should be asked to examine options for the introduction of a weekly museum ticket that could be marketed for use by tourists.

Resolved –

That the report be noted.

12 Major Partner Museum Funding From Arts Council England for Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service

The annexed report (12) by the Acting Head of Museums and Archaeology was received. The report provided a detailed breakdown of the Arts Council England (ACE) grant budget awarded to the NMAS.

The Joint Committee asked to receive regular update reports about how the significant investment in the NMAS by Arts Council England was being allocated and spent across the service on a project by project basis. It was recognised that an in- depth analysis of the projects was provided by Area Museums Officers at Area Museums Committee meetings but it was felt that the Joint Committee also needed to be kept updated of any changed circumstances, and in particular changes in project timetables, local planning permission and finance.

The Joint Committee supported the work which the NMAS had undertaken to agree an activity plan with ACE to deliver against the five goals which ACE had approved for the allocation of resources.

Resolved –

That the report be noted.

13 Induction Presentations for New Members: Site and Key Project Summaries

The Area Museums Managers for the NMAS Western Area (Dr Robin Hanley), Norwich (Rachel Kirk) and Eastern Area (James Steward) explained how the NMAS was a multi-award winning service with:

- Ten museums and a study centre across the county
- Collections of national and international importance
- Over 350,000 visits a year
- A schools programme reaching over 40,000 children a year
- Exciting learning programmes for people of all ages
- A leading role in museum development through the SHARE Museums East programme.
- A national reputation and major investment from Arts Council England.

A number of information packs about the work of the NMAS were laid on the table; further copies could be obtained from the NMAS on request.

At the end of the meeting the Chairman thanked Dr Robin Hanley on behalf of all Members of the Joint Committee for his work as Acting Head of Museums and Archaeology during the interim period following the retirement of Vanessa Trevelyan until Steve Miller recently took up his position as Head of Museums and Archaeology.

The meeting concluded at 3.30pm.

Chairman

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