

NORFOLK JOINT MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting Held at County Hall, Norwich on 31 March 2017 at
2.00pm

Present:

Norfolk County Council

Mrs J Brociek-Coulton
Mr P Gilmour
Mr H Humphrey
Mr J Joyce
Mr M Kiddle-Morris
Ms E Morgan
Mr M Storey
Mr J Ward (Chairman)

Norwich City Council

Mr T Jones
Dr K Maguire
Mrs V Thomas

Broadland District Council

Mr D Buck

Breckland District Council

Mr P J Duigan

South Norfolk District Council

Mr B Stone

North Norfolk District Council

Mrs M Prior

Great Yarmouth Borough Council

Mr B Lawn

Co-opted Member (Non-Voting)

Museum Friends

Mr J Knight

1.1 Apologies for Absence

1.2 Apologies for absence were received from Mr T Jermy and Mrs E Nockolds

2 Minutes

2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 January 2017 were confirmed by the Joint Committee and signed by the Chairman.

3 Declarations of Interest

3.1 There were no declarations of interest

4 Matters of Urgent Business

4.1 There were no matters of urgent business.

5 Reports of Area Museums Committees

(a) Breckland

5.1 The annexed report of the Breckland Area Museums Committee meeting held on 27 February 2017 was presented by Mr P Duigan.

5.2 It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

(b) Great Yarmouth

5.4 The annexed report of the Great Yarmouth Area Museums Committee meeting held on 2 March 2017 was presented by Mr B Lawn.

5.5 In introducing the report, Mr B Lawn drew the Joint Committee's attention to the forthcoming "Titanic Honour & Glory" national touring exhibition that was dedicated to preserving the legacy of the White Star Line and their fleet of ships. The exhibition opened to the public on 1st April 2017. It would feature the loan of a pocket watch from the Titanic as well as many rare and previously unseen artefacts, including chinaware from the Titanic and luxurious interior fittings from both the Olympic and Britannic, sister ships of the Titanic. The exhibition would tell the stories of Norfolk survivors and display local links to the Titanic, such as the menu that featured Great Yarmouth bloaters.

5.6 It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

(c) King's Lynn and West Norfolk

5.7 The annexed report of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee meeting held on 13 March 2017 was presented by Mr H Humphrey.

5.8 The Joint Committee's attention was drawn to the activities of the Friends of King's Lynn Museums who continued to offer a varied programme for members including a newsletter, trips and an annual lecture. The Joint Committee was particularly pleased to hear about the activities of the Junior Friends of King's Lynn Museums. This initiative was being run as a pilot scheme with new recruits often taken on when museum events were run in the school holidays.

5.9 It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

(d) Norwich

5.10 The annexed report of the Norwich Area Museums Committee meeting held on 7 March 2017 was presented by Mrs J Brociek-Coulton who explained the recent activities of the Norwich museums.

5.11 The Joint Committee's attention was drawn to the aims and objectives of the Town Close Estate Charity which was keen to support educational and heritage projects, such as the Castle Keep project. The NMS worked closely with the Town Close Estate Charity and was grateful for the support that they provided.

5.12 It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

6 **Norfolk Joint Museums Service – Finance Monitoring Report for 2016/17**

6.1 The annexed report (6) by the Head of Museums was received.

6.2 Members received a report that covered progress with the NMS revenue budget for 2016/17, reserves and provisions, the capital programme and savings applied to the revenue budget for 2017/18.

6.3 The Chairman said that the Norfolk Museums Service had received a major financial boost towards the transformation of Norwich Castle's Keep with the award of £500,000 from the Garfield Weston Foundation. Following the major National Lottery support, the grant from the Garfield Weston Foundation was the next important step towards raising the £13m required to transform the Keep to its former glory by 2020.

6.4 The Joint Committee **resolved** to note –

(a) Progress with the revenue budget, capital programme and reserves and provisions forecast out-turn positions for 2016/17.

(b) The proposed savings and changes for 2017/18 and beyond.

7 **Norfolk Joint Museums Service – Risk Monitoring Report for 2016-17**

7.1 The annexed report (7) by the Head of Museums was received.

7.2 The Joint Committee received a report that provided Members with the latest Norfolk Museums Service Risk Register as at February 2017.

7.3 The Joint Committee noted that the report was compiled in a similar way to risk monitoring reports presented to service committees of the County Council. All the risks identified in the report were continually reviewed by appropriate managers to ensure that the risk scores reflected the current position against current Service objectives.

7.4 Members spoke about the importance of the good personal and professional relationships that NMS staff had with staff of its property management partner, NPS, and with staff of Norwich City Council, This was seen as essential in identifying priorities in building maintenance and ensuring NMS building maintenance was kept up to the required standard.

7.5 The Joint Committee **resolved** to note:

(a) The risk data, information and analysis presented in the newly formatted risk register report at Appendix A to the report and that the mitigating actions identified in it were being managed to an appropriate level.

(b) Progress with Risk Management since the previous meeting, as shown in the reconciliation report at Appendix B to the report.

8 **Norfolk Museums Service – Performance & Strategic Update Report**

8.1 The annexed report (8) by the Head of Museums was received.

8.2 The Joint Committee received a report that provided progress with performance against the NMS agreed service plan for 2016/17, details as to museum education and learning programmes, marketing and PR, partnerships, commercial developments, Norwich Castle Keep and other capital developments, NMS fundraising, the Arts Council England funding programme and the DCMS National Museums Review.

8.3 During discussion, the following key points were noted:

- The Joint Committee was informed that museum visits (including school visits) across all 10 NMS sites for the period 1st April 2016 to 31 January 2017 had shown a slight decrease of 1% when compared to the equivalent period in the preceding year. Given many factors including an early Easter and a very hot summer, this level of performance was very encouraging.
- Following the opening of the new Voices from the Workhouse galleries at Gressenhall and a strong exhibitions and events programme across the County, the Service was confident of matching last year's record visitor figures of c.400,000, including school visits of around 46,000.
- Norwich Castle has run another successful annual art project with the Probation Service for Youth Offenders. The group learned about the history of the Castle, as first a Norman royal palace and then a prison, with a particular focus on the array of historic graffiti on the stone walls of the Castle Keep.
- A joint application for Kick the Dust, a new Heritage Lottery Fund programme aimed at developing opportunities for young people aged 16-25, was submitted in November by the Service in partnership with YMCA Norfolk. A decision was expected later in the year.
- The Museums Service was working with a tourism organisation UK Countryside Tours to develop tourism packages for the US alumni market, based on quintessential English experiences. The team at Gressenhall had helped to create an offer around the history of English agriculture focusing on leading figures like Jethro Tull and Charles Townshend.
- An application to the Garfield Weston Foundation for the support of the Keep development was submitted in February 2017. A significant grant of £500,000 was secured towards the project. Applications to other funders including the Foyle Foundation and the Wolfson Foundation were in preparation.
- The final element of the capital works for the Voices from the Workhouse development project at Gressenhall was nearing completion. The redeveloped Collections Gallery would be fully operational by May 2017. The new gallery would be used by a range of users, including young people's groups.
- NMS and Norfolk Arts Service had been successful in a Grants for the Arts funding bid to Arts Council England, for a project to be delivered in partnership with Sinfonia Viva, a nationally recognised orchestra. This exciting project would see an orchestral and sung performance by Sinfonia Viva and a choir of school children, volunteers and members of adult community groups at Gressenhall in June 2017. The words would be co-produced by school children and community groups and will be performed at evening and schools' performances.
- The conservation work on the Ensign of Le Généreux was made possible because of funding from the Costume and Textile Association supplemented by a Just Giving campaign and a contribution towards the lining of the fabric from the Nelson Society. Details about the Just Giving Campaign would be

emailed to JMC Members after the meeting.

8.4 The Joint Committee resolved:

1. To note that the redevelopment of the Keep at Norwich Castle which continues to progress positively.
2. To note progress with plans for the remainder of 2016/17, including the exhibition and events programme and the Service's progress in achieving a balanced budget.
3. To note progress with Arts Council England's new funding programme for 2018-22 and progress with the Service's funding applications.
4. That progress on all other museums matters should continue to be reported back to the Joint Committee as part of the Head of Museums' periodic Performance and Strategic Update Report.

9 NMS Collections Rationalisation Programme 2015-18

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

9.2 The Joint Committee was asked to approve the rationalisation of the Norwich Social History items that were listed in the appendix to the report.

9.3 The Joint Committee resolved:

To approve the rationalisation of the items listed in Appendix 2 to the report. It was noted that these items had been considered for rationalisation by Norwich City Council's Area Museums Committee. It was also noted that these objects would be offered in the first instance to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in their acquisition. They would then be offered to the museum community at large or any other suitable public body. If no interest was expressed they would be sold at auction or destroyed.

10 The Deep History Coast Project

10.1 The Joint Committee received presentations on the Deep History Coast (DHC) Project from Andrew Smith, NMS Operations Manager –East and Dr Andy Hutcheson Environment Manager, Norfolk County Council.

10.2 The Joint Committee heard that work was continuing, together with Natural History Museum specialists, on a review and analysis of Norfolk's faunal collections from the Cromer Forest Bed. NMS staff continued to work with North Norfolk District Council (NNDC) on the DHC Steering Committee in order to shape the direction of the project in North Norfolk. Specialist advice and support was also provided to North Norfolk's developing DHC Coastal Community Team work, with further meetings scheduled.

10.3 The Joint Committee noted that a partnership application led by NNDC to the Government's Coastal Communities Fund (CCF) was submitted at the end of June 2016 and had been successful in obtaining a Stage 1 pass. The second round application was submitted in December 2016 following a programme of exploratory work and detailed planning supported by NMS. If successful, the funding would enable the development of new tourism facilities across the North Norfolk Coast and improvements to the area immediately in front of Cromer Museum. The Joint

Committee would be kept informed of developments at future meetings.

- 10.4** A booklet about the Deep History Coast Project was made available for Members to take from the back of the Committee Room.

The meeting concluded at 3.45 pm.

Chairman

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