

## NORFOLK JOINT MUSEUMS & ARCHAEOLOGY COMMITTEE

**Date**

Friday  
15 February 2013

**Time**

2 pm

**Place**

The Edwards Room  
County Hall  
Norwich

## Agenda



Christmas Fair at Norwich Castle

**1 To note Apologies and whether any Substitute Members have been Appointed**

**2 To Receive the Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 23 November 2012** (PAGE 5 )

**3 Members to Declare Any Interests**

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is on your Register of Interests you must not speak or vote on the matter.

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is not on your Register of Interests you must declare that interest at the meeting and not speak or vote on the matter.

In either case you may remain in the room where the meeting is taking place. If you consider that it would be inappropriate in the circumstances to remain in the room, you may leave the room while the matter is dealt with.

If you do not have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest you may nevertheless have an **Other Interest** in a matter to be discussed if it affects:

- your well being or financial position
- that of your family or close friends
- that of a club or society in which you have a management role
- that of another public body of which you are a member to a greater extent than others in your ward.

If that is the case then you must declare such an interest but can speak and vote on the matter.

**4 Matters of Urgent Business**

**5 Public Question Time**

15 minutes for questions from members of the public of which two clear working days notice have been given.

**6 To Receive the Reports of Area Museums Committees/ Forum**

**(a) Breckland**

**(b) Norwich**

(PAGE 13 )

To view reports click on links shown in blue

- 7 Review of Norfolk Museums Service** (PAGE 18 )  
Report by the Cabinet Member for Cultural Services, Customer Service and Communications.
- 8 Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service-Integrated Performance and Finance Monitoring Report For 2012/13** (PAGE 50 )  
Report by Head of Museums and Archaeology
- 9 Norfolk Museums and Service--Service and Budget Planning For 2013-15** (PAGE 57 )  
Report by Head of Museums and Archaeology
- 10 Collections for Rationalisation (including Appendix 2 Proposed Objects To Be Deaccessioned)** (PAGE 65 )  
Report by Head of Museums and Archaeology
- 11 Report of the NMAS Curators 2011-12** (PAGE 79 )  
Report by Head of Museums and Archaeology
- Please note: This report provides a summary of the work of the NMAS Curators in 2011-12. The full report is available on <http://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/view/NCC117601>. Two reference copies of the report are available in the Members room at County hall. Paper copies of the report will not be available at the meeting because of the high printing cost.

**CHRIS WALTON**  
**Head of Democratic Services**

County Hall  
Martineau Lane  
Norwich  
NR1 2DH

7 February 2013

Enquiries and names of any Substitute Members to Tim Shaw  
Direct Dialling: Norwich (01603) 222948  
E-mail: [timothy.shaw@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:timothy.shaw@norfolk.gov.uk)

**GROUP MEETING**

Conservative – 1.30 pm – Colman Room



**If you need this Agenda in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact Tim Shaw 0344 8008020 or 0344 8008011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.**

## **NORFOLK JOINT MUSEUMS & ARCHAEOLOGY COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes of the Meeting Held on 23 November 2012**

#### **Present:**

##### **Norfolk County Council**

Mr M Carttiss

Mrs J Rogers

Mr B Stone

Ms J Toms

Mr J Ward (Chairman)

Mr M Wilby

Mr A J Wright

##### **North Norfolk District Council**

Mrs L Brettle

##### **Great Yarmouth Borough Council**

Mrs K S Robinson-Payne

##### **Norwich City Council**

Mr D Bradford

##### **Broadland District Council**

Mr J Bracey

##### **Breckland District Council**

Mr P J Duigan

##### **South Norfolk District Council**

Dr C Kemp

#### **Co-Opted Members (Non – Voting)**

##### **Museum Friends**

Mr J Knight

##### **Museums in Norfolk Group**

Ms S Potts

#### **1 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr G Gee, Mrs E Knockolds, Mr M Stonard and Mrs H Thompson.

#### **2 Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 June 2012 were confirmed by the Joint Committee and signed by the Chairman.

#### **3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **4 Matters of Urgent Business**

There were no matters of business.

#### **5 Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

## **6 To Receive Reports of Area Museums Committees/North Norfolk Forum**

### **(a) Breckland**

The annexed report of the Breckland Area Museums Committee meeting held on 19 October 2012 was received and noted.

In introducing the report, Mr Diugan congratulated the Gressenhall Learning Team on receiving the Sandford Award for Heritage Education which would help with marketing museum activities to schools.

### **(b) Kings Lynn and West Norfolk**

In the absence of Mrs Knockolds, whom had given her apologies for the meeting, the annexed report of the Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee meeting held on 15 October 2012 was introduced by Mr Wright.

The Joint Committee noted that the main exhibition gallery at the Lynn Museum was being refreshed over the winter period thanks to funding from the Arts Council Major Partnership Programme.

### **(c) North Norfolk**

The annexed reports of the North Norfolk Museums Forum meetings held on 11 July 2012 and 25 October 2012 were received and noted.

In introducing the reports, Mrs Brettle referred to the large numbers of heritage organisations in the North Norfolk area that were represented on the Forum and how the Forum brought museums together to encourage partnership working.

### **(d) Norwich**

The annexed reports of the Norwich Area Museums Committee meetings held on 17 July 2012 and 23 October 2012 were received and noted.

In introducing the reports, Mr Bradford placed on record members' thanks to the Friends of the Norwich Museums who had contributed £25,000 to the refurbishment of the Bridewell Museum.

Mr Barry Stone, Cabinet Member for Cultural Services at Norfolk County Council, said that he would be willing to attend Area Museums Committee/Museums Forum meetings to discuss the County Council's approach to the findings of the Museums Working Group, after the findings had been considered by the County Council's Cabinet on 3 December 2012. Mr Stone was asked to make separate arrangements for informing Broadland District Council (and South Norfolk District Council) which did not have an Area Museums Committee.

## **7 Proposed Change to Area Committee Arrangements in Great Yarmouth**

The annexed report by the Head of Museums and Archaeology was received.

### **Resolved**

That the Joint Committee approve the decision of the Great Yarmouth Borough Council to reinstate the Great Yarmouth Area Museums Committee.

## **8 Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service – Integrated Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report for 2012/13.**

The annexed report by the Head of Museums for Archaeology was received.

The Joint Committee received a report that provided performance against NMAS Service Plans and budget out-turns based on information at 30 September 2012.

In the course of the discussion, the following key points were noted:

- The NMAS remained on target to achieve a break-even budget position.
- The NMAS was close to a 5% reduction in admissions income, which was identified as an “amber” level risk within the NMAS risk register. Any adverse changes in visitor attendance and spending patterns could impact on the budget but the NMAS maintained an Income Reserve for that purpose.
- Officers were asked to take up corporately whether a more visible means could be found to show different levels of risk in risk registers.
- In reply to questions, the Head of Museums and Archaeology said that Mr Mark Clancy, who had gained wide ranging commercial experience whilst working at Walsall Museum and Art Gallery and for the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, would be taking up his new post of commercial manager for the NMAS on 3 December 2012. The post would be funded by the Arts Council for a period of two years and be responsible for reviewing current commercial performance and for examining options for further improving the return on retail and catering.
- The Gressenhall Eco – buildings project had been re-scoped in order to meet planning objections, and was going through the planning process again.
- The NMAS had investigated with the Highways Agency how to improve the safety of museum visitors crossing the public highway that divided Gressenhall Farm from the remainder of the Museum site.

The Joint Committee noted the following:

- Progress with performance and 2012/13 service plans
- Progress with the revenue budget, capital programme and reserves and provisions out-turn positions for 2012/13
- The Annual Governance Letter and Annual Audit Report
- The review of the NMAS Risk Register.

## **9 Service and Budget Planning 2013/15 for Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service.**

The annexed report by the Head of Museums and Archaeology was received.

The Joint Committee received a report that set out the financial and planning context for the County Council and gave specific service information for the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service for the next financial year.

In the course of the discussion, the Joint Committee noted the following:

- The revised service and financial planning context and assumptions.
- A detailed list of the updated costs and pressures facing NMAS
- A detailed list of updated proposals for savings
- Information about new capital bids and funding
- Known priorities for the service within the next service planning round 2013/15
- The figure for “new savings proposals” mentioned Appendix A to the report should read “126” rather than “94”
- Changes in demand for NMAS services could be attributed to competition from the wider cultural sector and from the cultural digital “economy” and changes in economic climate which impacted on consumer spending.

## **10 Collections for Rationalisation**

The annexed report by the Head of Museums and Archaeology was received.

The Joint Committee received a report that set out the background to a review of a group of social history items at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse and at Great Yarmouth Museums that were in poor condition and fell outside the NMAS Acquisition and Disposal Policy.

The Joint Committee noted the following:

- The term “de-accessioning” was a technical term used in the museums world to describe a process that preceded the act of “disposal” of museum items.
- Only items that had been de-accessioned could be considered for disposal.
- Item 3 (an electric cooker) (mentioned at page 100 of the agenda papers) had been removed from the list of items to be de-accessioned pending further research.
- Item 16 (the Brancaster water pump) did not form part of the current display within the NMAS and would be offered to Anglia Water.
- Requests from reputable and relevant organisations (such as railway preservation societies) that were able to provide a good home for items earmarked for disposal would be considered before items were put forward for sale on the open market.
- Should de-accessioned items be placed for sale on the open market, then Members asked to be sent the details at the time of sale.



## **Resolved**

That the objects listed in Annexes 2 and 3 of the report be de-accessioned (subject to the removal from the list of de-accessioned items, item 3, an electric cooker).

## **11 NMAS Collections Development Project**

The annexed report by the Head of Museums and Archaeology was received.

The Joint Museums Committee received a report that explained how the NMAS was creating a sustainable future for NMAS Collections, one where each and every accessioned object was significant to the aims of the Service, was accessible by staff and the public, and was stored in conditions which would assist its long-term preservation and use.

It was pointed out that the focus of the development project would be the collections housed at the Gressenhall superstores which were the largest collection stores within the NMAS and almost full to capacity. Space needed to be created to house the collections from the North Walsham store which had been closed as part of the NMAS Efficiencies Programme.

The Joint Committee noted that running in parallel with the 3-year project funded by Arts Council England's Major Partner funding stream from April 2012 until March 2015 was a complementary programme funded by the Esmée Fairborn Foundation called "Shine A Light" which would run from January 2013 until March 2014. The complementary programme had as one of its aims the creation of a sustainable and skilled volunteer and staff team to help unlock the potential of the reserve collections at Gressenhall.

It was also pointed out that the NMAS was exploring possibilities for using digital technology to improve intellectual and physical access to stored collections.

## **Resolved**

That the Joint Committee agreed:

- a) The vision for the Gressenhall superstores, set out in Annex 1 to the report.
- b) The NMAS Archaeological Review and Rationalisation Strategy, set out in Annex 2.
- c) The disposal of bulk archaeological material identified through the process, set out in Annex 2, section H.
- d) The Head of Museums and Archaeology report to the Joint Committee on such disposals in January each year.

## **12 Stories from the Sea – an innovative museum project in Great Yarmouth**

The Joint Committee received a report and a power point presentation about how the Great Yarmouth museums were working on a three year programme aimed at improving educational attainment and ensuring school children in the Great Yarmouth area developed an understanding of their local heritage and its significance.

In the course of discussion, the following key points were noted:

- Members were of the view that the words “areas of low cultural engagement” should be avoided because “cultural engagement” meant different things to different people. The Head of Museums and Archaeology was asked to point this out to the Arts Council.
- Time and Tide Museum and Royal Museums Greenwich had been selected to run one of ten national pilots.
- The NMAS had been awarded £180,000 of DFE/ACE funding over three years up to March 2015.
- The Great Yarmouth Museums would be working with the Royal Museums Greenwich to develop a programme of innovative and high quality activities and learning resources amongst targeted schools in the Great Yarmouth area. The project aimed to work with 4,500 pupils up to March 2015. In reply to questions, it was pointed out that there were possibilities for further work to sustain these contacts after March 2015.
- This money would help to increase visits by school children to Great Yarmouth Museums; to create a programme that would help children develop a better understanding of their local heritage, and support improvements in educational attainment.
- Writers in residence in the area would work with students and support informal learning events.
- The project outcomes should mean more children and families committed to visiting museums for learning and strengthened relationships with schools.

## **Resolved**

To note the report.

## **13 Skills for the Future**

The Joint Committee received a power point presentation from Sally Ackroyd, NMAS Skills for the Future Officer. Also present for the consideration of this item were Helen Bainbridge, Library and Archive Trainee, Hannah Southon, Environmental Conservation Trainee and Tom Watson, Environmental Conservation Trainee.

It was noted that Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse was offering a number of formal traditional skills based apprenticeships in such areas as farming and horticulture in partnership with Easton College. There were also 6-12 month internships suitable for both young people and those looking for a second career.

The internships were both part-time and full-time and covered:

- Heritage Gardening
- Museums Collections Management
- Historic Engine Running and Maintenance
- Learning Activities Using Traditional Skills
- Historic Building Maintenance

The apprenticeships were for eighteen months full-time and covered:

- Mixed Farming

- Horticulture
- Environmental Conservation
- Farriery

Over the period of the project there had been 80 trainees, 36 of these had been based at Gressenhall with 10 or 11 trainees based at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse at any one time. While most of the trainees came from the Eastern region, there had been national and international interest in these highly traditional skilled based apprenticeships.

### **Resolved**

To note the presentation.

The meeting concluded at 4.30 pm.

### **CHAIRMAN**



**If you need these minutes in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact Tim Shaw on 0344 8008020 or 0344 8008011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.**

---

**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of some Members of the**

**BRECKLAND AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE**

**Held on Friday, 1 February 2013 at 2.00 pm in  
Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse Museum, Gressenhall**

**PRESENT**

Mr R.G. Kybird  
Mrs P.A. Spencer

Mr M.A. Kiddle-Morris (Vice-Chairman)

**Also Present**

Mr D. Blackburn  
Mr R. Key

**In Attendance**

Mr Oliver Bone

Dr Robin Hanley  
Helen McAleer

- Curator of the Ancient House, Museum of Thetford Life
- Western Area Manager
- Senior Committee Officer

**Action By**

**Meeting Status**

As only one Member from Norfolk County Council was in attendance, the meeting was not quorate.

It was agreed by those Members present to receive the reports from Ancient House Museum of Thetford Life and Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse Museum, for information.

**1/13 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Duigan, Bracey, Brindle, Clark and Rogers.

Councillor Joyce had been invited to attend as a Substitute but had been otherwise engaged.

**2/13 ANCIENT HOUSE MUSEUM OF THETFORD LIFE**

Oliver Bone presented his report which covered the period October 2012 to January 2013.

The Mapping exhibition had concluded and the Hard Times exhibition had opened the previous week. There was a selection of artefacts on display which related to the everyday life of the poor of the town, providing a non-nostalgic view of real life. A highlight of the display was an album of photographs of characters of Thetford taken by Mr Chalk, and a collection of press cuttings relating to the pictures. One of the photographs was of

**Action By**

Harry Bensley, a Thetford resident who had walked round the world wearing an iron mask.

The exhibition would run until the end of July when it would be replaced by an exhibition on Thetford's Lost Tudor Sculptures which would display the findings of a research project into the stone monuments of the Tombs of the Dukes of Norfolk and would include artefacts from other museums. The project had been carried out in partnership with English Heritage and Leicester University and funding from the Arts & Humanities Research Council and others, allowing free admission to the exhibition which would run from 27 July until the beginning of October. A new book, phone app and screen would also supplement the information provided at the exhibition.

Melissa Hawker (Learning Officer) was also involved in the Arts Award Scheme and was receiving recognition.

Events in the past three months had included the Christmas Lights Switch-on. The museum had stayed open in the evening and during the day there had been a busy programme of school visits. The Big Draw event had taken place during October half-term week and had received national publicity.

In the autumn there had been a meeting with a group from Japan, keen to build a cultural exchange with the Thetford area and interested in school links. They had shown slides of activities at the Obsidian museum.

Ancient House had also been able to assist English Heritage by answering enquiries about local history regarding Thetford Warren Lodge which provided information for signboards, etc.

With regard to the museum itself, there had been a problem with one of the display cabinets which had been fixed and the flint fossils were now securely held in place. A new trainee (Sarah Cassell) had been recruited and would be working and learning about all aspects of the Museums Service.

The Friends had held a very good annual general meeting and Christmas Social. Additional people had been recruited to the Friends Committee and they were able to support the museum in various ways. They had recently purchased a badge-making machine which would be used to create rewards for children and also merchandise for the shop.

A new volunteer, Chris Samuels, had commenced work on a documentation project.

Mr Kybird asked about regional funding and was advised that the Museums Service had received a major grant from the Arts Council of England. They were one of only 16 Services across England to receive such funding and it amounted to about £4 million over three years and would deliver tangible benefits to visitors as well as being used to target youth development. It was a vital funding stream which underpinned the Museum's core capacity.

Mr Blackburn noted that they were supporting the SHARE initiative which

**Action By**

provided specialist networks for museums. Funding from that had enabled the launch of the Heritage Engineering Network. Small museums were heavily represented and it was a very valuable initiative. Gressenhall was also involved and would host a future meeting of the Network.

Oliver Bone observed that they needed to maintain good links with the Arts Council so that they would see the fruits of their funding, which replaced the Renaissance in the Regions funding.

Mrs Spencer asked how far back the Thetford records went and was advised that there were good records on Thetford Priory up to the dissolution, and some good books too. There was also an account of the funeral of the second Duke of Norfolk and his funeral procession.

Mr Kiddle-Morris asked how the Tudor sculptures had come to be scattered all over Norfolk and Oliver Bone explained that the Tombs had been relocated to Framlingham Church and some parts had not been needed.

Finally it was noted that attendance figures were very good with three months left in the financial year, which was testament to the hard work of the team.

The report was noted.

**3/13 GRESSENHALL FARM & WORKHOUSE MUSEUM**

Robin Hanley presented his report which covered the period from October to December when the museum had been mostly closed to the public. It was due to open for February half-term week. Following evaluation work carried out it would only be open from Monday to Friday that week (not the weekends). The museum would open fully again from 10 March until November.

A new offer would be trialled for Museum Pass holders, who provided a vital income stream. In an attempt to build membership there would be free or reduced admission events for Pass holders only. Those events would be evaluated and if successful would be built on for the future.

Apple Day on 21 October 2012 had been a big event with lots of activities and about 2,500 visitors. It would remain a big event in the calendar. The 2013 event programme was attached to the Agenda. It had been shaped by evaluations of last years' events and there were three main types of events for 2013:

- Main event days – with a full staffing establishment including the use of parking fields, (free for Pass holders);
- Days with a Difference – smaller themed event days requiring less staff and utilising core parking (free for Pass holders); and
- Ticketed events – pre-booked and pre-paid events such as Night at the Museum (reduced charge for Pass holders).

Some of the changes to the programme were highlighted. There would be a new 'History Alive' event day on 27 May when visitors would step

**Action By**

back into the Georgian period and a Victorian Family Christmas. These events would replace the History Fair which had seen reduced numbers. The 'Workhouse Experience' event was based on the successful schools programme. Two new events were the 'Gressenhall Garden Show' and 'Grandparents Day'.

The event programme was very important and a key driver for Museum pass sales. If the weather was kind, Robin Hanley was confident that people would come to the museum and enjoy their visit.

Gressenhall would also be hosting the Breckland Festival event, which was organised and funded by Breckland Council, on Saturday 10 August, and built on the success of the Festival held at the museum in 2012.

Half of the cost of delivering and marketing the event programme was covered by funding from the Arts Council England (ACE).

The 'Rediscover Gressenhall' marketing event was targeted at local people using fliers posted in Parish magazines, delivered door-to-door and distributed in local schools. It aimed to encourage repeat visits. The campaign featured a reduced entry charge and hoped to capture e-mail details for use in follow-up electronic marketing. Despite the bad weather in 2012 it had had a positive impact on visitor numbers and it was hoped to have an even greater effect in 2013 if the weather was kind.

There would be a lot of school holiday activities and additional marketing would take place before the school holidays, with fliers delivered to local schools in class size bundles.

Gressenhall had been successful in a funding bid to improve public access (either in person or on-line) to Superstore collections. A Project Officer and two teaching trainees would be recruited to work on that.

The museum was also in the early stages of preparing a bid for Heritage Lottery funding for new displays. Officers from the Lottery Fund would be visiting the following week. The provisional title for the project was 'Voices from the Workhouse' and displays would feature newly discovered evidence of people involved in the workhouse, with a whole range of first hand testimonials. The project would also tell later stories of the building and of other Norfolk Workhouses. There was currently nowhere to access such information. It would provide an on-line resource for people researching family members linked to workhouses.

The museum was working hard with social media, updating its Twitter account and Facebook page daily with new content to maintain a connection with visitors.

During the closed period improvements would be carried out and displays would be refreshed and upgraded ready for March. The Friends and volunteers continued to be very active and would be raising funds for the Workhouse project.

Work would be carried out by the Learning Team to maintain school visitor numbers by ensuring that content was relevant. The new Western Area Youth Engagement Officer, Anna Caley, had an office base at

**Action By**

Gressenhall. She was working on developing a project with 'Looked After Children'.

Gressenhall also had two trainees recruited as part of the NMA Teaching Museum programme. They formed part of an eight strong team of trainees who would be employed full time for 12 months.

The Skills for the Future training project continued to run at Gressenhall and there were two new farm apprentices who would receive formal and informal training on a variety of activities and they would also take part in placements with the National Trust, Norfolk Wildlife Trust, etc.

Plans for a joint project with the Prince's Trust were under discussion. The project would give short term training opportunities to out of work / in trouble young people.

Finally Robin Hanley advised that visitor numbers had been badly affected by the poor weather. It was hoped that with good weather and a strong event programme, visitor numbers would be better in 2013.

The report was noted.

**4/13 NEXT MEETING**

It was felt that there was insufficient time to rearrange the meeting to enable Members to provide input to the Joint Area Museums & Archaeology Committee on the Review of the Norfolk Museums Service. The Members present agreed therefore, that the next meeting should take place on Friday 22 March 2013 in Thetford. The venue would be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 2.50 pm

CHAIRMAN





## MINUTES

### NORWICH AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

2pm to 4.20pm

11 December 2012

Present:

**City Councillors:**

Bradford (chair)  
Blunt  
Gee  
Thomas

**County Councillors:**

Ward (vice chair)  
Edwards  
Mooney  
Nobbs  
Scutter  
Toms

Co-opted Non-voting members:

Councillor Bracey (Broadland District Council), Brenda Ferris (Norfolk Contemporary Arts Society), Charlotte Crawley (East Anglia Arts Fund) and Ceri Lamb (Friends of Norwich Museums)

Apologies:

City Councillors Ackroyd and Button; and Councillor Hornby (South Norfolk Council)

## 1. MEMBERSHIP

### RESOLVED to:

- (1) note that the city council has appointed Councillor Button to the committee following the resignation of Councillor Lay from the committee and the council;
- (2) approve the co-option of Brenda Ferris, who will represent the Norfolk Contemporary Arts Society on the committee, as a non-voting member;
- (3) record the committee's gratitude to Councillor Lay and Felicity Hartley (Norfolk Contemporary Arts Society) for their contribution to the work of the committee.

## 2. MINUTES

**RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2012 subject to item 2, The Norwich Museums, special events, first sentence, to insert "in December 2011" after the word "event" so that the sentence reads as follows:

"Councillor Edwards said that the library at Mile Cross had hosted an excellent event, in December 2011, on Christmas in the olden days."

### **3. RATIONALISATION OF THE COLLECTIONS**

The collections development manager (Norfolk County Council) presented the report and explained that the Norwich Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS) was undergoing a process of rationalising the collections and recommending the disposal of objects which could be better displayed by another organisation rather than kept in storage. He explained that the focus of displays at the Bridewell Museum had changed and that it was not possible to display all the objects. The list attached to the agenda papers comprised 20 objects of the 30 objects which had been recommended for disposal by the curator and endorsed by the NMAS rationalisation committee. The committee had removed some objects of significant local importance from the list. Members were asked to consider the recommendations for disposal and to make recommendations to the Norfolk Joint Museums committee. Members were advised that the recommendations for disposal complied with the NMAS acquisitions and disposal policy to ensure that objects were accessible to the public and displayed at other museums in Norfolk, including private ones, or the UK. NMAS undertook all reasonable measures to contact the donors or their successors before disposing of any items.

Discussion ensued in which the collections development manager answered questions and explained that it would be unreasonable to put conditions on disposing objects to other museums. Arrangements were usually made for the transport of the object to the new museum by the recipient. The storage of items was costly. Members of the committee considered that should NMAS not be able to achieve the recommended actions for each of the listed objects such items should be referred to this committee for further consideration before disposal.

#### **RESOLVED to:**

- (1) endorse the recommendations of the NMAS rationalisation committee as set out in the report and recommend to the Norfolk joint museums committee that it approves the disposal of the items listed in the report, subject to the following conditions:
  - (a) that all items are referred back to the Norwich area museums committee in the event of the recommended action not being achieved in relation to the disposal of that particular item;
  - (b) that Thorpe St Andrew's Town Council is offered the water bicycle and the body recovery beam (record nos NWCM:1975.461.1 and NWHCM:1975.491) if the Museum of the Broads is unable to accept either of these objects;
  - (c) that the spiked dock (record no NWHCM: 1977.191) is not offered to other museums via the Museums Journal if Norwich Heart is unable to accept it, but that it is referred back to the Norwich Area Museums committee as the committee considers that it is an item of particular importance to the history of the Guildhall and the city;
- (2) ask the collections development manager to report back to the committee on the outcome of the recommended disposals.

#### **4. THE NORWICH MUSEUMS**

The Norwich museums manager (Norfolk County Council) presented the report and answered members' questions.

Charlotte Crawley (East Anglia Arts Fund) reported that the Norwich Castle Open Art Show had been very successful and had raised a record sales £31½k of which 35% would be donated to support temporary art exhibitions at Norwich Castle. The next Open Art Show would be held in the summer of 2014 to coincide with the "Wonder of Birds" exhibition.

During discussion members considered the activities provided for school sessions and it was noted that the themes, such as the 1960s had been requested by teachers to fit into the school's curriculum. The Norwich museums manager referred to the Christmas events and pointed out that NMAS worked closely with colleagues in the library service and the city council's events team to coordinate events across the services.

**RESOLVED** to note the reports and the statistics for museum visits 2012-13.

(Charlotte Crawley left the meeting at this point.)

#### **5. REVIEW OF THE NORFOLK MUSEUMS AND ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE (NMAS)**

(County Councillor Leggett who had been a member of the county council's cabinet's cross-party working group, attended the meeting for this item.)

(Councillors Nobbs and Toms declared an interest in that they were members of the county council's cabinet's cross-party working group.)

Councillor Nobbs, the chairman of the county council's cabinet's cross-party working group, presented the report which had been considered by the county council's cabinet on 3 December 2012, and introduced Councillor Leggett (also a member of the working group) who commented on the governance arrangements for NMAS and the need for meaningful service level agreements for the district councils that had museums located within its area. The working party had unanimously agreed the recommendations proposed in the report.

During discussion Councillor Nobbs answered questions, together with Councillor Leggett, on the consultation arrangements, which included members from those councils where there were museums, officers and fact-finding visits to other authorities' museums. The chair of this committee and the leader of the city council had been interviewed.

Discussion ensued in which the committee considered the working party's recommendations as set out in appendix A to the report and Councillors Nobbs, Leggett and Toms referred to the report and answered questions. Members noted that staff had the opportunity to engage in the consultation. Councillor Nobbs pointed out that the working group proposed two models for the composition of the joint museums committee and was not proscriptive. The composition of the area museums committees would be part of the negotiations on service level agreements

with the county council. Members welcomed the proposals for the Norwich area museums committee to make decisions on local matters and noted that where these had implications beyond the remit of the service level agreement, could be met by district council or external funding. This greater flexibility would enable area museums committees to consider the introduction of free entrance to museums; extend opening hours and maximise income generation by using museums for events, for instance and would reflect the needs of the local community and businesses.

The assistant director community services and head of library and information services (Norfolk County Council) advised the committee that on 3 December 2012, the county council's cabinet had agreed to receive the conclusions of the working group and the recommendations at appendix A of the cabinet report and to conduct further consultation with other interested parties and consider a detailed action plan at a future meeting. The cabinets of each of the district councils would have an opportunity to respond to the consultation, as would other interested parties. Copies of the report and letter had been sent to each of the district councils in Norfolk. The meeting of the Norfolk joint museums committee had been postponed from January to a date in February to enable the results of the consultation to be collated and considered by the committee.

**RESOLVED to:**

- (1) welcome the conclusions in the report of the chairman of the working group to the county council's cabinet on 3 December 2012 and endorse the recommendations as set out in appendix A to the report, subject to the following comments:
  - (a) Management, staffing and marketing –
    - (i) Members considered that staff engagement is very important and noted the need to clarify management reporting to the cabinet member at the county council as set out in recommendations 1 and 2.
    - (ii) Members noted that interaction with the district councils was set out under Governance arrangements, recommendations 14 to 21, but considered that the recommendations should clarify how senior managers also reported to the appropriate cabinet members at district council level (which was referred to in the chairman's summary to the county council's cabinet at the beginning of the report).
    - (iii) The committee requested that the wording in relation to recommendation 3 should be amended by inserting the word "exchange" to reflect the good practice of the NMAS staff and therefore the recommendation should read as follows:

"NMAS staff should have "the opportunity to visit, observe and *exchange* good practice with other museum services".
    - (iv) The committee also concurred with recommendation 13 which suggested that an external opinion on the staffing

structure and management of the service should be carried out from an experienced leader of another museums service before a decision was made on the recruitment and appointment of a new head of service.

(b) Governance arrangements –

- (i) Members broadly agreed the principles of the governance arrangements but considered that local arrangements and the co-option of other organisations and interested bodies to the area museums committee should be subject to further discussion.
  - (ii) The committee did not reach a conclusion on the proposed composition of the joint museums committee and this would be the subject of further discussion (recommendation 16).
  - (iii) The recommendation that heritage forums were established at district council level, as set out in recommendation 16, was noted.
  - (iv) Members welcomed the proposal for service level agreements and noted that the disparity in the level of financial contributions made by the district councils needs to be addressed (recommendations 19 and 20).
- (2) note that all the district councils and interested bodies will have the opportunity to respond to the consultation on the review of NMAS and that the city council's cabinet will respond on behalf of the council.

## **6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED** to note that the committee officer will consult with members regarding the date of the next meeting of the committee.

CHAIR

## **Review of Norfolk Museums Service**

Report by the Cabinet Member for  
Cultural Services, Customer Service and Communications

### **Summary**

The Cabinet received the attached report at its meeting on 3 December 2012.

The report informed the Cabinet of the work undertaken by the Member working group and its conclusions and recommendations.

At the meeting it was resolved that the conclusions of the Working Group and the recommendations at Appendix A of the Cabinet report be received and following consultation with other interested parties that a detailed action plan be considered at a future meeting.

The report is brought to this Joint Committee meeting as part of the consultation process.

### **Action Requested:**

The Joint Committee is asked to consider and discuss the recommendations in the annexed report.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 At its meeting on 2 April 2012, Cabinet agreed to commission a detailed review of the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Services (NMAS) and to appoint a cross party working group chaired by Councillor George Nobbs to undertake this work. The working group's terms of reference are available at Appendix B of the annexed report from its Chairman.
- 1.2 The report was presented to Cabinet on 3 December 2012
- 1.3 At that meeting it was resolved that the conclusions of the Working Group and the recommendations at Appendix A of the Cabinet report be received and following consultation with other interested parties that a detailed action plan be considered at a future meeting
- 1.4 As part of the consultation, the report has been sent to the City and District Councils as members of the Joint Museums and Archaeology Committee. Their comments on the report will be discussed at this meeting.
- 1.5 The annexed report is brought to this Committee meeting as part of the consultation process.

## **2 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)**

The report does not have any implications for equality issues

## **3 Section 17 – Crime and Disorder Act**

- 3.1 There are no implications for crime and disorder reduction

## 4 Any other implications

- 4.1 All the implications that members should be aware of have been considered and there are no others to take into account.

## 5 Action requested

- 5.1 The Joint Committee is asked to consider and discuss the recommendations in the annexed report

### Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper please get in touch with:

Officer Name	Tel No	email address
Harold Bodmer	01603 223175	<a href="mailto:harold.bodmer@norfolk.gov.uk">harold.bodmer@norfolk.gov.uk</a>
Jennifer Holland	01603 222272	<a href="mailto:jennifer.holland@norfolk.gov.uk">jennifer.holland@norfolk.gov.uk</a>
Vanessa Trevelyan	01603 493620	<a href="mailto:vanessa.trevelyan@norfolk.gov.uk">vanessa.trevelyan@norfolk.gov.uk</a>



If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact Jill Blake Tel: 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

## **Review of Norfolk Museums Service**

Report by the Chairman of the Cabinet Working Group

### **Summary**

This report informs Cabinet of the work undertaken by the Member working group and its conclusions and recommendations.

### **Recommendation**

Cabinet is asked to support the working group's conclusions and its recommendations at Appendix A of the annexed report.

## **Background**

At its meeting on 2 April 2012, Cabinet agreed to commission a detailed review of the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS) and to appoint a cross party working group chaired by Councillor George Nobbs to undertake this work. The working group's terms of reference are available at Appendix B of the annexed report from its Chairman.

## **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)**

This report does not have any implications for equality issues.

## **Section 17 – Crime and Disorder Act**

There are no implications for crime and disorder reduction.

## **Environmental implications**

There are no environmental implications arising from the working group's report.

## **Risk implications/assessment**

This report is not making any recommendations that have risk implications.

## **Any other implications**

All the implications which members should be aware of have been considered and there are no others to take into account.

## **Recommendation**

Cabinet is asked to support the working group's conclusions and its recommendations at Appendix A of the annexed report.

## **Reason for decision**

The working group's recommendations are intended to improve the governance and management arrangements for the museums service.

## **Alternative options**

Cabinet could decide not to support the working group's recommendations.



## Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this report please get in touch with:

Keith Cogdell      Tel. 01603 222785      email: [keith.cogdell@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:keith.cogdell@norfolk.gov.uk)



If you need this Agenda in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact Keith Cogdell on 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

# Cabinet

## Review of Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS)

### Report by the Chairman of the Cabinet Working Group

December 2012

[www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)

## Contents

<b>Chairman's Foreword</b>	<b>page 1</b>
<b>Chairman's summary of main recommendations</b>	<b>page 2</b>
<b>Background</b>	<b>page 4</b>
<b>Management, Staffing and Marketing</b>	<b>page 5</b>
<b>Governance arrangements</b>	<b>page 11</b>
<b>Views of Norfolk residents and schools</b>	<b>page 17</b>
<b>Appendix A – Our recommendations</b>	<b>page 19</b>
<b>Appendix B – terms of reference</b>	<b>page 22</b>
<b>Appendix C – list of witnesses</b>	<b>page 23</b>
<b>Appendix D – Chairman's summary of the background to the Joint Museums Agreement</b>	<b>page 24</b>

## Chairman's Foreword

Our Museum service is held in great affection by the people of Norfolk and not least by me. I have loved our museums since, as a small schoolboy I discovered the Castle in Norwich and it became my Saturday morning treat. That was in the days when all museums were free. So it was a great pleasure to see the massive queues winding round that same Castle Keep a few weeks ago on the occasion of the national free museums night. This week I was delighted to be among the many people who thronged to the East Anglia Art Fund's special exhibition *Art and Vision* - the first of its type for 4 years; and last Sunday I visited *Time and Tide* - a superb example of how a museum can reflect a whole community and create that elusive thing – a sense of ownership. Indeed, during the last few months I and my colleagues on the working group have once again visited and revisited every one of our museums in Norfolk.

So there is much to admire and to celebrate but, acting as a candid friend, we have found that many improvements can be made and many new ideas need to be embraced. For example, the lack of any attempt to exploit the sheer pre-eminence and setting of Norwich Castle is surely just one obvious case of a lost opportunity. We have also commissioned new research which included asking for the views of current *non*-visitors – something that in the past there seems to have been an odd lack of curiosity about.

We feel that we owe it to the previous generations of individuals, who gave so freely to their local museums in the expectation that the collections would be for all the people of their local community (the superb Colman Bequest for example), and to the pioneering local councils who provided vital funds in the early days that we speak frankly now when making our recommendations.

Governance (or its effective lack) is at the heart of the problem. If it has been possible for the Museums service to be described as being run “like a private fiefdom”, it is largely because it has been allowed to do so. Senior management have made decisions which they, no doubt, thought were in the best interests of the service but effective input from elected bodies, prior consultation *with* them and reporting *to* them, has been lacking in many cases. Given the changes that are taking place, we feel that it is now timely and opportune for a new leadership style in the service.

It has not been possible to address the issue of the various voluntary bodies or the many volunteers because, with the need for decisions on purely local government involvement, we have not yet been able to explore that area. We would also like to say that, although we have made serious efforts to hear the views of staff, we are very disappointed that some staff were still not made aware of our offer to listen to them.

Before I come to our main recommendations, I wish to pay a heartfelt tribute to all those colleagues who saw this review through to its conclusion. This has been a very time-consuming and detailed task and they have enthusiastically thrown themselves into it. There was much more that we could have looked at (and after a suitable break, may be asked to examine) but conscious of time we have concentrated on the two essential aspects of governance and management. We are also very grateful to all the witnesses, many of whom gave up their own free time to assist us.

And one final but vital point. This review was commissioned in order to improve the service in the light of recent events. It has never been part of our task to consider recent or possible future cuts in local government funding. Our review has been entirely independent of any such considerations and is intended to be cost neutral.

# Chairman's Summary of Main Recommendations

## Governance

**Decision-making should be exercised by Local Museum Committees wherever and as much as, possible**

**There needs to be regular contact between management and the Cabinet member (district as well as County)**

**Effective political leadership; elected people should make decisions and see that they are carried out, not wait to be told what decisions *have already been made and carried out***

**Proper Service Level Agreements are needed saying what each district contributes and what it gets in return**

## Management

*We believe that, along with the collections and buildings, our Museum staff are our greatest assets. They consist overwhelmingly of dedicated and well-motivated people who love the service and, given the chance, could help to make it even better. But we find that the organisation is inadequate to the needs of the service and that the staff and the service would benefit from a new leadership style. Our main recommendations can be summed up as:*

**The Museum visitor (or Customer) should be the service's main priority.**

As one of our members said on the last day of our work, the issue of the needs of the visitor or customer was virtually never addressed in the evidence we heard from management.

**Management adopts a much more "can do" attitude at all times.**

**Revenue raising projects (such as building hire for functions where it doesn't affect normal museum activities) should be enthusiastically embraced rather than resisted.**

**Meaningful communication and involvement with staff should be an immediate priority.**

**The over-complicated admission charge system should be simplified and the "headline" charges should be reduced significantly as soon as conditions permit.**

**Future staff reductions – should they have to occur – should be shared equally throughout the service and its management and not confined solely to an entire, specific group or team, for example.**

**The Head of Service should meet regularly with the relevant Cabinet member and the new Joint Committee to take guidance on future strategy and policy**

**The Head of Service should meet regularly with the Chairs and members of the Area Committees to obtain their views on future developments in the relevant museums, rather than inform them of what has been decided.**

The more detailed recommendations and the reasons behind them can be found on the following pages.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George Nobbs". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underlining the name.

**George Nobbs**  
**Chairman**

## 1. Background

- 1.1 At its meeting on 2 April 2012, Cabinet agreed to commission a review of the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS) and to appoint a cross party working group chaired by Councillor George Nobbs to undertake this work. The group also comprised the following Members:
- Michael Carttiss
  - Marion Chapman-Allen
  - Graham Jones (until 16 October 2012)
  - Judy Leggett
  - Hilary Thompson
  - Jennifer Toms
- 1.2 At its first meeting on 23 April 2012, the working group agreed its terms of reference, which were endorsed by the Leader of the Council. These are available at Appendix B. The group has met formally on ten occasions and delegations of members have also met with District Councillors in Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Kings Lynn to discuss the involvement of local councillors in the running of the service. We also met with the Chairmen of Breckland Area Museums Committee and North Norfolk Museums Forum. A list of witnesses involved in all of these meetings is available at Appendix C.
- 1.3 In addition to visits to all NMAS museums by members of the working group, there have also been visits by delegations of members to the museums services in Hull, Lincoln and Colchester. Importantly, NMAS staff have also been given the opportunity to give us their views, either in writing or in person, on how the service may be improved. We have made every effort to gather the views of staff but are conscious that, perhaps due to communication problems within the service, some members of staff have still not been made aware of the opportunity to do this. Our findings in respect of the management and marketing of the service are outlined in section two of this report.
- 1.4 We have also dedicated a great deal of our time to looking at the arrangements for governance of the joint museums service and our findings and recommendations for taking forward this issue are to be found in section three of this report.
- 1.5 At the beginning of our inquiry, we made it clear that we wanted to hear the views of the people of Norfolk and in particular those who do not visit museums. An online survey was therefore conducted during September in order to capture these views, with separate questionnaires for people who have visited a NMAS museum and those who have not. Work has also been undertaken by the County Council's Community Engagement team to ascertain why some schools do not make use of the museums service and the findings of both these pieces of work are outlined in section four of our report. We think this is very valuable intelligence and would expect that the Head of Service and County Council Cabinet portfolio holder should give serious consideration to the issues raised by this research.

## 2. Management, Staffing and Marketing

### 2.1 Findings

- 2.1.1 Our overall findings are positive in a number of areas and the service provided by the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS) is highly valued by its users. The service is also a highly valuable resource for schools and students.
- 2.1.2 The collections are excellent and deserve to be seen by more people. The art collection is very good and, although it is very locally orientated, that is a positive thing in terms of serving the people of Norfolk. The Norwich School collection is indeed world-class in terms of a provincial school of painting.
- 2.1.3 Most of the museums buildings are huge assets in themselves and local government in Norfolk is generally very supportive of the service. The service has also been able to secure a lot of grant aid in recent years but this may also be seen as a weakness, as explained in paragraph 2.2.4 below.
- 2.1.4 Overall, staff are very dedicated, self-motivated and enthusiastic. Most staff would not oppose new approaches and want to be more involved in decision-making and initiatives. Many want to meet and interact more with the public. Our curatorial staff are good and are a resource that could be used more in providing services to others.
- 2.1.5 In short the service has four great assets:
- Its collections
  - Its buildings
  - Its staff, especially those on the frontline and those working behind the scenes who are often overlooked
  - Public goodwill in Norfolk

### 2.2 Management and staffing

- 2.2.1 The lack of clarity around the political governance of the service is highlighted in the following section of this report. This was confirmed to us in interview with the present Head of Service, who said she was unsure of where ultimate decision making rested on all aspects of the service. We are also aware that the museums service (insofar as it forms part of the range of services provided by the County Council) is only a part of Cultural Services, which in itself forms a small part of the much wider Community Services department also responsible for adult social care and community safety. In terms of line management, the Head of Service reports to an Assistant Director and Director who have much wider remits and no experience of managing a museums service. This combination of services is itself of relatively recent origin, having previously been lumped in with Corporate Affairs. We believe that this has resulted in the service developing its own culture and management style to the point that it acts as if it is a self-governing corporation rather than a local government service answerable in the same way as other public services. We therefore recommend that **there needs to be clear accountability between the Head of Service, the Director and Assistant Director of Community Services, the County Council's Cabinet portfolio holder and the Joint Museums Committee, and clarity as to who makes the decisions and on what (Recommendation 1) .**



**There should also be regular pre-programmed meetings of the Head of Service with the Cabinet portfolio holder, to include either the Director or Assistant Director of Community Services as appropriate (Recommendation 2)**

- 2.2.2 Against this background, we also believe that the management of the service has developed a resistance to what it considers to be outside interference, particularly from members of the Area Museums Committees. This is evidenced by what we consider to be a 'can't do' attitude in respect of ideas for developing and marketing the service, as outlined in the following section.
- 2.2.3 While there is nothing wrong with staff being proud of what they do, we believe it is complacent to regard the whole service as a 'market leader' or 'world class', as senior managers and some staff seem to do. This view wasn't borne out by discussions with managers of other museums services and there would seem to be a great deal of merit in a suggestion from one member of staff that **NMAS staff should have the opportunity to visit and observe good practice in other museums services ( Recommendation 3)**
- 2.2.4 We have heard from both the Head and Deputy Head of Service that the principal focus for senior management over the past few years has been pursuing external funding linked to particular projects. While reacting to the availability of funding pots has been successful in improving the fabric of the buildings and facilities such as toilets and kitchenettes, it would seem that there has been no corresponding strategy for improving the service or engaging with local communities. We also believe that project management around the refurbishment of the Bridewell museum was lamentable, with the project being completed a year later than the original schedule.
- 2.2.5 We have found that there is a lack of clarity around the staff structure, including uncertainty about the actual numbers of staff. This information does not appear to be readily available to senior management and it is curious that, while we have been told that there have been cuts in staffing, senior management insist that the overall number of staff seems to have remained the same!
- 2.2.6 We have also heard evidence that some staff feel that management do not always welcome their views and concerns, and that some staff have felt intimidated by management. We have no way of knowing if this is widespread, but we recommend that **when the issue of the management ethos is addressed by the new Head of Service, then some additional work should be undertaken with staff to identify how the whole question of staff representations and/or complaints or consultations with staff could be better handled. (Recommendation 4).**

## **2.3 Marketing and admissions policy**

- 2.3.1 We have found that there is not a coherent marketing strategy for the service and that a number of issues need to be reviewed and clarified. The main ones that we have identified are outlined below.
- 2.3.2 Admission charges are a major feature of policy but they seem to be seen by senior management as a virtue in themselves rather than a necessary evil. In

spite of this, the system of charging is incredibly complex and confusing. For example, the impact of the various arrangements by which visitors can receive free or discounted entry varies from one museum to another. Figures we have been given show that the percentage of visits to Norwich Castle in 2011-12 that were paid for was 63%, while the figure for Gressenhall was 29%. In addition, the percentage of all visits to these museums that were charged at 'Full Adult Price' was 9% for Norwich Castle and 5% for Gressenhall. In addition, membership of a Friends of Museums group may offer more benefits, at less cost, than a museums pass. **The current system of admission charges, including discounts and free entry, therefore needs to be rationalised and simplified (Recommendation 5).**

- 2.3.3 We recognise that the museums service is paid for by the taxpayers of Norfolk (whether they use it or not) and that admission income makes a relatively small contribution to the overall budget. We are also told by management that few people actually pay the full official admission price. For these reasons we feel that the deterrent value of the full admission price outweighs its value as a source of funding and recommend that **the new Head of Service and the new governance bodies explore, as a matter of urgency, the advantages of some element of free admission (even if only at set times or specified periods), together with an overall meaningful reduction in the standard admission charge (Recommendation 6).**
- 2.3.4 We have also been informed of proposals to replace the museum pass with a membership scheme that 'enhances the offer' to subscribers, for example 'behind the scenes' tours or 'Meet the Curator' sessions. We believe that the proposed changes to the museums pass scheme are unnecessarily complex and that the time and effort spent on introducing a new scheme could be better spent on looking at ways to reduce admission prices. We therefore **recommend that these proposals should be reconsidered (Recommendation 7).**
- 2.3.5 On the issue of retail and catering sales, we have heard from senior managers that there is limited scope for improvement on current performance which showed a net profit of nearly £16,000 on retail sales and a loss of about £1,700 on catering in 2011/12. At the same time, we have been told that if grant funding were withdrawn, more resources would have to be concentrated on the service's 'flagship' museums "where there is more opportunity to increase visitor numbers and retail income". The negative view of NMAS managers in this respect does not accord with the findings from our visits to other museums services, as outlined below. We therefore do not accept the prevailing view that little can be done to improve income from retail sales and catering, and recommend that **the new Head of Service and Commercial Manager need to review current performance and options for improving retail and catering income, and discuss ideas with the Area Museums Committees as a matter of priority (Recommendation 8).**
- 2.3.6 We have been told by senior managers that generating income for the service by hiring out NMAS buildings for a variety of functions such as weddings is an aspiration that is being pursued. At the same time, however, we have been told that there are numerous obstacles to being able to realise this aspiration and we have seen no evidence that any meaningful plans are in place to address these. This contrasts starkly with what we found on our visit to Colchester and we can

find no convincing reason why NMAS buildings should not be available for private hire to reduce the cost of the service to Norfolk residents. We believe that there should be a presumption that all NMAS buildings are available for private hire when they are not being otherwise used and we recommend that **the new Head of Service must explore all options for venue hire with the assumption that all buildings should be available for hire (usual usage permitting) unless there are very good reasons to the contrary (Recommendation 9).**

- 2.3.7 Arrangements for opening NMAS museums to the public, including times of the day, days of the week and seasonal variations, are erratic and confusing. Strangers Hall museum is a good example of this. We recommend that **there should be an aspiration that all NMAS museums are open seven days a week throughout the year (Recommendation 10).**
- 2.3.8 Improving signage to Norwich Castle has been a long-standing issue for the Norwich Area Museums Committee, and one that has met with resistance and is yet to be resolved. However, on our visits to the various NMAS museums and in our meetings with staff, it has become clear that signage is a wider issue that needs to be addressed at all the museums, and one that should be targeted at car drivers as well as pedestrians. Improved internal signage at the larger museums, such as to exhibits of national significance at Norwich Castle, also needs to be addressed.
- 2.3.9 While it is positive that there are many school visits to museums, there need to be appropriate arrangements and facilities for teaching, eating lunches etc so that the children and other users can make the most of their visit. This has been highlighted as a particular issue at Norwich Castle but arrangements at all museums that are regularly visited by school groups should be reviewed to ensure that they are appropriate. We therefore recommend that **arrangements and facilities for school visits to museums should be reviewed to ensure that they are fit for purpose in ensuring a positive experience for the children as well as other visitors (Recommendation 11)**
- 2.3.10 We recommend that **the new Head of Service and Commercial Manager should address the following matters as a matter of urgency:**
- Developing a marketing strategy
  - Undertaking a thorough review of charging (including the museums pass), including stating clearly the rationale for any charging structure
  - Highlighting what is best and making the most of the opportunities this brings by making sure people know about it
  - Review the current position on opening hours and see if this can be made more consistent and easily understood
  - Consider opportunities for the excellent behind the scenes staff to interact with the public and ways in which the less visible artefacts the service holds can be more publically available **(Recommendation 12)**

## **2.4 Visits to other museums services**

- 2.4.1 In late July and early August, delegations of working group members visited Hull, Lincoln and Colchester and met with senior managers and, where possible, Cabinet portfolio holders to see what could be learned from other museums

services. Our main findings are outlined below.

- 2.4.2 In terms of clarity of roles and responsibility for decision making, we found a very good professional relationship between the Head of Service and the Cabinet portfolio holder in Hull, with fortnightly meetings between them and regular meetings with other service managers. We found the Cabinet portfolio holder to be very knowledgeable about the service and he is clearly seen as the person who makes the final decisions. In fact, we were told that he is "the boss". In Lincoln, there are also regular meetings between the Head of Service and the Cabinet portfolio holder and there is a clear expectation that the Head of Service is open to challenge regarding service improvement.
- 2.4.3 At Hull, culture is seen as a selling point for tourism by the City Council and customer focus is at the centre of everything the museums service does. Admission to museums is free and they are all open seven days a week. Staff receive training in customer service skills, front of house staff are welcoming and there are welcome signs in eight languages. A museums guide 'app' for mobile phones is also being planned. There is also a sense of 'ownership' by both staff and visitors. For example, visitors are encouraged to 'adopt a painting' to fund conservation work. Customer focus was also in evidence at Lincoln, for example the dedicated area for parents and young children at the 'Collection' museum. This area had initially been designed as a shop but staff soon decided that it was in the wrong place and made a virtue of necessity. An excellent piece of initiative!
- 2.4.4 We also found good examples of 'can do' attitudes and a business-like approach during these visits. At Hull, for example, a positive attitude is something that is recruited for in new staff. The Head of Service had ready access to a whole range of management information on staffing and budgets and a Commercial Manager in post on a three-year contract had increased the profit margin on retail sales from 20% to 50%. The museums education service had also managed to fill a large part of the gap created by lost national funding through local sponsorship. At Lincoln, the restaurant at the 'Collection' museum in the city centre is commercially run and opens at night as well as during the day. Lincoln Castle is not used as a museum but is hired out for functions such as period re-enactments. Colchester and Ipswich museums service has a very well-developed and comprehensive policy for hiring out its buildings for various functions, including Colchester Castle which is similar to Norwich Castle.

## **2.5 Meetings with members of staff**

- 2.5.1 A letter was sent to all NMAS staff on 11 September offering them the opportunity to meet with members of the working group either individually or with colleagues to ensure that members "understand the current successes, challenges and opportunities of the service". To date, meetings had been held with thirty-six members of staff, in addition to those we spoke to during our various visits. We are sorry to learn that not all members of staff received our letter. The 'high level' findings from these meetings were that staff were happy to be working in a museums service and motivated to do a good job. However, this did not necessarily mean that they were happy with every aspect of their particular jobs.
- 2.5.2 One of the areas for improvement identified by staff during these meetings was a lack of communication from management and the misunderstandings and

frustration that this can cause. Some staff felt that there is a “void” between senior management and frontline staff and a lack of understanding about how decisions are made. Consultations with staff are also seen by some as senior management paying lip service to involving staff in decision making.

- 2.5.3 The move to shared support services has also caused some frustration for staff in terms of what is seen as a lack of a timely response in the areas of human resources and ICT services. For example, the NMAS website was thought to be good but it was felt that the change to an ICT shared service had led to delays in updating it. We also received negative comments about the slowness of response caused by inadequate equipment or networks.
- 2.5.4 In terms of support for change or ideas for improvement, we found that those staff who spoke to us were generally supportive of a more commercial approach such as venue hire and online purchasing. However, some staff feel frustrated by limitations on what they are allowed to do and not being able to use their full potential. There was support for the idea of staff being able to shadow each other or share roles and for ‘behind the scenes’ staff having more opportunity to meet members of the public. Backroom staff such as curators are a huge asset to the service but the new Head of Service must make better use of their professional skills and enthusiasm by involving them more directly with the public. This would include refreshing exhibits more frequently and enabling the public to view items in the collection that they would not normally be able to see.

## **2.6 Challenges for the future**

- 2.6.1 We are aware that the present Head of Service has announced her intention to retire in April 2013 and believe that it would be foolhardy not use this change in leadership as an opportunity to review managerial structure and roles to ensure there is an appropriate balance between management and the rest of the service.
- 2.6.2 We would like to see a fundamental change in the culture of the service so that there are very clear lines of accountability and responsibility, a strong customer focus and a consistent ‘can do’ attitude. We therefore want to see a management team which:
- Consistently demonstrates a ‘can do’ attitude
  - Is open and receptive to challenge
  - Is keen to grasp opportunities and, where possible, create them
  - Has a business-like approach to everything it does
  - Strives for continual improvement and is able to demonstrate this through benchmarking
  - Is strategic in its approach to service improvement - e.g. chasing money to deliver a strategy, not just having a strategy to chase money.
- 2.6.3 Service improvement must be at the heart of the job description for the new Head of Service and we envisage that, in order to take the service forward, the person appointed should be able to demonstrate the following skills and experience:
- Proven management and leadership skills
  - Experience of leading a professional service, but not necessarily a museums service
  - Proven entrepreneurial flair
  - Experience of managing a comparable organisation

- Experience of working in the private sector would be desirable

2.6.4 We see merit in indentifying and learning from the experience of a high performing museums service to achieve:

- A clear and appropriate staffing structure
- An open, listening and responsive Management ethos
- Clarity on budgets, responsibility and accountabilities
- Improved communications with and between staff
- An emphasis on building staff morale
- The correct balance of front line staff to management

We therefore recommend that **before a new Head of Service is appointed, consideration should be given to the merit of employing an experienced and successful leader from another museums service to advise on the above (Recommendation 13).**

### 3. Current governance arrangements

#### 3.1 Joint Museums Agreement

Central to the governance of the joint museums service is the Joint Museums Agreement, which has been revised periodically since the service was created in 1974, well before the introduction of the Cabinet system in local government. The current version is therefore the fourth and was signed in July 2006. Although it was only intended to remain in force until March 2010, there is a clause that it should continue thereafter unless any of the Councils gives each of the other Councils twelve months notice of its intention not to continue the agreement. There are a number of areas in which this agreement does not correspond to current practice and these are outlined in remainder of this section.

#### 3.2 Joint Museums Committee

3.2.1 The current Joint Agreement spells out the role of the Joint Museums Committee as:

- Monitoring the effective operation of NMAS within the available budget
- Advising all Council's on the strategic framework for museums and archaeology in Norfolk
- Acting as a forum for developing future strategy
- Agreeing policies for NMAS in accordance with national and local guidelines
- Agreeing the service plan in the light of the available annual budget

3.2.2 In practice, there are different views as to what the function of the Joint Committee is or should be, including providing scrutiny of decisions made by Area Museums Committees, enabling the County Council to have an overview of what the Area Museums Committees are doing, and providing a forum for sharing best practice.

3.2.3 There is a requirement in the Joint Museums Agreement that the chairman of the Joint Museums Committee must be a member of the County Council and provision that this would normally be the Council's Cabinet portfolio holder for Cultural Services. In addition, the chairman and vice-chairman of the Joint Museums

Committee are ex-officio non-voting members of each Area Museums Committee. The County Council's Cabinet portfolio holder for Cultural Services therefore used to attend meetings of all the Area Museums Committees to make a link with the Joint Committee but this is no longer the case. There is therefore a widely held view that there is less of a connection than in the past between the Area Museums Committees, the Joint Committee and the County Council Cabinet portfolio holder for Cultural Services, and that the impact of the Joint Committee has declined.

### **3.3 Area Museums Committees**

3.3.1 According to the current Joint Museums Agreement, the role of Area Museums Committees is to:

- Provide a detailed view of local museums and archaeology issues
- Agree a local service plan within available budget and county-wide service plan
- Advise on the terms of any Service Level Agreement with NMAS
- Monitor the local Service Level Agreement
- Recommend proposals to the Joint Committee e.g. museum development projects
- Agree an area museum strategy within the context of an approved NMAS strategy as far as possible to be consistent with and complementary to all other relevant strategies e.g. heritage, leisure, tourism, arts, economic development.

3.3.2 In 2010, both North Norfolk District Council and Great Yarmouth Borough Council dissolved their Area Museums Committees and replaced them with local arrangements. In North Norfolk, these consisted of the creation of a Museums Forum that includes representatives of local independent museums and heritage organisations, of which there are many. In Great Yarmouth, arrangements were made for the Area Museums Manager to report periodically to the Council's Scrutiny Committee on the activities of the museums service in the area, and for the Joint Museums Committee to receive relevant extracts from that Committee's minutes. While the achievement of financial savings featured prominently in these decisions, the view that the Area Museums Committees were ineffectual also played a part. We understand, however, that the present administration is looking to reinstate its Area Museums Committee.

3.3.3 From the evidence we have received, none of the remaining three Area Museums Committees fulfils the roles ascribed to them in the Joint Museums Agreement and arrangements vary between one Council and another for agreeing agendas and involving local Members. While there are differing views on whether there should be a consistent model for Area Committees or flexibility to reflect local differences, there is a widely-held view that they were only informed of decisions that had already been taken or events that had already happened, and that they should have a stronger advisory role in respect of decisions yet to be made. In Norwich, there is also a strong view that there needs to be more involvement of local people and businesses to foster a sense of 'local ownership' of the service.

3.3.4 There is also a widely held view that local Members should have greater control over the content of displays and themes for exhibitions and events. However, Area Museum Committee members frequently feel marginalised and that their views are not valued. This was variously characterised by 'everything is under

control', 'leave it to the experts' or 'can't do' responses from service managers to suggestions from local councillors. These Members took the view that the involvement and influence of District councillors in the running of local museums had virtually disappeared in recent years, including the extent to which Area Museums Committees are consulted about service developments.

### **3.4 Service Level Agreements**

- 3.4.1 The current Joint Agreement specifies that “the Joint Committee and the Area Committees shall be guided by the Mission Statement and Key Objectives agreed by the Joint Committee and the Area Committees and set out in the Service Level Agreements between the County Council and each District to be agreed annually or less regularly if agreed by the County Council and the relevant District Council.” These agreements should outline the details of the services to be delivered by each museum and services delivered countywide. Outline terms for a service agreement are annexed at Schedule 2 of the Joint Agreement.
- 3.4.2 It is not clear whether or not Service Level Agreements were initially negotiated with each District but the only current agreements are with North Norfolk District Council and the Borough of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk. The key targets in these agreements relate to the NMAS Service Plan which is agreed annually by the Joint Museums Committee.

### **3.5 Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service Board**

- 3.5.1 The current Joint Museums Committee introduced a new NMAS Service Board to provide the Head of Service with support in managing the budget and the County Council's contribution to it. At a Member level, this Board was to consist of the County Council's Cabinet portfolio holder for the service, the chairman of the Joint Museums Committee (if different from the Cabinet portfolio holder) and the vice-chairman of the Joint Museums Committee. The Board met periodically between April 2004 and April 2010.

### **3.6 Funding**

- 3.6.1 The Joint Agreement includes an agreement for the District Councils “to endeavour to provide financial and other contributions to NMAS” but does not stipulate the level or nature of such contributions. However, Schedule 2 of the Agreement specifies that the financial and other contributions provided by the County Council and the relevant District to enable the delivery of museums services should be set out in the Service Level Agreement with that District. In practice, there are significant disparities in the financial contributions made by the District Councils, as shown in the table below.



### 3.6.2 Revenue and Project Contributions for 2012/13:

Council	Budget Contribution
Breckland	0
Broadland	0
Great Yarmouth	£42,400
Kings Lynn & West Norfolk	£35,500
North Norfolk	£40,500
<b>Norwich City*</b>	£14,000
South Norfolk	0
Norfolk County Council	£3,753,000

***\*See paragraph 3.6.3 for details of the City Council's total contribution***

- 3.6.3 In addition to its contribution to the revenue budget, there is an agreement between NMAS, Norfolk County Council and Norwich City Council entitled the 'Division of Responsibility for Building Maintenance of Jointly Operated (Museums) Buildings in Norwich'. In accordance with this agreement, the City Council paid £100,832 in 2011/12, not including the cost of officer time in surveying, procuring and coordinating building works. Other contributions to building maintenance costs in 2011/12 were £1,784 from Great Yarmouth Borough Council and £517 from Breckland District Council.

## 3.7 Member involvement within the County Council

- 3.7.1 As part of our evidence gathering on governance arrangements, we interviewed a former County Council Cabinet portfolio holder for Cultural Services, Councillor James Carswell. His view was that current arrangements do not offer sufficient opportunity for elected Members at either a District or County level to challenge and scrutinise decisions affecting the museums service. In his experience, Cultural Services are overshadowed by issues concerning adult social care at the County Council's Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel and there had never been a significant debate about any aspect of the museums service. Mr Carswell thought that there is a need to ensure that Cultural Services are properly scrutinised within the County Council and that service managers are given the opportunity to showcase their work to Members. He therefore suggested that there should be separate meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel to look into Cultural Services. Mr Carswell also recommended that the County Council's Cabinet portfolio holder for Cultural Services should meet or communicate regularly with his or her counterparts in the Districts and have an input into the role of Area Museums Committees. He also saw a need for a debate about how much power could be given to Area Committees and the Joint Committee. As a general rule, he thought that decisions affecting local museums should be taken by Area Museums Committees, with the Joint Committee performing a scrutiny function.
- 3.7.2 Mr Carswell thought that senior managers of the museums service were accomplished professionals but they did not always seem to understand the role of elected Members in the governance of the service. There had been a lack of appropriate and consistent communication from them concerning significant events such as the theft of valuable artefacts and he often had to rely on the relevant Assistant Director to keep himself informed of events. Mr Carswell thought that

senior managers needed to be less defensive and to understand that challenge and scrutiny are not 'personal attacks'. There also needed to be clear written advice as to when they should be informing the Cabinet portfolio holder and other key individuals about significant events. It was important for elected Members to receive such information before others such as the media or staff, as there could be issues concerning democratic accountability or confidentiality.

### **3.8 Conclusions and recommendations on governance arrangements**

- 3.8.1 The joint museums service often seems to be regarded as an exclusively County Council service rather than a partnership. This seems at least partly due to a lack of clarity or understanding regarding the County Council's role and the extent of its powers in the governance, as opposed to the management of the service. In fact there is a lack of clarity around the remits and responsibilities of the Area Museums Committees, the Joint Museums Committee, the County Council's Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel and its Cabinet portfolio holder for Cultural Services.
- 3.8.2 The growing professionalisation of the service, combined with the impact of the Cabinet system of local government, has left the Joint Museums Committee and the Area Museums Committees without a clear and meaningful role and where service managers take decisions without Member challenge.
- 3.8.3 Although not shared by all of our witnesses so far, there is a view that there needs to be more local decision making to reflect the fact that NMAS is a joint service and not a County Council service and that, with the exception of Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse, the museums and most of their collections are owned by the District Councils in whose area they are situated.
- 3.8.4 Current practice no longer reflects the letter or spirit of the Joint Museums Agreement, which is in need of urgent review (**Recommendation 14**). The future agreement should spell out meaningful roles for the Joint Museums Committee and the Area Museums Committees. There needs to be a decision on the extent of decision-making that could be delegated to these committees. Suggestions of matters over which there could be more local control have included opening up museums to a wider audience by increasing awareness of what is available and using various means to reduce admission charges and fund special events.
- 3.8.5 We were tempted to recommend the abolition of the Joint Museums Committee but realise that this is probably a step too far. We therefore recommend the creation of a new Joint Museums Committee to act as the body to which the head of the museums service is answerable and which ensures the service is accountable to elected Members. The committee would be charged with overseeing service delivery and providing strategic leadership for the service across the whole of Norfolk. (**Recommendation 15**).
- 3.8.6 The new Joint Museums Committee should be much smaller than currently and we can see advantages and disadvantages in each of the following two models of composition:
- The relevant Cabinet portfolio holder for museums from the County Council and each of the District Councils, plus the Chairman of each of the new Area Museums Committees in Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Kings Lynn.

- Seven representatives of the County Council (one of whom will be the Cabinet portfolio holder) and at least seven District councillors drawn from those areas with museums, the proportions to be agreed by negotiation, and usually drawn from the District museums committees.

We see value in having a separate Heritage Forum in which previously co-opted members of the Joint Museums Committee meet separately and regularly with others in the field of heritage, tourism and culture with the Chairmen of Area Museums Committees and Area Museums Managers. The same is recommended for districts. **(Recommendation 16)**

As with all our proposals, the choice of model for the new Joint Museums Committee would be subject to consultation with and agreement of the District Councils.

- 3.8.7 Before the creation of a joint museums service, Norwich City Council, Great Yarmouth Borough Council and the Borough of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk ran their own museums services. We recommend that these councils have restored to them the right to make decisions on local matters in line with the principle that any decision that can be made locally should be **(Recommendation 17)**. This would be best achieved by the creation of smaller, more focused Area Museums Committees consisting of not less than five, or more than seven, members who have been elected within the District concerned as either District or County councillors, irrespective of party political considerations, but with the majority being District councillors. Where the decisions of such committees have additional funding implications beyond what is included in the service level agreement, these should be met by the District council either directly or by arranging outside funding **(Recommendation 18)**. A current example of such practice is funding provided by the Borough of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk to cover free admission to Lynn museum for part of the year.
- 3.8.8 There should be Service Level Agreements detailing the respective responsibilities of each District Council and Norfolk County Council, the financial and other contributions of the District Council to the local museums service and what they receive in return. **(Recommendation 19)** To ensure that the disparity in the level of financial contributions between District Councils is addressed in these agreements, there needs to be a debate about how best to ensure that contributions are based on a rational funding formula rather than historical precedence. **(Recommendation 20)**
- 3.8.9 Reporting and decision making at the County Council's Community Services Overview & Scrutiny Panel concerning the museums service and Cultural Services in general seems to be scarce and buried in wider reports concerning the Community Services department as a whole. We recommend that **there should be dedicated meetings of this Panel for the consideration of the budget, performance and development of Cultural Services (Recommendation 21)**

#### 4. Views of Norfolk residents and schools.

4.1 This section outlines the findings of work undertaken by the County Council's Community Engagement team to ascertain the views of Norfolk residents and why some schools do not make use of the museums service.

#### 4.2 Online survey for Norfolk residents

4.2.1 To gather the views of residents on what makes a good museum 1704 museum users and 204 non-users were surveyed in September 2012. Visitors rated Norfolk museums well for things to see and do with 91% saying this was either good or very good. Respondents felt that collections were presented in an appealing way (91%), that the museum they visited helped increase understanding about the area (90%) and that what there was to see and do was relevant to them (87%).

4.2.2 Satisfaction levels are high, with 94% reporting they were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their visit, compared to 3% that were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. When compared to museums outside of Norfolk our museums fared well with 67% saying they were better or the same for value for money, 88% helpfulness of staff and 72% appeal of the collections.

4.2.3 Residents who had not recently visited a museum were also asked their views on what makes a good museum and 204 responses were received. The two main reasons that people reported for not visiting a museum were cost of the day out, tickets, food, travel (48%) and that they had not thought about it (40%). The factors listed as being important to non-visitors were placed in a slightly different order to those reported by recent visitors, with cost of entry (93%), interesting buildings or collections (88%) and cost of transport/eating out (77%) being the most mentioned. Non-visitors were also asked an open question, asking them to say what would encourage them to visit a museum. Some consistent themes emerged including special offers / reduced ticket / free entry, more publicity / information and special events.

#### 4.3 School visits to museums

4.3.1 In addition, eight teachers with responsibility for educational visits from schools in the vicinity of two museums, Gressenhall near Dereham and Time and Tide in Great Yarmouth were interviewed by telephone. Norfolk Museums Service runs a full range of educational and learning opportunities in all its museums, with individual museums running different educational programmes depending on their size and nature of their collections. The majority of their work is with primary schools for Key Stages 1 and 2. Teachers were clear about the benefits for pupils of visiting a museum, commenting on how they responded differently in an alternative environment, to the point that they almost "don't realise that they are learning" and gained much from the sensory experience. Some pupils, particularly those from more deprived backgrounds, have never visited a museum before.

4.3.2 The most important factor determining which museum a school visits is whether it is considered to be relevant to the curriculum. Interviewees felt that it was important that museums recognise this and respond as far as possible. The key barrier identified by every teacher was cost. Although entrance to museums is free to

Norfolk schools, museums do charge for half and full day educational programmes – charges are fixed on a cost recovery basis. The cost of transport was a particular area of concern and schools were very clear that they can't always rely on contributions from parents for their visits.

- 4.3.3 Interviewees were also asked about museum outreach services. This is where museum staff deliver educational opportunities in schools, for example loaning artefacts or visiting schools to deliver education programmes to children. Teachers who had used this service spoke positively about it and felt it a good way to help keep costs down. However, most teachers said they would prefer to go to a museum. Teachers were positive about online access to museum collections and all felt that the collections would be far more likely to engage children if they were interactive.
- 4.3.4 One key finding was that, when those interviewed were asked if they felt informed about their local museum's educational offer, the majority of teachers told us they did not feel informed. Most recognised that it can be difficult to ensure information reaches the right teacher. This is an area that the service needs to give further consideration to so that schools can benefit from the full range of support, information and advice that is on offer to them, but that is not currently being fully utilised. Finally, most teachers felt their local museum was good value for money. However they found it more difficult to compare the value for money of NMAS museums with that offered by other museums or attractions run by the voluntary or private sector.

## Our Recommendations

### Management, Staffing and Marketing

#### **Recommendation 1**

There needs to be clear accountability between the Head of Service, the Director and Assistant Director of Community Services, the County Council's Cabinet portfolio holder and the Joint Museums Committee, and clarity as to who makes the decisions and on what.

#### **Recommendation 2**

There should also be regular pre-programmed meetings of the Head of Service with the Cabinet portfolio holder, to include either the Director or Assistant Director of Community Services as appropriate

#### **Recommendation 3**

NMAS staff should have the opportunity to visit and observe good practice in other museums services.

#### **Recommendation 4**

When the issue of the management ethos is addressed by the new Head of Service, then some additional work should be undertaken with staff to identify how the whole question of staff representations and/or complaints or consultations with staff could be better handled.

#### **Recommendation 5**

The current system of admission charges, including discounts and free entry, needs to be rationalised and simplified.

#### **Recommendation 6**

The new Head of Service and the new governance bodies should explore, as a matter of urgency, the advantages of some element of free admission (even if only at set times or specified periods), together with an overall meaningful reduction in the standard admission charge.

#### **Recommendation 7**

Proposals concerning the replacement of the current museums pass scheme with an enhanced membership scheme should be reconsidered.

#### **Recommendation 8**

The new Head of Service and Commercial Manager need to review current performance and options for improving retail and catering income, and discuss ideas with the Area Museums Committees as a matter of priority.

#### **Recommendation 9**

The new Head of Service must explore all options for venue hire with the assumption that all buildings should be available for hire (usual usage permitting) unless there are very good reasons to the contrary.

#### **Recommendation 10**

There should be an aspiration that all NMAS museums are open seven days a week throughout the year.

#### **Recommendation 11**

Arrangements and facilities for school visits to museums should be reviewed to ensure that they are fit for purpose in ensuring a positive experience for the children as well as other visitors.

#### **Recommendation 12**

As a matter of urgency, the new Head of Service and Commercial Manager should address the issues outlined in paragraph 2.3.10 of this report.

#### **Recommendation 13**

Before a new Head of Service is appointed, consideration should be given to the merit of employing an experienced and successful leader from another museums service to advise on the issues outlined in paragraph 2.6.4 of this report.

### **Governance arrangements**

#### **Recommendation 14**

Current practice no longer reflects the letter or spirit of the Joint Museums Agreement, which is in need of urgent review.

#### **Recommendation 15**

A new Joint Museums Committee should be created to act as the body to which the Head of the Joint Museums Service is answerable and which ensures the service is accountable to elected Members. The committee would be charged with overseeing service delivery and providing strategic leadership for the service across the whole of Norfolk.

#### **Recommendation 16**

The new Joint Museums Committee should be much smaller than currently and we can see advantages and disadvantages in each of the following two models of composition:

- The relevant Cabinet portfolio holder for museums from the County Council and each of the District Councils, plus the Chairman of each of the new Area Museums Committees in Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Kings Lynn.
- Seven representatives of the County Council (one of whom will be the Cabinet portfolio holder for cultural services) and at least seven District councillors drawn from those areas with NMAS museums, the proportions to be agreed by negotiation, and usually drawn from the District museums committees.

We see value in having a separate Heritage Forum in which previously co-opted members of the Joint Museums Committee meet separately and regularly with others in the field of heritage, tourism and culture with the Chairmen of Area Museums Committees and Area Museums Managers. The same is recommended for districts.

#### **Recommendation 17**

Those authorities which, before the agreement had their own independent museums services, (i.e. Norwich City Council, Great Yarmouth Borough Council and the Borough of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk) should have restored to them the right to make decisions on local matters in line with the principle that any decision that can be made locally should be. This would be best achieved by the creation of smaller, focused Area Museums Committees consisting of not less than five, or more than seven, members who have been

elected within the District concerned as either District or County councillors, irrespective of party political considerations, but with the majority being District councillors. The Breckland Area Museums Committee and North Norfolk Museums Forum should remain unchanged.

#### **Recommendation 18**

Smaller, focused Area Museums Committees should be created, consisting of not less than five, or more than seven, members who have been elected within the District concerned as either District or County councillors, irrespective of party political considerations, but with the majority being District councillors. Where the decisions of such committees have additional funding implications beyond what is included in the Service Level Agreement (see recommendation 19), it will be up to the District council to come up with the money either directly or by arranging alternative outside funding in the form of grants or sponsorship, for example, or from their own resources.

#### **Recommendation 19**

There should be Service Level Agreements detailing the respective responsibilities of each District Council and Norfolk County Council, the financial and other contributions of each District Council to the local museums service and what they receive in return.

#### **Recommendation 20**

To ensure that the disparity in the level of financial contributions between District Councils is addressed in these agreements, there should be a debate about how best to ensure that contributions are based on a rational funding formula rather than historical precedence. The imbalance between Norwich's building maintenance contributions and other districts is one example.

#### **Recommendation 21**

There should be dedicated meetings of the County Council's Community Services Overview & Scrutiny Panel for the consideration of the budget, performance and development of Cultural Services.



## Norfolk Museums Service Working Group

## Terms of Reference

<p><b>Membership of working group</b></p> <p>Michael Carttiss  Marion Chapman-Allen  Graham Jones (until 16 October 2012)  Judy Leggett  George Nobbs (Chairman)  Hilary Thompson  Jennifer Toms</p> <p><b>Officers</b></p> <p>Keith Cogdell, Scrutiny Support Manager  Colin Sewell, Planning, Performance and Partnerships Manager  Tim Shaw, Committee Officer</p>
<p><b>Reasons for scrutiny</b></p> <p>The current business model may not be sustainable given current and foreseeable financial constraints on local government. The Joint Museums Agreement is also due for renewal and this provides the opportunity to evaluate the current arrangements, including governance, monitoring, reporting and funding, to ensure they are fit for purpose.</p>
<p><b>Purpose and objectives</b></p> <p>To consider and make appropriate recommendations concerning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ethos and core values of the Museums Service</li> <li>• Governance arrangements</li> <li>• Management and structure</li> <li>• Admissions policy</li> <li>• Publicity and promotion</li> <li>• Security</li> <li>• Finance</li> </ul>
<p><b>People and organisations to consult with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The people of Norfolk/ the general public</li> <li>• Museums Service staff</li> <li>• Museums volunteers</li> <li>• Museum visitors including schools</li> <li>• Friends of the museums</li> <li>• Museums pass holders</li> <li>• District Councils in their capacity as partners in the Joint Museums Agreement</li> <li>• National Trust (as owners of the Elizabethan House Museum, Great Yarmouth)</li> <li>• Trustees of the Royal Norfolk Regiment collection</li> <li>• East Anglia Art Fund</li> <li>• Heritage Lottery Fund</li> <li>• Art Fund</li> </ul>

- Arts Council England
- Contemporary Arts Society
- Costume and Textile Association
- Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

#### **Background documents**

- Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service Plan 2012-15
- Joint Museums Agreement
- Commercial options matrix
- Museums Service options appraisal – Report to Joint Museums & Archaeology Committee on 13 January 2012
- Priority based budget report

#### **Style and approach**

- Panel-style meetings with witnesses
- Museum visits
- Various means of consultation, as appropriate – letters, questionnaires, email, internet, social media

#### **Deadline**

Report to Cabinet in October 2012

## List of Witnesses

## Appendix C

Brenda Arthur - Leader of Norwich City Council

David Bradford - Norwich City Councillor & Chairman of the Norwich Area Museums Committee

Lindsay Brette - North Norfolk District Councillor and member of North Norfolk Museums Forum and Norfolk Joint Museums and Archaeology Committee

James Carswell – former Cabinet portfolio holder for Cultural Services, Norfolk County Council

Barry Coleman - Gt. Yarmouth Borough Councillor and former Leader of the Borough Council

Phillip Duigan - Breckland District Councillor, County Councillor, Chairman of Breckland Area Museums Committee and member of Norfolk Joint Museums Committee

Alison Gifford - Chairman of Kings Lynn Civic Society

Robin Hanley – Western Area Museums Manager, Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service

Rachel Kirk - Norwich Museums Manager, Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service

John Knights – Vice-Chairman of the Friends of Norwich Museums

Elizabeth Nockolds - Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council Cabinet portfolio holder for Shared Services and External Relations and Chairman of West Norfolk Area Museums Committee.

John Perrott – Business and Development Manager, Norfolk County Council Community Services

Rory Quinn – former Chairman of Norwich Area Museums Committee and Vice Chairman of Norfolk Joint Museums Committee

Bill Seaman – Assistant Head of the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service

James Steward - Eastern Area Museums Manager, Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service

Barry Stone – Norfolk County Council Cabinet portfolio holder for Cultural Services, Customer Services and Communications

Vanessa Trevelyan – Head of Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service

Andy Tyler - Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Councillor, member of West Norfolk Area Museums Committee and Labour Group spokesperson for culture

Charles Wilde – Central Services Manager, Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service

Bernard Williamson - Former Chairman of the Great Yarmouth Borough Council Scrutiny Committee

## **Appendix D**

### **Chairman's summary of the background to the Joint Museums Agreement.**

We came to this review believing that Norfolk people held our local museums in high regard. We also felt, as councillors, that there was some considerable vagueness about how they were currently run and (from a democratic point of view) by whom.

In making our recommendations, we are very aware that we have been charged with this task by the Cabinet of *Norfolk County Council* and that we are ourselves County Councillors. Any proposals, however, will require the agreement of each of the district councils, as well as the County Council. Indeed, we would not want it any other way because returning more governance to the district councils is at the very heart of our recommendations.

For that reason, our suggestions are intended to redress the balance in favour of those

partners who originally made the Joint Museums Agreement back in 1974. We are also very aware that in making these recommendations we are specifically concerned with the issue of *local government* involvement, the effectiveness of *democratic accountability*, and *the scrutiny of a publicly funded service*. It is essential in these times that such a service should be strategically led by, and answerable to, those who have been elected locally.

That's why we are not making any recommendations that affect the various very valuable bodies and organisations (of which the *Friends of Norwich Museums*, *East Anglian Art Fund* and *Norfolk Contemporary Art Society* are examples) that support the museums service in various areas – except in reference to their participation in heritage forums.

Our object as far as this report is concerned is to make suggestions about *local authority governance* and management only. The role of voluntary bodies – and volunteers - will need to be addressed more fully at a later date.

In making our recommendations, we have been concerned about the decline in effective democratic accountability in recent years and the need to address it. It might be useful, however, to look at some of the contributing factors.

When the joint agreement was signed in 1974, it coincided with the drastic changes in the structure of local government that saw the sweeping away of centuries of self-rule for ancient cities and towns. However, whilst libraries were transferred to County control, the new Act left museums as a district function. Norfolk County Council at that time operated only one museum of its own, the tiny one at Walsingham – which it divested itself of soon afterwards.

What Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Kings Lynn did was to enter into a Joint Agreement with the County (and the other new districts) that was to be renewed every 3 years. At the time, with the director of Norwich's museums becoming the new head of the service, it looked for all intents and purposes as if the City had taken over the County. However, that was not the case. Thirty-eight years later, the coincidence of the date 1974 has led to an assumption by many that legal responsibility for museums passed to the County Council at that time. That also was not the case. It emphatically did not!

The original agreement provided for a central committee of up to 33 members but no local committees. The first revision set up a local committee for Norwich (but nowhere else) and slightly reduced the size of the Joint Committee. Later revisions set up "Areas Committees" but with few powers – and those that they did have were soon whittled away. Things might have carried on without mishap had it not been for the introduction of the Cabinet system in recent years. This imposed a structure of a County Cabinet member and seven district Cabinet members on top of the Joint and Area Committees.

Cabinet members brought with them Review Panels and these too were added to the structure of governance. One by one, the Area Committees were abolished or ceased to meet until only a couple remained and the ultimate blow was the removal of any effective budgetary function from the Joint Museums Committee. It is not surprising then that the abortive attempt to transfer the museums service into a Trust got so far as it did without elected councillors apparently being aware of it.

Recent events have highlighted the problem of senior management being theoretically answerable to a host of competing bodies and individuals whose function, area of competence and even continued existence was in doubt. Too often this has meant that in

practical terms, far from being accountable to too many bodies, senior management were *effectively* accountable to none. This has been the fault of the governance structure and we mean to address it.

Committees barely exist in local government today but we still have them in relation to our museums in Norfolk as a legacy of that agreement of 1974. Therefore, we need to make them work effectively. We have concluded that it is not just desirable as a matter of principle that, (as far as possible), decision making be returned to accountable local museum committees but that it will lead to much more effective management and leadership in the service. We are recommending smaller, leaner executive style committees for the three partners who historically had their own museums services. We believe that all should be elected from within the relevant district council area and that a simple majority should be appointed from and by the district council itself, and the remainder from and by the County Council. This will provide balance but retain local accountability and decision making. Our recommendation addresses the financial implications of this.

As for a county-wide Joint Committee, we have, as you will see, two alternatives. However, as one of our members said, "it is not the exact composition that matters so much as the fact that there is a body that the museums service is expected to answer to - and does".

One of our suggestions fully embraces the Cabinet system and seeks to make it work effectively while keeping full local representation, and the other - perhaps less radical - which nonetheless retains the County/District balance. Either, we believe would provide a more decisive decision making body.

Further, we recommend that meaningful Service Level Agreements be instituted with those districts which have museums within their borders.

We believe that the issue of effective governance has drifted for too long. It is essential, if we are to continue providing these valuable services – as we all wish to do - that they are truly accountable to the people who not only have to pay for them but who actually own them!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George Nobbs". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font. The first name "George" is written in a larger, more prominent script, and "Nobbs" follows in a similar but slightly smaller script. There is a horizontal line under the "s" in "Nobbs".

**George Nobbs**  
**Chairman**

# JOINT MUSEUMS AND ARCHAEOLOGY COMMITTEE

15 February 2013

Item no: 8

## Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service – Integrated Performance and Finance Monitoring Report for 2012/13

A report by the Head of Museums and Archaeology

### Executive Summary

This report provides performance against Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS) service plans and budget out-turns based on information at 30 November 2012. Section 1 covers service performance information in the context of delivering service plans. Section 2 covers progress with the NMAS revenue budget, reserves and provisions and the capital programme.

The main issues for consideration by this Committee are:

- Progress with NMAS Revenue budgets and Reserves and Provisions indicates that the service should achieve a break-even position at the year-end. The capital programme is set out in Appendix A1.
- NMAS received 7,004 fewer visits April to November 2012 than in the equivalent period in the previous year due to inclement weather and the alternative attractions of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the Olympics and Paralympics. Progress with NMAS service plans is satisfactory and an update appears at paragraph 1.2.

### Recommendation

Committee Members are asked to consider and comment on:

- Progress with performance and 2012/13 service plans
- Progress with the revenue budget, capital programme and reserves and provisions out-turn positions for 2012/13

## 1. Performance against Service Plans

### 1.1 Performance Summary

- 1.1.1 In the period April to November 2012 museum visits were 266,244 compared with 273,248 in the previous year. The main loss of visits are due to the closure of the Regimental Museum and wet weather discouraging visits to Gressenhall's main event days. Visitor figures over Easter were buoyant,

particularly at Norwich Castle. The large number of national events – Olympics and Paralympics, Diamond Jubilee – depressed visitor figures over the summer period. Norfolk's museums were not as badly affected as those in London, where several national museums reported reductions in visitor numbers of up to 40% during the Olympics. Visits in organised school groups were 26,456 compared to 28,590 in the previous year.

## **1.2 Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS)**

1.2.1 The eight trainees appointed as part of the Teaching Museum initiative started work in January 2012. They will combine work in specific museum team with general grounding in all aspects of museum work. This initiative is funded by Arts Council England.

1.2.2 Thanks to a generous donation from the Friends of Norwich Museums, Strangers Hall will be open for four days a week rather than two during the summer months in 2013.

1.2.3 On 28 November, Cllr Barry Stone and staff from Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse and Norwich Castle were presented with their Sandford Awards for heritage education by the Duchess of Marlborough at a ceremony at Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire.

1.2.3 Works have been completed to the entrance to the Lynn Museum to provide new automatic doors and a re-configured entrance area. Plans for an enhanced shop display and a new museum display case for small changing displays such as recent acquisitions will add to the visitors' interest.

## **1.3 Conclusion**

1.3.1 Our conclusion is that the year has is on track to deliver the 2012/13 service plan.

## **2. Budget Monitoring 2012/13**

### **2.1 Revenue Budget**

2.1.1 Based on the position at the end of November 2012, the NMAS should achieve a break-even revenue budget outturn.

2.1.2 Taking into account the reduction in visitor numbers there is a small reduction in admissions income of £0.007m. This has been covered by small increases in income from catering and sales.

2.1.3 Revenue Budget Changes during 2012/13 - changes totalling £0.033m to the budget are noted for 2012/13:

- -£0.033m return of pay inflation budget

2.1.4 The table below sets out the net revenue service budgets and out-turn for the NMAS.

Service	Approved budget £m	Outturn £m	+Over/-Under spend £m	+Over/Under spend as % of budget	Variance since last report £m
Museums Service	3.720	3.720	0.000	0.00%	0
<b>NMAS Total</b>	<b>3.720</b>	<b>3.720</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b>

- 2.1.5 Savings targets included in the Approved Budget for 12/13 total £0.145m. These are made up of lower storage costs £0.110m, withholding inflation for supplies and services budgets £0.010m, flexible opening hours at the Tollhouse Museum £0.015m and increased hire income £0.010m.

## 2.2 Capital programme

- 2.2.1 Norfolk County Council's commitment to the county's cultural heritage and resources has been evidenced over the last year in our continuing programme of refurbishment and improvement to museums.
- 2.2.2 The capital programme is monitored over the life of the scheme rather than a single year. This reflects the life of the projects and the associated funding.
- 2.2.3 The NMAS 2012/13 capital programme is shown at Appendix A and includes any programme revisions.

## 2.3 Reserves and Provisions

- 2.3.1 There are some changes to reserves and provisions to report. The table summarising the out-turn position appears below.
- The income reserve is maintained to enable the service to effectively manage resources during periods of unfavourable weather conditions that can impact upon visitor numbers.
  - The Museums Repairs and Renewals Reserve is expected to reduce by £0.130m to fund replacement equipment for audience development, galleries, shops and cafe.
  - The Unspent Grants and Contributions Reserve shows expected project balances at year end with no conditions attached to the type of funding, although restrictions may apply.



<b>Reserves and Provisions 2012/13</b>	<b>Balances at 01Apr12</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn at 31Mar13</b>	<b>Change</b>
	£M	£M	£M
<b>Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service</b>			
Museums Income Reserve	0.079	0.079	0.000
ICT Reserve	0.000	0.000	0.000
Museums Repairs and Renewals Reserve	0.334	0.204	-0.130
Unspent Grants and Contributions Reserve	0.555	0.199	-0.356
Service Total	0.968	0.482	-0.486

### **3. Resource implications**

- 3.1 The implications for resources including, financial, staff, property and IT, where relevant, are set out in Section 2 of this report.

### **4. Other Implications**

- 4.1 Officers have considered all the implications which members should be aware of. Apart from those listed in the report (above), there are no other implications to take into account

### **5. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)**

- 5.1 The NMAS Service Plan places diversity, equality and community cohesion at the heart of service development and service delivery. It aims to ensure that activities included in the service plan are accessible to diverse groups in Norfolk and that all policies, practices and procedures undergo equality impact assessment. These assessments help the service focus on meeting the needs of customers in relation to age, disability, gender, race, religion & belief and sexual orientation.

### **6. Section 17 – Crime and Disorder Act**

- 6.1 The NMAS is working hard to help address the issues of social exclusion, one of the key triggers for crime and disorder. The NMAS provides services that are accessible to local people, encourage participation in cultural activities by people who are at risk of offending, engage offenders through a range of cultural projects, assist schools in improving pupil attainment and deliver opportunities to increase the number of people who are in education, employment or training. Through these and many other projects the NMAS is using its resources to contribute towards reducing crime and disorder in Norfolk.

## 7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The NMAS achieved a break-even revenue budget position and progress with performance indicators and the successful implementation of service plans points to continuing improvement.

## 8. Recommendation or Action Required

- 8.1 The Joint Museums and Archaeology Committee is asked to consider and comment on:

- Progress with performance and 2012/13 service plans
- Progress with the revenue budget, capital programme and reserves and provisions out-turn positions for 2012/13

## Officer Contacts

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper please get in touch with:

Vanessa Trevelyan  
Head of NMAS  
Community Services Department  
Cultural Services  
Tel: 01603 493620  
Email: [vanessa.trevelyan@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:vanessa.trevelyan@norfolk.gov.uk)

John Perrott  
Finance and Business Support Manager  
Community Services Department  
Cultural Services  
Tel: 01603 222054  
Email: [john.perrott@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:john.perrott@norfolk.gov.uk)



If you need this report in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

## Capital Programme 2012/13 – Museums and Archaeology Service

Scheme or programme of work	Approved 2012/13 capital budget £m	2012/13 forecast capital outturn £m	Change since the previous report	Reasons
<b>Schemes in Progress</b>				
Bridewell Museum Development	0.443	0.443	0.000	Project expected to complete 12/13
Castle Fire and Security Improvements	0.017	0.017	0.000	Project completed 12/13
Gressenhall Eco Building	0.139	0.139	0.000	Advised planning delays pending meeting in January 2013
Seahenge	0.033	0.033	0.000	Lynn Museum expected to complete in 12/13
Gressenhall Biomass Boiler CERF *	0.015	0.015	0.000	Works now complete but snagging issues remain
GFWH Wind & Solar CERF*	0.000	0.000	0.000	Budget re-profiled to 13/14 due to advised planning delays
Gressenhall Shop Relocation	0.025	0.025	0.000	Complete
Museum Stock System	0.120	0.120	0.000	New system procurement in process
Prior Years Corporate Minor Works	0.017	0.017	0.000	All projects due to complete in 12/13.
<b>Schemes in Progress - Total</b>	<b>0.809</b>	<b>0.809</b>	<b>0.000</b>	
<b>2012/13 New Starts</b>				
Corporate Minor Works 2012/13	0.031	0.031	0.000	Gressenhall Lifebelt Stations, CCTV & Engineers sink.
Cromer Museum CERF* Lighting	0.002	0.002	0.000	Complete awaiting final invoices
<b>New Starts - Total</b>	<b>0.033</b>	<b>0.033</b>	<b>0.000</b>	
<b>Total Capital Programme</b>	<b>0.842</b>	<b>0.842</b>	<b>0.000</b>	

\* CERF is the Carbon Energy Reduction Fund.

The NMAS capital programme is funded from a variety of sources:

- The feasibility element of the Bridewell Museum project was funded from NMAS. The capital programme is £1.577m with approved HLF funding of £0.979m, £0.224m NCC capital, £0.76m Norwich City Council and £0.025m from the Friends of Norwich Museums and service contributions.
- The Gressenhall Eco-Buildings project is funded by the NCC over 2 years with approved funding of £0.048m in 2009/10 and £0.095m in 2010/11. Due to planning objections this project needs re-scoping. The programme will concentrate on providing necessary visitor facilities including toilet provision adjacent to the adventure playground.
- Seahenge ongoing funding is to improve the entrance at Lynn Museum in conjunction with a minor works project.
- 12/13 CERF funding is for energy reduction projects at Cromer.
- Gressenhall Shop Relocation and the Museum Stock System projects have been funded from revenue.

o - 0 - o

## Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service Service and Budget Planning 2013 to 2015

Report by the Head of Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service

### Executive Summary

At its November meeting, the Joint Museums and Archaeology Committee considered a report on proposals for service and financial planning for 2013-14. This report updates the Committee on further information and changes affecting proposals. It includes an update from the Chancellor's Autumn Statement and confirmation of the Provisional Finance Settlement, updated information on revenue budget proposals and capital funding bids and the latest information on the cash limited budget for the services relevant to this Committee.

### Action Required

Members are asked to consider and comment on the following:

- a. The provisional finance settlement for 2013-14;
- b. The updated information on spending pressures and savings for the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Committee and the cash limited budget for 2013-14;

## 1 Background

- 1.1 The Council is almost at the end of the second year of its three-year programme of work, to reshape the role of the County Council and to deliver savings needed to meet the Government's planned spending reductions. In November, Committee members considered, not only the progress that this Committee had made within the programme, but also the key issues facing the service and the revised planning assumptions including changes to cost pressures and savings for 2013-14. Members considered a detailed list of the updated cost pressures for the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS) and a list of updated proposals for savings.
- 1.2 On 7 November 2012 a comprehensive review of the authority's functions was announced. The Enterprising Norfolk review aims to identify recommendations to enable the organisation to manage further grant reductions and increases in demands for services from 2014 onwards by creating a more self sufficient organisation in funding terms, with a stronger business like focus which demonstrates both innovation and flexibility of service delivery. Outcomes from the review will be announced in spring 2013, covering how the Council plans to meet the continued challenges and changing context for the authority expected from the next Comprehensive Spending Review. The review does not detract from the concurrent and continued transformation programme of work underway to support changes needed to deliver 2012-13 and 2013-14 savings that reflect Years Two and Three of the current three year programme.
- 1.3 This paper brings together for consideration and comment by Committee Members, the latest financial context for the County Council, following the Government's Provisional Finance Settlement, any further planning revisions and the expected

cash limited budget for the service for 2013-14.

## **2 Managing Change**

- 2.1 Cultural Services continues to implement a wide range of efficiencies involving reduced and restructured staffing in libraries and museums, the relocation of collections, and rationalisation of buildings.
- 2.2 The Cultural Services programme for 2012/13 involves further efficiencies and a savings target of £0.835m. Within this figure the NMAS savings are 0.145m and made up of lower storage costs £0.110m, withholding inflation for supplies and services budgets £0.010m, flexible opening hours at the Tollhouse Museum £0.015m and increased hire income £0.010m.
- 2.3 The overall assessment of the Cultural Services transformation programme is green.
- 2.4 Further information on current progress is contained within the Integrated Performance and Finance reports which are presented quarterly to this Committee.

## **3. Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2013/14 and 2014/15 and the Autumn Statement 2012**

- 3.1 The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced his Autumn Statement on 5 December, reaffirming the Government's commitment to reduce the deficit. The national context remains difficult and the Chancellor announced reduced growth forecasts from the Office of Budget Responsibility, with 1.2% growth now forecast in 2013, rising to 2% in 2014 and 2.3% in 2015.
- 3.2 The chancellor also set out the Governments plans for investment, with an extra £5bn capital investment, supporting new development including free schools, academies and road infrastructure. A replacement for PFI was also announced with the aim of sharing risk and reward between private and public sector.
- 3.3 The spending announcements made in the Autumn Statement are cost neutral and amongst other savings the Chancellor announced further reductions to government departments of 1% in 2013-14 and 2% in 2014-15, with protection for Health and Schools. As Local Government budgets have already been reduced to deliver the freeze in council tax, the Chancellor announced that there would be no change to Local Government departmental spending limits in 2013-14 and therefore our planning assumptions remain unchanged. It was announced that there will be an additional 2% reduction to Local Government departmental spending limits in 2014-15, which will further increase the funding gap for that year.
- 3.4 The next Spending Review, setting out detailed plans for 2015-16, will be announced in the first half of 2013, but total spending for the three years 2015-2018 is planned to continue to fall at the same rate as the current spending review.
- 3.5 The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, announced the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2013-14 and 2014-15 on 19 December 2012. At the time of writing this report, further detail explaining the full

technical breakdown of the settlement was still awaited. However, the following headline information from the provisional finance settlement is set out below.

3.6 Revenue funding within the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2013-14 will be received through either the Business Rates Retention Scheme (BRRS) or specific grants. The majority of funding is through BRRS, as many grants have been rolled into the calculation of the baseline funding for the new scheme. These are Council Tax Freeze Grant for 2011-12; Learning Disabilities and Health Reform Grant; part of the Early Intervention Grant and part of the Lead Local Flood Grant.

3.7 The new Business Rates Retention Scheme includes three key streams of funding; our local share of business rates; a top-up payment to make up the shortfall between the local share of business rates and our baseline funding from business rates and the Revenue Support Grant.

### 3.8 **Business Rates**

For the purposes of the BRRS, the forecast collected business rates for Norfolk in 2013-14 is £124,973,507. This is calculated based on each billing authority's proportionate share (based on a two year average) of forecast national business rates for 2013-14 following the removal of 50% central share, which is paid back to central government. Under the Business Rates Retention Scheme, Norfolk County Council will receive 20% of the local share of the collected rates forecast as £24,997,701. However, the actual figure that will be received in 2013-14, is subject to final forecasts by district councils and these will be finalised by 31 January 2013.

### 3.9 **Top Up**

The funding formula that has been used in previous years to calculate formula grant has been updated for 2013-14 data and to reflect particular changes announced by the Secretary of State, including providing additional weighting for those authorities that have more reliance on government grant due to lower council tax bases. In particular, for Norfolk, damping continued to be applied to the funding formula. For 2013-14 this formula will be used to provide a basis for calculating both the business rates funding baseline and for the allocation of the Revenue Support Grant. The forecast local share of nationally collected business rates has been allocated based on the funding formula in order to derive a business rates funding baseline – effectively calculating how much of the national local share each authority would require based on its need. The difference between the baseline funding and the retained business rates is set at the outset of the BRRS as either a top-up or a tariff payment. Norfolk County Council will receive a top-up payment of £110,429,264, which will be fixed until 2020 and increased each year in line with the small business rates multiplier – in previous years this has increased in line with RPI.

### 3.10 **Revenue Support Grant**

The national amount available for Revenue Support Grant is calculated based on the National Spending Control Totals and after removing the expected local share of business rates. This total is then allocated based on the formula based shares.

3.11 The headline amounts within the Business Rates Retention Scheme for 2013-14 and 2014-15 are summarised below. The figures for 2014-15 are indicative only and in particular are subject to change from both RPI and any change in the amount of business rates collected.

	<b>2013-14 £m</b>	<b>2014-15 (all subject to change) £m</b>

Top Up payment	110.429	113.816(subject to RPI)
Business rates (subject to change)	24.995	25.761
Revenue Support Grant	203.562	173.937
	<b>338.986</b>	<b>313.514</b>

### 3.12 Specific Grant

In addition, the Government has announced the following specific revenue grants for Norfolk County Council in 2013-14 and 2014-15.

	<b>2013-14 £</b>	<b>2014-15 £</b>
Local Reform and Community Voices Grant (including funding for Local Healthwatch, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards in Hospitals, Independent Complaints and Mental Health Advocacy Services)	731,858	754,702
Lead Local Flood Grant (£199,000 rolled into BRRS)	311,000	311,000
Inshore Fisheries Conservation Grant	151,999	151,999
Fire Revenue Grant - Firelink	125,000	142,000
Fire Revenue Grant – New Dimension	966,000	968,000
Council Tax Freeze Grant (2013-14)	3,477,901	3,477,901
Social Fund – Programme	1,905,516	1,905,516
Social Fund - Administration	402,650	369,072
Community Right to Challenge	8,547	8,547

- 3.13 The funding announcement for Public Health services transferring to local government has been delayed and a two year funding settlement is now expected in January.

## 4 Consultation

- 4.1 Prior to setting the budget for 2011-12, Norfolk County Council undertook its largest ever public consultation – ‘The Big Conversation’, which set out proposals for meeting the expected reductions in funding over the period 2011-14. This reflected significant changes proposed by the Council to its core role and to services commissioned or delivered. Overall, around 9,000 individuals and organisations were involved, representing Norfolk’s diverse population and many different communities and stakeholders. Full details can be found in Appendix J to the County Council Plan & 2011-14 Budget Report received by Cabinet on 24 January 2011.
- 4.2 In setting the budget for 2013-14 no additional public consultation directly relevant



to the JMAC was required.

#### 4.3 **Representatives of non-domestic ratepayers**

- 4.3.1 The Council has a statutory duty under Section 134 of the Local Government Act to consult with representatives of non-domestic ratepayers. A meeting with representatives of the business sector is scheduled for XX **(to be completed when known)**. A verbal update will be provided to Cabinet on 28 January 2013.

### 5 **Joint Museums and Archaeology Committee Comments**

- 5.1 In the light of the overall financial planning context for 2013-14 and the proposals set out in the Big Conversation, Panels and Committees in November considered proposed savings and issues of particular significance for the services covered by this Committee. At that meeting it was noted that changes in demand for NMAS services could be attributed to competition from the wider cultural sector and from the cultural digital “economy” and changes in economic climate which impacted on consumer spending.
- 5.2 Earlier comments and any arising from this meeting will be reflected in the budget report to Cabinet on 28 January 2013

### 6 **Revenue Budget Proposals**

- 6.1 Appendix A1 sets out the proposed cash limited budget for 2013-14, based on the cost pressures and budget savings reported to this Committee in November.

Appendix A shows:

- a. Total Cost pressures which impact on the Council Tax
  - b. Total Budget Savings
  - c. Any transfers of grant and transfers of responsibility from Central to Local Government affecting this Committee
  - d. Cost neutral changes i.e. budget changes which across the Council do not impact on the overall Council Tax, but which need to be reflected as part of each service’s cash limited budget. Examples are depreciation charges, budget transfers between services and changes to office accommodation charges.
- 6.2 All budget planning proposals have been considered in the light of their impact on the Council’s core role, objectives, performance, risk, value for money, equality, community cohesion and sustainability. Key implications for consideration were reported to this Committee in November
- 6.3 There are some risks within the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology budget which were included in the report to the November Committee. These are reiterated below:
- a. The changing economic climate which impacts on employment and consumer spending, the reducing availability of funding from external sources for projects, and
  - b. Competition from the wider cultural sector and increasing access to the cultural digital ‘economy’.

## **7 Capital Programme**

- 7.1 As in previous years it is proposed that Government allocation of capital grant will be earmarked to the services for which the grant has been made. In this there are no implications for the NMAS.
- 7.2 In accordance with the Capital Strategy, departments have submitted bids for corporate capital funding or prudential borrowing to the Corporate Capital and Asset Management Group (CCAMG). These bids relate in the main to schemes or services for which the Government support is available but which are nevertheless considered to be a priority.
- 7.3 CCAMG has reviewed new bids and consider them appropriate for consideration by this Committee. There are no schemes relevant to this Committee. In addition long term bids considered in previous years covering 2013-14 have been brought forward. The detailed prioritisation model used prior to 2012-13 for assessing capital bids, has again not been needed this year due to the small number of bids, in part due to the requirement for Services to fund additional borrowing costs. As Government makes new announcements of capital grant for 2013-14, sources of funding for schemes will be re-assessed to ensure the most cost effective use of capital funding. Any changes to the submitted bids may reduce the need for prudential borrowing proposed. Cabinet will consider the bids on 28 January 2013, alongside revenue requirements and the level of funding that can be made available to fund the bids, and will recommend to Council which bids are included in the capital programme.

## **8 Equality impact assessment**

- 8.1 Prior to agreeing the budget and County Council Plan for 2011-14, Norfolk County Council undertook its largest ever public consultation with protected groups – part of ‘The Big Conversation’ – to inform a major equality impact assessment of all budget proposals. This reflected the significant changes proposed by the Council to its core role and services commissioned or delivered. The findings of equality impact assessments informed the final County Council Plan and budget for 2011-14, and in addition, a number of mitigating actions were agreed where potential adverse impact was identified.
- 8.2 In setting the budget for 2013-14 no amendments to the equality impact assessments have been identified. Full details of all equality impact assessments and the outcome of public consultation with protected groups can be found in Appendix K to the County Council Plan and 2011-14 Budget Report received by Cabinet on 24 January 2011, or alternatively, please contact the Planning, Performance and Partnerships team.

## **9 Section 17 – Crime and Disorder Act**

- 9.1 There are no direct implications for Crime and Disorder within this report.

## **10 Resource implications**

- 10.1 The implications to resources including, financial, staff, property and IT are set out in Sections Three to Five of this report and within Appendix A1.

## 11 Staffing implications

- 11.1 Staffing implications of the budget proposals are being reviewed as part of workforce planning activity carried out across the authority. Changes to service delivery will have the potential to impact upon staff. This will be managed throughout the process.

## 12 Risk assessment

- 12.1 Known areas of potential risk are covered within section Six of this report. An assessment of risk will be carried out as part of the service planning process.

## 13 Action required

- 13.1 Members are asked to consider and comment on the following:
- a. The provisional finance settlement for 2013-14;
  - b. The updated information on spending pressures and savings for the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Committee and the cash limited budget for 2013-14.

## 14 Officer Contact

- 14.1 If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper please get in touch with:

Vanessa Trevelyan      01603 224215      [vanessa.trevelyan@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:vanessa.trevelyan@norfolk.gov.uk)

John Perrott      01603 222054      [john.perrott@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:john.perrott@norfolk.gov.uk)



If you need this report in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact Jill Blake on 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

<sup>1</sup>See: [www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties/guidance-and-codes-of-practice/codes-of-practice](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties/guidance-and-codes-of-practice/codes-of-practice)

**NMAS Proposed Budget Changes 2013-14**

		<b>2013-14</b>
	<b>Community Services – NMAS</b>	£m
	Base Budget	<b>3.753</b>
	<b>ADDITIONAL COSTS</b>	
	<b>Basic Inflation – Pay (2013/14 – 1%)</b>	0.039
	<b>Basic Inflation - Prices (General 2%, School and social care passenger transport 4%)</b>	0.016
	<b>Sub total Additional Costs</b>	<b>0.055</b>
Ref	<b>BUDGET SAVINGS</b>	
C02	NMAS: Increased catering and retail income	-0.010
C06	NMAS: Review of senior management structure	-0.057
	<b>Total Big Conversation proposals</b>	<b>-0.067</b>
	<b><u>Other savings proposals within Medium Term Financial Plan</u></b>	
	NMAS: Increased Marketing Support	-0.010
	NMAS: Administrative efficiencies	-0.005
	NMAS: Partnership contribution to overheads	-0.047
	NMAS: Reallocation of development funding in Western Area	-0.020
	NMAS: Reduction in Collections Storage	-0.012
	Removal of 2012-13 1% pay award	-0.033
	<b>New savings proposals</b>	<b>-0.127</b>
	Support Services adjustment	-0.005
	<b>Total Savings Proposals</b>	<b>-0.199</b>
	<b>COST NEUTRAL ADJUSTMENTS, i.e. which do not impact on the overall Council Tax</b>	
	*Depreciation charges	-0.073
	Debt Management Charges (£180)	-0.000
	Office Accommodation Capital Charges	-0.008
	Transfer from Community Services (Cultural Services) to Resources for Accommodation Charges in respect of Shared Services	-0.005
	Transfer from Community Services (Cultural Services) to Resources for creation of Information Management Service	-0.002
	<b>Sub Total Cost Neutral Adjustments</b>	<b>-0.088</b>
	<b>Cash Limited Budget</b>	<b>3.521</b>

\*These changes are required to comply with the Local Authority Accounting Code of Practice but do not impact on the Council Tax calculation.

Note 1: REFCUS is the abbreviation for Revenue Expenditure Funded by Capital Under Statute. This is expenditure that legislation allows to be classified as capital for funding purposes when it does not result in the expenditure being carried on the Balance Sheet as a fixed asset, for example improvement grants.

## Collections for Rationalisation

Report by the Head of NMAS

### Summary

This report sets out the background to a review of collections held by the Norwich museums, and recommends deaccessioning a group of social history items that are in poor condition, unrelated to Norwich and/or outside the NMAS Acquisition and Disposal policy.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to agree that the objects listed in Annex 2 are deaccessioned.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 Collecting within the NMAS is undertaken in accordance with the Acquisition and Disposal Policy approved by Committee and available on the NMAS website<sup>1</sup>. This is reviewed every five years and sets out the strengths of the collections, areas for future collecting and constraints on collecting, such as resources, space and expertise.

As part of a responsible collections management strategy the NMAS undertakes regular reviews of its collections to ensure that material is properly classified and adequately housed. Objects that are deemed unsuitable for retention as part of the core collection are identified and alternative homes found. The process to be followed was agreed by Committee in 2002 following a Best Value Review of collections and collections management (see Annex 1).

- 1.2 To summarise, the core collections basically fall into three categories with different levels of access:

1. **Display material** represents the best or most significant items in the collections and is easily accessible by all people visiting the museums.
2. **Study collections** provide depth for people who want to learn more about a specific subject. The emphasis is on presenting as many objects as possible for study. Improved study facilities are being provided at collections study centres, such as the Shirehall in Norwich or Gressenhall. Objects are either freely accessible when the museum is open, in open storage (easily accessible with an appointment or on regular open days) or in study rooms (open on set days a week).

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/About\\_Us/Policy\\_Documents/Acquisition\\_and\\_Disposal\\_Policy/index.htm](http://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/About_Us/Policy_Documents/Acquisition_and_Disposal_Policy/index.htm)

3. **Long-term research material** is needed as evidence for current or future research and only needs to be available on an appointment basis. This can be contained in high-density storage, thereby making the most cost effective use of space.

1.3 Items not retained for the Core Collection are categorised as follows:

4. **Working or demonstration material** objects are put to working use or demonstration use at or on behalf of the museum eg agricultural equipment.
5. **Education, handling and loan collection** objects are included for educational reference material only, including loans. There is an implied deterioration through usage over time.
6. **Set dressing and cannibalisation** items are used as set-dressing for on-site activities of the museum.
7. **Dispersal** objects are found alternative homes where they will be put to good use. We follow Museums Association and Accreditation good practice guidelines. There will be a presumption that objects remain in the public domain and offered initially to similar institutions at whichever location provides the best balance of care, context and access.
8. **Disposal** following Museums Association guidelines. If no other home can be found, objects are sold at auction or scrapped.

## 2 Review of social history collections in the Norwich museums

- 2.1 The Norwich museums contain a number of social history objects. These were primarily brought into the collections during the 1970s at a time when collecting was undertaken in a relatively uncontrolled manner, without reference to an official collecting policy or quality control. As a result many collections contain objects that are duplicated in other museums or are of poor quality and now require large conservation resources to be of display standard. Most of the objects have little or no provenance and some have no known relevance to the local history of the area. As a result these fall outside the Acquisition Policy of the museums service today.

These social history objects take up large areas of floor space and are in many cases heavy and cumbersome. As a result access to other stored and better provenanced collections has been made difficult and on occasion, impossible for health and safety reasons.

- 2.2 A review of these collections has been undertaken in order to:

- Improve access to the collection as a whole
- Release storage space and resources to allow improved collections management
- Remove threats posed by possible insect infestation
- Remove threats posed by inappropriate storage conditions

- 2.3 Following the agreed process the attached list of objects (Annexe 2) has been identified for deaccessioning and subsequent dispersal or disposal. These objects have little or no provenance, have little relevance to the history of the area and as a result fall outside the Collecting Policy of the NMAS. Many duplicate items in the collection and others are in extremely poor condition and incomplete.
- 2.4 While finding a new home for the objects in another museum will be the ideal first priority, it may be that because of the poor quality and lack of provenance of the objects, sale or destruction of some the objects may be the only realistic outcome of the rationalisation process.
- 2.5 The objects listed in Annexe 2 have been identified by the relevant curators as candidates for deaccessioning and dispersal if possible. The list has been scrutinised by the NMAS' internal Rationalisation Group, which comprises the Collections and Information Manager, the Senior Conservation Officer and the County Curator. Where possible these objects will be found a home in another museum or cultural institution.

### **3 Resource Implications**

- 3.1 **Finance:** a budget of £1000 may be required to pay for removal firm's charges and possible destruction or rubbish disposal.

### **4 Other Implications**

#### **4.1 Equality Impact Assessment**

NMAS puts diversity, equality and community cohesion at the heart of service development and service delivery. It aims to ensure that activities included in the service plan are accessible to diverse groups in Norfolk and that all policies, practices and procedures take account where feasible of customers' differing needs in relation to age, disability, gender, race, religion & belief and sexual orientation.

This review of collections aims to improve accessibility. Principles of representation and equality will guide the selection of objects for disposal, which will all be offered in the first instance to other Accredited museums so that they remain accessible in the public domain.

#### **4.2 Health and Safety Implications**

The rationalisation programme will improve health and safety conditions for staff by removing risks in overcrowded stores.

#### **4.3 Environmental Implications**

Rationalisation of collections will reduce NMAS' storage requirements thereby reducing the carbon footprint. Providing public access to storage facilities as appropriate will improve the value for money of

these facilities.

#### 4.4 **Any Other implications**

Officers have considered all the implications which members should be aware of. Apart from those listed in the report (above), there are no other implications to take into account.

### 5 **Section 17 – Crime and Disorder Act**

There are no Section 17 implications.

### 6 **Recommendation**

Members are asked to agree that the objects listed in Annex 2 are deaccessioned.

### **Background Papers**

MLA Museum Accreditation Standard  
MA Good Practice Guidelines on Acquisition and Disposal  
NMAAS Acquisition and Disposal Policy  
NMAAS Rationalisation Strategy (Annex 1)

### **Officer Contact**

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper please get in touch with:

Jamie Everitt                      01603 493654                      [jamie.everitt@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:jamie.everitt@norfolk.gov.uk)

Vanessa Trevelyan 01603 493620                      [vanessa.trevelyan@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:vanessa.trevelyan@norfolk.gov.uk)



If you need this report in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.



## **Strategy for rationalising NMAS collections**

### **1 Introduction**

As part of a regular programme of good collections care all museum collections will be reviewed to ensure that objects conform to standards of high priority and top quality. All material that does not conform will be disposed of. This paper sets out how the review will be undertaken. The key elements of the process outlined below are required under the Museum Accreditation Scheme, the UK standards scheme for museums that ensure good practice is followed in all publicly funded museums.

The policy of the NMAS is to preserve and interpret Norfolk's history while also providing a window on the world for the people of Norfolk. The NMAS has rich and diverse collections and is ranked within the top 2.5% of non-national registered museums. These collections are held in trust on behalf of current and future generations. The collections housed in the Castle Museum & Art Gallery and the Shirehall Collections Study Centre have been Designated by the DCMS as being of national significance. Fifty museums out of over 2,000 Accredited museums have received this distinction, and a challenge fund has been established by the DCMS to support the work of Designated collections. The NMAS has received £742,000 since the Fund was created in 1999 towards improving the quality of collections, making it accessible on-line, and improving our displays.

Collecting within the NMAS is undertaken in accordance with the Collecting Policy, which is reviewed and approved by Committee every five years. This sets out the strengths of the collections, areas for future collecting and constraints on collecting, such as resources, space and expertise. Cromer Museum, for instance, will only acquire material that provides information about the history of Cromer not currently held within the museum. Thus, duplicates or material that is historic but not otherwise interesting or informative, will not be acquired. This does not preclude collecting outside the terms of the Policy in exceptional cases, such as the West Runton elephant, which is within the terms of the Collecting Policy but of unusual size and national importance. A similar exception is the famous teapot collection of over 3,000 examples is now a nationally important collection without parallel elsewhere in the country and supports the study of styles in ceramic design. It is also a good marketing "hook" for visitors and spreads the fame of Norfolk throughout the world through a series of international travelling exhibitions funded by Twinings.

### **2 Using collections**

**The Core collections basically fall into three categories, with different levels of access:**

**1. Display material** represents the best or most significant items in the collections and is easily accessible by all people visiting the museums. Gallery displays are highly interpreted to attract the interest of the general visitor and, hopefully, enthuse them. The Egyptology collection at Norwich Castle "earns its keep" by providing an interesting display for the general visitor and an important resource for schools, which

are able to study this part of the national curriculum from real objects in their local museum.

**2. Study collections** provide depth for people who want to learn more about a specific subject. The emphasis is on presenting as many objects as possible for study. Improved study facilities are being provided at Collections Study Centres, such as the Shirehall, Carrow House or Gressenhall, where collections are available in reference galleries. Objects are either freely accessible when the museum is open, on open storage (easily accessible with an appointment or on regular open days) or in study rooms (open on set days a week).

**3. Long-term research material** is needed as evidence for current or future research and only needs to be available on an appointment basis. This can be contained in high density storage, thereby making the most cost effective use of space. It is debatable how much of this material is needed but museums have a responsibility to future research to ensure that important evidence is not destroyed unnecessarily. New analysis techniques are being developed all the time and often unprepossessing samples from a Roman midden or pieces of fire-damaged stone can provide important information. "Seahenge" is a case in point. The timbers are over 4,000 years old and have been damaged by the action of the tides but English Heritage has been able to determine the year and month in which the trees were felled, and how many individual people worked on them. However, we can't keep everything and a balance needs to be struck between keeping enough for future needs but not so much that there are no resources to do anything else.

**Items not retained for the Core Collection are categorised as follows:**

**4. Working or demonstration material**

Objects are put to working use or demonstration use at or on behalf of the museum. Items may require sufficient restoration to satisfy for example health and safety requirements, functionality, and should take account of presentation issues of object preservation/restoration within the museum environment. They should be used under defined conditions that are stated in their documentation.

**5. Education, handling and loan collection**

Objects are included for educational reference material only, including loans. There is an implied deterioration through usage over time.

**6. Set dressing and cannibalisation**

Objects are used as set dressing for on-site activities of the museum, following the principal of ultimate disposal by the 'back to nature' route.

**7. Dispersal**

Objects are sold or given away to others. We shall follow MA and Registration guidelines. There will be a presumption that objects will remain in the public domain and offered initially to similar institutions at whichever location provides the best balance of care, context and access.

**8. Disposal**

Following MA guidelines objects are scrapped or cannibalised for reference material or restoration use.

### **3 The rationalisation programme**

The rationalisation programme will particularly concentrate on identifying which material should fall in category 3 and below. Material in category 2 will also be reviewed as it is likely that there is some material which, over the years, has become surplus to requirements. Material in category 1 will have been reviewed when a decision was taken to put it on display. The NMAS has an ongoing programme of renewing or refreshing displays which allows for changing objects on display and assessing their importance.

#### **3.1 First steps in the rationalisation programme**

A Collections Management Officer will be responsible for the review programme. Other staff to be involved include:

- County Curator
- Head of Conservation
- Staff with curatorial responsibility for collections at specific sites, eg Curator of the museum
- Subject specialists

The first step will be to agree a review process and timetable with staff and identify staff teams to carry out the review. The timetable will be affected by major developments currently underway or in the planning cycle that will determine the availability of staff.

#### **3.2 Identifying material for rationalisation**

We shall particularly examine material in the following categories to consider them for rationalisation:

- Does not fall within the current collecting policy.
- Unethically acquired material.
- Loan material no longer required for display.
- Does not provide important information about Norfolk and its history.
- Is irrelevant to the collection.
- Has no reasonable expectation of being useful for display or research.
- Is unaccessioned (ie has not been properly recorded).
- Is unprovenanced (ie has no background information to provide a context).
- Is of poor quality compared with other examples in the collection.
- Has deteriorated beyond any useful purpose (eg through decay or infestation. This might be a textile item that has rotted or a natural history specimen that has an infestation)
- Poses a threat to other objects or people (eg by contamination. This might be WW2 gas masks with degraded asbestos filters or radio-active geological specimens).
- Is an unnecessary duplicate.
- Where there is no reasonable expectation that NMAS will be able to provide suitable levels of curation or collections care.

- Is of good quality but would fit better into another museum's collection (eg Archaeological material has been recently transferred to West Stowe Anglo-Saxon Village.
- May be more appropriate to the NRO or NLIS.

Meeting one of the above criteria does not automatically condemn any object. Each object will be considered on its merits. There may well be good reasons why objects that fall into one or more of the above categories should be kept, but they will be critically examined and justified.

### **3.3 Options for disposal**

There are several ways in which material that is not suitable for the NMAS core collections might continue to fulfil a useful purpose including:

- Transfer to a handling collection for use with schools or the public
- Working machinery can be used to engage the public and demonstrate historic practices

Other alternatives include:

- Transfer to another Accredited museum by gift or sale
- Return to donor or lender
- Transfer to another public institution by gift or sale
- Repatriation to country of origin
- Charitable donation
- Cannibalisation or set dressing
- Sale on the open market, or
- Destruction (as a last resort)

### **3.4 Process for decision taking**

The process for taking decisions about disposal is time consuming but it is important to ensure that

- all legal responsibilities are fulfilled,
- that the sensibilities of donors are respected,
- that the political views of the partners in the Joint Museums & Archaeology Agreement are taken into account, and
- that the public retain confidence in the NMAS and the County Council as trustees of Norfolk's heritage.

### **3.5 The process of selection for disposal will be as follows:**

- Objects for disposal will be identified by staff with collections care responsibilities at each site, assisted by subject specialists as appropriate
- Documentation will be checked to confirm that the NMAS is the legal owner of the items and is legally free to dispose of them (there may be conditions attached to a bequest etc)
- Permission for disposal will be sought from the Joint Museums & Archaeology Committee
- The views of particularly interested groups or organisations will be sought



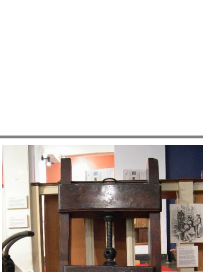
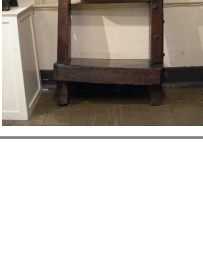
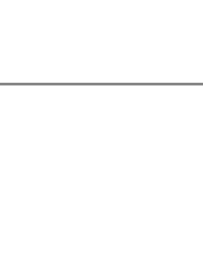
- If material was acquired or conserved with grant aid, contact will be made with the grant funding body to establish whether the funder has any requirements or views on the disposal. Reimbursement of grant aid is a standard requirement unless the object is to be transferred as a gift to another Accredited museum.


### **3.6 Process for disposal of accessioned material**


Once Committee has agreed the list of proposed disposals the following steps will be taken:

- As required by the conditions of the Museum Accreditation Scheme, a notice will be placed in the Museums Journal or on-line equivalent, and any other appropriate specialist publication, advertising the availability of significant material to other Accredited museums.
- Direct contact will be made with any Accredited museums or other public institutions that would have a particular interest in any of the objects.
- If no Accredited museum is interested and the material was donated within the last 20 years, attempts will be made to contact the donor to return the item.
- Material in which no interest is expressed will be either sold or destroyed.
- Complete records of all transactions will be kept.

End

Record number	Brief Description	Image	Disposal Reasons	NMAS Rationalisation Committee recommendations
NWHCM : 291	Vee-twin marine engine made by Sturgess and Towlson, Norwich about 1868; two 4 1/4 inch (bore) x 6 inch (stroke) cylinders set at right angles to one another which allows the engine to start with the crank in any position; each cylinder is fitted with Stephenson's link motion; the engine formerly powered the steam launch 'Vivid' on the Norfolk Broads which operated from 1875 until just after the First World War; the engine is mounted on a wooden stand		Although made by a firm of Norwich engineers and founders, the engine was used on a launch on the Norfolk Broads. There is no opportunity to display the item in the foreseeable future; best served as part of a specialist collection	Transfer. Offer to Museum of the Broads for display.
NWHCM : 706	Stanhope press, cast iron frame with curved and flanged sides, set on a wooden base, rectangular platen and carriage, a heavy counterweight is suspended from a bracket at the back of the press, made around 1810, used at the Pitt Press (Cambridge) until 1847, removed to Thetford and in use until 1925		The item falls outside the collecting policy of the Bridewell Museum as there is no record of it being used in Norwich.	Transfer. Offer to University of Reading (Dept of Typography & Graphic Design) or Cambridge Museum of Technology.
NWHCM : 708	Imposing stone; a wooden frame with three drawers; the two top drawers divided internally into compartments, a 40 mm stone slab is set into the top of the frame; made around 1770, used in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, until 1925		The item falls outside the collecting area of the Bridewell. The item was used in Yarmouth until 1925.	Transfer. Offer to other local museums; if no interest offer nationwide via Museums Journal.
NWHCM : 1958.408.1	Book binder's standing press, wood frame comprising two uprights with an iron rod inserted between them at the top of the press; fixed wooden lower bed and adjustable top bed; with iron screw and press pin; late 19th century		Although the donor was a local man the history of use is not known - suggest it be offered to the John Jarrold Museum	Transfer. Offer to John Jarrold Printing Museum, if no interest to other museums via Museums Journal.
NWHCM : 1964.422	Hearse, wood, this bier made by T. Parker, S. Bloomfield and S. Brewster in memory of the men of Great Fransham, Norfolk who fell in the Great War, 1914-18		This item falls outside the collecting policy of the Bridewell. It nominally formed part of the St. Peter Hungate collections. Following the closure of that museum there is little opportunity to display this item. Suggest it be offered to parish.	Transfer. Return to parish. Item was donated by individual donor - contact donor's family and consult before taking action.
NWHCM : 1970.515.1	Roller mill by W.R. Dell and Son, London and Croyden; 6 pairs of rollers in one frame with wooden hoppers, installed 1898 at Tharston Mill		This item falls outside the collecting policy of the Bridewell Museum	Transfer. Discuss with Gressenhall; if no interest for rural life collections then offer to other museums via Museums Journal.

Record number	Brief Description	Image	Disposal Reasons	NMAS Rationalisation Committee recommendations
NWHCM : 1972.260	Pneumatic power hammer made by B and S Massey Limited, Manchester and used in the fitter's shop at Carrow Works, Norwich; complete with anvil and stand, weight approx 7 tons, painted green, made around 1880		One of many items that was acquired for an industrial museum in Norwich which never materialised; a difficult object to display or show in store; local use but no local manufacture; a specialist item	Transfer. Offer to Museum of Science and Industry Manchester; if no response offer to Fornsett St Mary Steam Museum then wider museums via Museums Journal. If no interest consider as possible candidate for Gressenhall Shine a Light project.
NWHCM : 1974.604.1	Wood turners' lathe, operated by treadle with belt drive from flywheel to turning bit, 3 varying sizes of top spindle enable turning at three different speeds, base of lathe wood, flywheel of cast iron with wooden rim, cast iron bed for puppets, machine marked in brass of central column with Holtzapffel, London, manufacturers of the lathe, possibly between 1860 and 1880		This is a London made lathe presumably used by an amateur woodworker. There is no history of its previous ownership	Transfer. Offer to other museums via Museums Journal.
NWHCM : 1974.641.1	General pedestal drill operated through belt drive from motor, made by Schulte and Van der Beeck, Barmen, it is a self feeder, has four back gears and drills anything up to 2½ inches, bought from Boulton and Paul by W. Hagg, machine merchant of 70 King St, Norwich, Norfolk, last used 1974, also 5 drilling bits (2 three quarter inch, one inch, one and a half inch and one and a three quarter inch)		Although the item was used in two different Norwich firms, it is a general piece of equipment which is not key to the work undertaken by either of its previous users	Transfer. Offer to other museums via Museums Journal.
NWHCM : 1975.461.1	Water bicycle, pedal drive with two galvanised iron floats, steers by wheel above front forks connected through chains and wire to two rudders on floats, painted green and yellow and its name Nutty Slack painted on the back, hole in front compartment of offside float, pedal drive to paddle wheels at back, bought by donor at a sale at Wroxham around 1947, associated with Thorpe, Norfolk		Although the donor lived in Thorpe St. Andrew, the item was used more generally on the rivers and Broads in Norfolk and therefore no specific Norwich application; the item therefore falls outside the collecting policy for the Bridewell Museum	Transfer. Offer to Museum of the Broads for display.
NWHCM : 1975.491	Body recovery beam trawl for raking dead bodies from the river; a white painted metal and wooden frame with four chains and hooks attached to it; for use with the water bicycle named 'Nutty Slack'; black marks indicate some of the successes, donor recalls that 31 bodies were recovered from the Broads rivers in Norfolk between the 1930s and 1960s		Although the donor lived in Thorpe St. Andrew, the item was used more generally on the rivers and Broads in Norfolk and therefore no specific Norwich application; the item therefore falls outside the collecting policy for the Bridewell Museum	Transfer. Offer to Museum of the Broads for display

Record number	Brief Description	Image	Disposal Reasons	NMAS Rationalisation Committee recommendations
NWHCM : 1975.564.3	Cast iron hand operated guillotine with a manufacturer's plate 'The Sheffield Engineers Ltd Sheffield'; the guillotine has a 590 mm diameter flywheel and a 582mm diameter toothed wheel and is painted green; used circa 1975 at 315 Unthank Road, Norwich, Norfolk, as part of a one man part time printing service		Although used by a Norwich printer, this is a generic piece of equipment, with no distinctive significance to user or trade	Transfer. The platen printing machine NWHCM : 1975.564.3 from the same printer has been retained. Offer to John Jarrold Printing Museum, and other museums via Museums Journal.
NWHCM : 1976.203	Dray, originally from City Station, Norwich, Midland and Great Northern Joint, wood, brass hub caps, impressed M and G.N.Jt, iron fittings, no shafts, originally painted chocolate with red undercarriage and black wheels, early 20th century, made before donor bought it in 1930		Specialist interest with little associated or supporting material in collections; a large object with no foreseeable opportunity to display.	Transfer. The dray is in need of care and attention. Offer to North Norfolk Railway for restoration and use in working goods train demonstrations.
NWHCM : 1977.287.1.1	The Clipper Safety Chaff cutter, painted green with wooden casing round cutting wheel, driven by electric motor through belt drive from ceiling, food was hoisted up and prepared on top floor, then lowered to first floor where animals were kept while under treatment, early 20th century; from the former vet's premises in Red Lion Street Yard, Norwich, Norfolk		Although the item came from a local vet's practice, it does not add very much to our understanding of that practice. The machinery has no local manufacture	Transfer. Discuss with Gressenhall, if no interest offer to other museums via Museums Journal.
NWHCM : 1977.287.2	The Rapid Corn Crusher, made by Bamford of Uttoxeter, painted blue with wooden hopper, driven probably by electric motor through belt drive from ceiling, food was hoisted up and prepared on top floor, then lowered to first floor where animals were kept while under treatment, early 20th century; from the former vet's premises in Red Lion Street Yard, Norwich, Norfolk		Although the item came from a local vet's practice, it does not add very much to our understanding of that practice. The machinery has no local manufacture	Transfer. Discuss with Gressenhall, if no interest offer to other museums via Museums Journal.
NWHCM : 1978.178	Section of overhead line shafting, used in the tinsmith's shop at Carrow Works for conveying power from an electric motor to machines stamping out tins, consists of one length of shafting with one main and two subsidiary pulley wheels attached; two cast iron brackets for supporting shafting from ceiling, two cast iron bearing blocks stamped SKP, one length of drive belt, in use during the 20th century until 1978		This item is a piece of generic factory equipment which is well illustrated in photographs of factory interiors	Transfer. Offer to other museums via Museums Journal.



Record number	Brief Description	Image	Disposal Reasons	NMAS Rationalisation Committee recommendations
NWHCM : 1978.550 :	Horstead parish bier with maker's brass name plate, Ingate and Sons, Coachbuilders Aylsham, hand-drawn with four wheels, detachable stretcher and framework for cover over top, late 19th century		This item was nominally part of the St. Peter Hungate collections and had never been on display. With the closure of that museum, active collection of church history has ceased and there is little or no opportunity to display this type of item. Suggest the item be offered back to the parish	Transfer. Offer to parish for return.
NWHCM : 1982.92	Line shafting assembly with shaft, drive wheels etc from the winding shop at Laurence, Scott and Electromotors Limited, Gothic Works, used to drive lathes, thought to date from 1880s to 1890s		Although this has local provenance, it does not have special significance, being a piece of generic factory equipment which is well illustrated in photographs of factory interiors	Transfer. Offer to other museums via Museums Journal. Offer to Forncett Steam Museum

## **Report of the NMAS Curators 2011-12**

Report by the Head of NMAS

### **Summary**

This report provides a summary of the work of the NMAS Curators in 2011-12. It outlines the achievements of staff based at all NMAS sites across the county.

The report also includes contributions from the Conservation, Collections Management and Display teams.

The full report is available on <http://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/view/NCC117601>.

### **Recommendation**

That Members note and comment on this report.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 A report on the work of the NMAS Curators has been compiled on an annual basis since 2006-7. Until now, the report has focused on the work of the Curators based in Norwich. For this sixth annual report, the decision has been taken for the first time to include contributions from the whole countywide Curator team and representing all NMAS sites.
- 1.2 The full Countywide Curator Report 2011-2012 is available on <http://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/view/NCC117601>. Some paper copies will be available at the meeting on 15 February.

## **2. Structure of the Report**

- 2.1 The contents of the Curator Report reflect the Service priorities of NMAS. It is also presented in a format which responds to the goals set out for the sector by the Arts Council (ACE). These ACE Goals have been employed as the section headings.
- 2.2 Contributions from the Western Area, Eastern Area and Norwich are interspersed within the component sections.
- 2.3 The report contains contributions from other sections of the Service that work closely with the Curator team, in terms of the county collections. The range of work undertaken by the Collections Management, Conservation and Display teams is accordingly covered in the report.

### **3. Contents of the Report**

- 3.1 The initial section, concerned with 'Improving the Collections and Displays', focuses on projects, which include the new Bridewell Museum and the re-opening and subsequent move of the Costume and Textile collection in Norwich. It includes the opening of the 'Land Girls and Lumber Jills' display at Gressenhall in the West and the new Time and Tide gallery displays in the East.
- 3.2 The many uses of the collections are outlined. In terms of loans to other institutions, it is recorded that 142 NMAS objects were sent out to 23 institutions across Britain and Europe. They were seen by 60,000 visitors at these other institutions beyond Norfolk.
- 3.3 The section on 'Communication with Audiences' highlights the energetic exhibition programme across the Service. A significant landmark was achieved at Norwich Castle with the showing of Titian's 'Diana and Actaeon', which was loaned from the National Gallery and National Galleries of Scotland. There were a total of 31,419 ticket sales at the museum during this six week show. Western area exhibitions included 'Memories of Lynn: King's Lynn since the 60s' and the 'Maharajah' exhibition at the Ancient House, Thetford. A major feature exhibition at Time and Tide was 'Sea View: Great Yarmouth Masterpieces'.
- 3.4 In terms of exhibiting 'Resilience', Collections Management initiatives have included the countywide Rationalisation and Documentation Projects. Staff at Cromer Museum have established a new photographic Collections Management Monitoring System. At Time and Tide, the environment can now be monitored directly by the Conservation team based at Norwich Castle Study Centre via the installation of a new Hanwell server.
- 3.5 When considered together, this report presents an integrated picture of the important and creative work that is being achieved by Curators and other staff working with collections across the Service. It reflects the ways in which staff with specialist skills actively support each other, while sharing their range of complementary skills to greatest effect.

### **4. Other Implications**

#### **4.1 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)**

NMAS puts diversity, equality and community cohesion at the heart of service development and service delivery. It aims to ensure that activities included in the service plan are accessible to diverse groups in Norfolk and that all policies, practices and procedures take account where feasible of customers' differing needs in relation to age, disability, gender, race, religion & belief and sexual orientation.

## **4.2 Any Other implications**

Officers have considered all the implications which members should be aware of. Apart from those listed in the report (above), there are no other implications to take into account.

## **5. Section 17 – Crime and Disorder Act**

All NMAS service plans take account of the need to address the issues of social exclusion, one of the key triggers for crime and disorder. Many of the museums are located in areas of social deprivation and their development is part of an integrated regeneration strategy. By providing services that are accessible to local people, by encouraging participation by young people at risk of offending, by assisting schools in improving pupil attainment, by generating pride in the local heritage, NMAS is making a substantial contribution towards reducing crime and disorder in Norfolk.

## **Officer Contact**

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper please get in touch with:

Dr John Davies  
County Curator and Collections Manager  
01603 493630  
[john.davies@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:john.davies@norfolk.gov.uk)



If you need this report in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.