

NORFOLK JOINT MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting Held on 28 October 2022 at 2.00 pm at Norfolk County Council

Present:

Norfolk County Council

Cllr A Birmingham (sub for Cllr J Brociek-Coulton)

Cllr J James

Cllr E Maxfield

Cllr R Savage

Cllr J Ward (Chair)

South Norfolk Council

Cllr J Easter

North Norfolk District Council

Cllr V Gay

Great Yarmouth Borough Council

Cllr G Freeman

Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk

Cllr E Nockolds

Broadland District Council

Cllr D King

Breckland District Council

Cllr R Kybird

Norwich City council

Cllr J Huntley

Cllr V Thomas (sub for Cllr C Kidman)

Co-opted Members (Non-Voting)

Museum Friends

Mrs F Devonshire

Norfolk Black History Month

Mr D Keen

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr J Brociek-Coulton, Cllr B Duffin, Cllr K Mason Billig, Cllr S Penfold, Cllr K Vincent, Cllr B Price and Cllr C Kidman.

2. Minutes

- 2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 July 2022 were confirmed by the Joint Committee and signed by the Chairman.

3 Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4 Breckland Area Museums Committee

- 4.1 Cllr Robert Kybird presented the annexed minutes of the Breckland Area Museums Committee meeting held on 5 September 2022 which were noted.

4.2 In introducing the minutes of the Area Committee Cllr Kybird referred to the following:

- The deployment of CO2 monitors, supplied through Norfolk County Council, had played a crucial role in bringing back into use some NMS back-office space for staff and volunteers.
- Building works at the former King's Head public house, a listed building next door to the Ancient House, had not yet recommenced. An agreement was expected to be put in place with the agent for the site developer on how this work would proceed.
- The events programme at Gressenhall for the 2022 season continued to run across four operational models (special event days, Days with a Difference, Norfolk School Holiday Activities and Ticketed Events) which would be reviewed at the end of the calendar year to assess visitor attendance and feedback.
- The Community Tree Nursery (which formed part of the Gressenhall Environment Hub) had become more established.
- As part of the Gressenhall Environment Hub work, Gressenhall continued to work in partnership with the NCC Environment team and neighbouring landowners in the creation of the Wendling Beck Exemplar Project.
- The Area Committee had received an update on the Kick the Dust: Norfolk Project, funded through the National Lottery Heritage Fund and delivered in partnership with a range of organisations.

5 Great Yarmouth Area Museums Working Group

5.1 Cllr Geoffrey Freeman presented the annexed minutes of the Great Yarmouth Area Museums Working Group meeting held on 20 July 2022 which were noted.

5.2 In introducing the minutes of the Area Committee Cllr Freeman referred to the following:

- The Retro Games exhibition which runs at Time and Tide until 20 March 2023, was the result of a creative collaboration between young people involved in the NMS Kick the Dust youth engagement programme, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The exhibition is a draw for people, especially young people, who might not have visited the museum otherwise.
- It was noted that the next stage in the development of Time and Tide Museum was to build on core values of community engagement by encouraging more co-production of events, collections, displays, engagement programmes and exhibitions and make sensitive adaptations to the courtyard space to accommodate increased demand from visitors, schools, event organisers and other community groups. This work included direct partnership working with the National Maritime Museum (Royal Museums Greenwich).
- The new Events Co-ordinator for the Eastern Area Museums was reported to be Gabrielle Copeman who had previously worked on the Kick the Dust: Norfolk Project.

6 Norwich Area Committee

6.1 Cllr Jacob Huntley presented the annexed minutes of the Norwich Area Museums Committee meeting held on 6 September 2022 which were noted.

- 6.2** In introducing the minutes of the Area Committee Cllr Jacob referred to the following:
- The Area Committee meeting was preceded by a tour of Norwich Castle. There would be further opportunities for tours by Members of the Area Committee and the Joint Committee as work progressed and milestones were reached.
 - The Area Committee had noted a recent increase in visitor numbers at Norwich Castle which showed that people were becoming more comfortable visiting inside spaces.
 - It was pointed out that the Area Committee had paid tribute to the work of Brenda Ferris who had died recently. Brenda had served as the representative of the Norfolk Contemporary Art Society (NCAS) on the Area Committee for many years and had in the past also served as a long-term member of the Joint Committee. The Chair of the Joint Committee added the Joint Committee's condolences and said that Brenda Ferris was a pillar of NCAS and the wider cultural community who would be sadly missed.

7 Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Area Committee

- 7.1** Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds said that the Area Committee had not met since the previous meeting of the Joint Committee but was due to meet again on 14 November 2022.
- 7.2** Cllr Nockolds referred to a new exhibition entitled Hoards: Archaeological Treasures from West Norfolk which featured some of the best treasure finds unearthed in north-west Norfolk and ran at the Lynn Museum until 11 June 2023.

8 Norfolk Museums Service – Finance Monitoring Report for 2022/23

- 8.1** The annexed report (8) by the Director of Culture & Heritage was received.
- 8.2** The Joint Committee received a report that covered the Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) forecast budget out-turn for 2022/23 and detailed the latest monitoring position of the revenue budget, capital programme, reserves and provisions.
- 8.3** Steve Miller, Director of Culture & Heritage, drew the Committee's attention to the following main issues for consideration by this Committee:
- The detailed budget position for 2022/23 was set out in the table at paragraph 1.1.4 of the report.
 - The Service was currently projecting an over-spend of £0.850m as it continued to face significant uncertainty in relation to the main income streams following a slower than hoped for return to normal, pre-pandemic visitor numbers and patterns. A rise in energy costs, the very hot summer, and the reduced visitor offer in place at Norwich Castle Museum, because of the ongoing work for the Keep re-development, were also reasons for the overspend.
 - The Service was expected to see a positive return to museum visiting in the new year, with income from new exhibition programmes and the renewed publicity given to the museum visitor pass helping to alleviate the current financial pressures.
 - NMS budgetary pressures continued to be managed by the County Council at CES departmental level.
 - The table at paragraph 1.2.3 of the report set out the capital building programme.

- The position regarding reserves and provisions was set out in paragraph 1.3 of the report.

8.4 The Joint Committee resolved to note:

- **The latest monitoring position of the revenue budget, capital programme, reserves and provisions and forecast outturn for 2022/23.**

9 Norfolk Museums Service - Risk Management Report

9.1 The annexed report (9) by the Director of Culture & Heritage was received.

9.2 The Joint Committee received a report that provided Members with the latest Norfolk Museums Service Risk Register. The Norfolk Museums Service risk register was last reported to the Joint Museums Committee in July 2022.

9.3 The Committee's attention was drawn to the following issues:

- There were no material changes to the risk register in terms of scores or mitigations since this matter was last reported to the Committee. However, the target dates for risks RM14286 (Reduction of centralised support services) and RM14364 (Failure to deliver Arts Council England business plan 2018-22) had changed.
- The outcome of the application for future funding by Arts Council England (ACE), was expected to be made public on 4 November 2022. This would be reported to JMC Members by email shortly afterwards.
- The risk score pertaining to the failure to generate additional income streams in accordance with the service plan which was currently rated red would be reviewed before the next meeting.
- The NMS was run as a joint service, and it was therefore not possible to provide budgetary costs for the Service on a museum site by site basis.

9.4 The Joint Committee resolved:

To agree the active and dormant risks as per appendices A and B of the report.

10 Norfolk Museums Service – Performance & Strategic Update Report

10.1 The annexed report (10) by the Director of Culture and Heritage was received.

10.2 The Joint Committee received a report that provided progress with performance of Norfolk Museums Service over the current financial year 2022//23, including the Service's award-winning learning programmes and the Service's work with key identified groups including Looked After Children, carers and foster families, and vulnerable older residents across the County. The report also provided an update on all major projects, including the *Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England* project and the National Lottery Heritage Fund supported youth development programme, *Kick the Dust Norfolk*.

10.3 The following points were discussed and noted:

- Visitor numbers for the first five months of the financial year were above target but below pre-Covid levels. School visits to museum sites had increased significantly and work in this area of NMS activity was running at full capacity.
- Members were encouraged to explore the links to YouTube sites and Museums blogs that could be found in the report.
- The Teaching Museum Trainees continued to make a valuable contribution to the core work of the service by helping to deliver the objectives set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report.
- The Joint Committee received an update on how the Kick the Dust: Norfolk project, funded through the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and delivered in partnership with a range of organisations including YMCA Norfolk, had continued to engage with young people aged 11 to 25.
- While the current NLHF-funded Kick the Dust project was due to end in March 2023, the lessons learnt from the project had clearly demonstrated the positive impact on young people and staff who had engaged in project activity. The project had seen young people move through the programme, gaining the confidence to take on volunteering roles within NMS. The service was continuing to work with the Y Heritage project in Leicester to develop a future funding bid that would be based on the lessons learnt from the current project.
- Members drew attention to the Singh Twins: Slaves of Fashion exhibition that ran at Norwich Castle until 22 January 2023 that had received many acclaimed media reviews.
- Danny Keen gave an update on Norfolk Black History Month activities which included supporting the telling of the Duleep Singh story at the Ancient House Museum. The telling of black history stories was an area of NMS activity with significant potential beyond the strong work already undertaken. Members of the Black History Month Committee were happy to help the Service in any way that they could.
- The Joint Committee received an update on progress of the Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England project for which construction work had started. The steelwork was fully erected in the Keep and the first of the three-stage handover process was complete, with the return of the new schools' entrance, toilets and Changing Place facility, and pop-up café.

10.4 RESOLVED

That the Joint Committee note:

- 1. An update on the 2022/23 position to date.**
- 2. Progress regarding development of the Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England project.**
- 3. Progress in terms of NMS key Arts Council England and National Lottery Heritage Fund programmes for 2022/23 and the Service's planning relating to its future Arts Council England funding.**

The meeting concluded at 3.32 pm.

Chair

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