

NORFOLK JOINT MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the Meeting Held at County Hall, Norwich on 22 April 2016 at
2.00pm**

Present:

Norfolk County Council

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

Broadland District Council

Mr S Dunn (substitute for Mr D Buck)

Breckland District Council

Mr P J Duigan

South Norfolk District Council

Mrs J Wilby (substitute for Mr B Stone)

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk

Mrs E Nockolds

Co-opted Member (Non-Voting)

Museum Friends

Mr J Knight

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Ms B Arthur, Mr D Buck, Ms E Morgan, Miss B Palmer Mr B Price Mrs K S Robinson-Payne Mr B Stone Mrs V Thomas and Mrs M Wilkinson.

2 Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 January 2016 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 urgent business.

5 Reports of Area Museums Committees

(a) Great Yarmouth

The annexed report of the Great Yarmouth Area Museums Committee meeting held on 22 March 2016 was received.

Members requested reports from the Great Yarmouth Area Museums Committee to be of a similar style to the reports that the Joint Committee received from other Area Museums Committees. This was considered necessary in order for the Joint Committee to be keep abreast of developments regarding the Great Yarmouth Museums.

Members were informed about the contribution that NMS staff from across the Service were making to the Google Art Project which would include a new high profile means of showcasing objects from the Great Yarmouth Museums collections to the public.

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

(b) King's Lynn and West Norfolk

The annexed report of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee meeting held on 14 March 2016 was presented by Mrs E Nockolds.

Members discussed the opening of the Lynn Museum on Sunday afternoons, the continuing success of the Junior Friends of King's Lynn scheme, the highly successful HLF-funded *Stories of Lynn* project and the work that was being done at the Lynn Museum with local schools to deliver a broad range of formal learning sessions.

It was suggested that Tourism Officers in other areas of the county should report to their Area Museums Committees on local tourism activities (which was the position taken by the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee).

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

(c) Norwich

The annexed report of the Norwich Area Museums Committee meeting held on 8 March 2016 was received.

Members discussed the arrangements for museums to be used as venues for weddings, conferences and banqueting functions and the NMS response to changes in the National Curriculum and the addition of a local history item to history GCSE.

In reply to questions, it was pointed out that the NMS had been contacted by schools in the Norwich area about how the NMS could link its school activities to a local history option in the history GCSE. The NMS would be happy to discuss this issue with schools elsewhere at their request.

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

6 Norfolk Joint Museums Service – Integrated Finance and Risk Monitoring Report for 2015/16

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

Members received a report that (based on budget out-turns as at end of February 2016) covered progress with the NMS revenue budget for 2015/16, reserves and provisions and the capital programme, and savings applied to the revenue budget for 2016/17. The report also provided the Committee with an update on progress with the management of risk within the NMS.

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

- Progress with NMS Revenue budgets and Reserves and Provisions indicated that the Service would achieve a break-even position at the year end.
- Good progress had been made with risk management for the NMS with several key risks now being recorded as 'fully met' rather than outstanding.
- The risk register would be updated to show that the threat from flooding across the County remained only as a residual threat, particularly in Great Yarmouth.
- To meet the savings targets for 2016/17 and beyond the NMS was dependent on continuing strong performance in terms of income generation.

The Joint Committee **resolved** to note –

- (a) Progress with the revenue budget, capital programme and reserves and provisions forecast out-turn positions for 2015/16.
- (b) Progress with the management of risk within the NMS.
- (c) The proposed savings for 2016/17 and beyond.

7 Norfolk Joint Museums Service – Performance & Strategic Update Report

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

The Joint Committee received a report that provided progress with performance against the NMS agreed service plan for 2015/16 and plans for the delivery of the 2016/17 budget, progress regarding the Voices from the Workhouse project at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse, Norwich Castle Keep and other capital developments, details as to museum education and learning programmes, marketing and PR, partnership programmes, commercial developments, NMS fundraising, the Deep History Coast project and Arts Council England consultation on its new funding programme for 2018-22.

During discussion of the report, the following key points were noted:

- Visits by members of the public across all 10 NMS sites had closely matched the previous year's all-time record of 400,000 visits. This significant result for 2015/16 was achieved despite the impact of development work at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse and of poor weather conditions on some of the museum's special event days.
- School visitor figures had remained high due largely to the hard work of the Museums' learning teams. Their proactive approach in the face of changes to the National Curriculum, and in overcoming the many barriers faced by schools in terms of making a museum visit, had reduced the shortfall in school visitor figures that were reported at previous Joint Committee meetings.
- The highly successful schools' and family events programme had involved the Service working closely with the Norfolk Libraries and Information Service.

- The record breaking visitor numbers were attributed to a large extent to the continuing success of the NMS visitor programme. The highlights of that programme included:
 - **A Viking's Guide to Deadly Dragons:** exhibition at Norwich Castle, which ran until 30 May 2016
 - **Halfway to Paradise – The Birth of British Rock:** exhibition at Time and Tide Museum, Great Yarmouth, which ran until 2 October 2016
 - **Art of the Mart: exhibition at Lynn Museum,** King's Lynn, which ran until 2 July 2016
 - **Memorial Cottages:** exhibition at Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell, which had run until Spring 2016
 - **17th Century Tokens:** exhibition at Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell, which ran until the Autumn
 - **'To watch the corn grow, and the blossoms set':** the art of Claughton Pellew: exhibition in the Colman Project Space, Norwich Castle which ran until the Autumn
 - **Flint Rocks: exhibition at Ancient House, Thetford** which ran until 29 October 2016.
- The NMS had arranged for an informal opening to the public of the Voices from the Workhouse capital development project at Gressenhall for spring 2016. The VIP opening (with representatives of the Heritage Lottery Fund and other funders) was due to be held on Friday, 8th July 2016 and all Members of the Joint Committee are invited to attend.
- The NMS had continued to work closely with the Norwich University of the Arts (NUA) to bring the British Art Show to Norwich in the summer of 2016. The British Art Show was the largest contemporary art exhibition in Britain. It was held every 5 years and this would be first time in its history that it had been held in the East of England and the first time it had taken place without a London anchor venue (the Hayward Gallery). The exhibition was expected to have a very significant impact in terms of benefits to the wider Norfolk economy.
- The NMS continued to actively promote the corporate venue hire offer of its museum sites as wedding venues. Going forward, the NMS was working with third parties to build links between museum wedding venues and the provision of outside reception facilities, particularly in relation to Norwich Castle, Strangers' Hall and Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse museum sites.
- The Joint Committee placed on record its congratulations to Rachael Duffield, Learning Officer from the Voices project, Gressenhall, a runner up (in third place) in the Visit England/Mirror Newspaper Group National Tourism Superstar Awards 2016. This good result for Rachael and the wider team helped focus national attention on how important the tourism sector was for the Norfolk economy and how museums were central to that important sector.
- The Joint Committee was informed that the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Norwich Castle Keep project had been assessed by the East of England Committee and the final decision of the Board of Trustees was expected to be made public shortly.
- Consultation was underway with the Arts Council to shape its next funding programme. This was likely to be a four year settlement that brought Museums into line with the rest of the arts portfolio in terms of having one major funding programme (with the potential of three levels of investment

giving different stages of responsibilities).

The Joint Committee **resolved to note:**

1. The performance of the NMS against the Service Plan for 2015/16.
2. Progress regarding development of the Keep at Norwich Castle.
3. Progress regarding the Voices from the Workhouse project at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse.
4. Performance for the financial year 2015/16 and plans for the delivery of the 2016/17 budget.
5. The Arts council England consultation on the new funding programme for 2018-22.

8 To receive presentations about recent work by the countywide NMS learning team in developing participation and building new audiences

The Joint Committee received three presentations. The first of these presentations by Jan Pitman, Learning Manager, Western Area Museums, was about the NMS response to changes in the National Curriculum and other key learning developments. The second presentation by Colly Mudie, Learning Manager, Norwich Museums, was about the Service's work with Looked After Children and those in foster care. The third presentation by Colin Stott Learning Manager, Eastern Area Museums, was about an extension to the "Museums and Schools" literacy programme *Stories from the Sea*, funded by the Department for Education (DfE) and Arts Council England, to North Norfolk (in addition to the continuing programme in Great Yarmouth).

The Joint Committee thanked the Area Museums Learning Managers for their presentations.

9 Date, Time and Venue for the next meeting on Friday, 1st July 2016

The Joint Committee **resolved:**

That the next meeting of the Joint Committee be held at Kings Lynn in the afternoon of Friday, 1 July 2016.

The meeting concluded at 3.55 pm.

Chairman

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