

Norfolk Records Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 April 2012

Present:

Norfolk County Council

Mr G Jones
Mr T Wright

King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council

Mrs E Nockolds

Breckland District Council

Mr P Duigan (Vice-Chairman)

Norwich City Council

Ms D Carlo

Broadland District Council

Mr J Bracey

South Norfolk District Council

Dr C J Kemp

Non-Voting Members

Co-Opted Member

Mr M Begley
Prof C Rawcliffe
Prof R Wilson

Representative of the Norfolk Record Society

Dr G A Metters

Representative of the Bishop of Norwich

Revd C Read

Observer

Dr V Morgan

Also in attendance:

Mr T Blowfield, South Norfolk District Council

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr D Murphy, Mrs A Claussen-Reynolds, Mrs M Coleman, Mr M Sands, Ms V Thomas and Mr R Jewson.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 January 2012 were confirmed by the Committee and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

3. Matters of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5. Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy 2011-12 Version

5.1 The annexed report (5) by the Chief Internal Auditor was received. This report

informed the Committee about the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy, which had been updated as a result of the Bribery Act 2010 and contained more information on the current position and strategy.

- 5.2 During the discussion it was noted that all members of the Committee would be subject to the rules under the Bribery Act 2010 contained within the Localism Act policy. More detailed clarification would be sought from the Head of Law.
- 5.3 A presentation would be arranged at the next meeting of the Records Committee on the Code of Conduct, to provide clarity for all members including voting by co-opted members as well as non-voting co-opted members.

RESOLVED

- 5.3 That the strategy as set out in the report be adopted.

6. Norfolk Record Office – Performance and Budget Report 2011/12

- 6.1 The annexed report (6) by the County Archivist was received. The report provided information on the performance against service plans and forecast budget out-turn information for 2011/12 for the Norfolk Record Office (NRO).

The Committee's attention was drawn to the forecast revenue budget outturn for the NRO and the break-even position expected, although there may be further minor changes as accounts were closed.

Members were informed that the Green Room, Archive Centre, refurbishment would be commencing in the near future and that the fan speed control pilot project was already underway, as part of the Capital programme.

Members were asked to consider and comment on:

- Performance with the 2011/12 service plans.
- Performance with the revenue budget and reserves and provisions for 2011/12.

- 6.2 During the discussion the following points were noted:

- Members were pleased to see how inclusive Black History month had become and that the UEA had also been involved in the project.
- Big Conversation savings were on track to be achieved for a total of £0.076m from a combination of reductions to staffing and energy efficiencies.
- The reference to Townhouse within the report should read Town Close.
- The NRO mission statement stated that everyone was welcome to view the records contained within the Record Office. Specific activities were also run within the building as well as at locations across Norfolk.
- The Norfolk Sound Archive played a significant role in supporting oral history projects which record Norfolk people's experiences and reminiscences.

- Oral history encouraged young people to speak to older people to find out more about the older people's knowledge and memories of their experiences.

RESOLVED

6.3 That

1. The performance with the 2011/12 service plans, and
2. Performance with the revenue budget and reserves and provisions for 2011/12 be noted

7. Risk Register

7.1 The annexed report (7) by the County Archivist was received. The report set out the latest version of the Norfolk Record Office risk register. Members' attention was drawn to the fact that there were four risks on the register, two targets had now been met, with the other two making good progress.

7.2 During the discussion the following points were noted:

- Regarding RM13960 (A lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities), it was noted that it would be difficult to pin down and clarify the actions and responsibilities involved in working relationships with other organisations.
- Once the detailed regulations on the localism Code of Conduct policy came into force, there may need to be some alterations to risk number RM13960 (A lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities).

RESOLVED

7.3 that the report be noted.

8. Annual Review of Charges for Services

8.1 The annexed report (8) by the County Archivist was received. The report set out the annual review of Record Office charges and recommended changes.

8.2 During the discussion the following points were noted:

- Charges for photocopying and administrative work were made by calculating the actual amount of time taken in dealing with an enquiry.
- A rolling ticket system to allow people to stagger their research over several days had been investigated, but it had been found that it would be too complex to administer. However, the County Archivist had the discretion to waive or amend charges in instances in which he felt it would be appropriate to do so.
- TIFF files took longer to download than JPEG files which accounted for their being more expensive to process.
- Members noted the £5 increase in the room hire charges.

RESOLVED

- 8.3 That new charges, as shown in the Appendices to the report, be agreed.

9 Norfolk Record Office Service Plan 2012-15

- 9.1 The Committee received the annexed report (9) by the County Archivist outlining the service planning priorities for the Record Office and the key service activities over the next three years.
- 9.2 The Committee's attention was drawn to the fact that the NRO service plan now followed the corporate template. In particular, the dashboard reflected the savings identified within the Big Conversation consultation, with no other issues being recorded on it at this stage.
- 9.3 The service plan had been completed in March 2012; therefore some of the data referred to 2010/11, and thus would be slightly different from some of the figures contained within the financial report.
- 9.4 The Committee commended the Record Office on the 95% satisfaction figure for searchroom use within The Archive Centre, which they felt was an excellent achievement.
- 9.5 During the discussions the following points were noted:
- The Archive Centre had approximately 8 years of accrual space remaining to accommodate accessions. When the building was constructed, it had been designed to accommodate all the records in the possession of the Record Office at that time, with an additional 15 years of accrual space.
 - The Record Office was on track to make all the NRO efficiencies identified within the Big Conversation consultation.
 - The Record Office was aware of the low percentage of blue-collar communities using the Record Office and would be investigating this further.
 - The Public Service Quality Group survey had been conducted over a period of three to four weeks in 2011.
 - The Record Office held regular programmes of events which included visiting children in schools. A lot of work was done to engage children, parents, grandparents in the work of the Record Office.
 - Volunteer workers played a very important part in the work of the Record Office. Last year, approximately 20 volunteers had been involved in the work of the Record Office. There was a wide variety of volunteers, although some were often graduates who were looking for a career and were thus seeking to gain valuable work experience. One person who had worked as a volunteer for several months was then appointed to a five-week Record Office internship, funded by the Business Archives Council, which gave her experience of compiling a business archive catalogue. On the strength of her Norfolk Record Office experience, she had gone on to take up an eleven-month pre-qualification traineeship at the Britten-Pears Foundation's Archive and Library in Suffolk, then had successfully obtained a place on

the postgraduate archive training course at the Centre for Archive Studies (LUCAS) at the University of Liverpool.

RESOLVED

9.6 That the report be noted.

10 Periodic Report 1 October 2011-31 March 2012 and Annual Report 2011/12

10.1 The Committee received the annexed reports (10 and 11) by the County Archivist informing the Committee of the achievements of the Norfolk Record Office over the past year. The Committee noted that the Record Office was still seen as a Centre of Excellence following a very successful year.

10.2 During the discussion the following points were noted:

- The Sound Archive had researched and made recordings from people who had experienced the Baedeker Raids on Norwich during April 1942.
- Black Anna of the Jolly Butchers Public House had been the subject of a programme by the BBC which the Norfolk Sound Archive (NSA) had recently digitised.
- The Committee thanked the team who had completed the archiving and cataloguing project.
- The NRO were aware of the issues involved in ensuring electronic information would be available in the future and were working with the best practices available at present and to try to factor in next generation technology.
- The Record Office were committed to making the experience exciting for anyone using the Record Office and to show younger people they were moving with the times.
- The County Archivist agreed to pass on the Committee's thanks to everyone involved in Record Office projects.

RESOLVED

10.3 That the

1. Periodic Report, 1 October 2011 to 31 March 2012 (at annex 10), and the
2. Annual Report, 2011-12 (at annex 11) be noted.

11. Exclusion of the Public

11.1 The Committee was asked to consider excluding the public from the meeting under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 for consideration of the item below, on the grounds it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

- 11.2 The County Archivist presented the following conclusion of the public interest test:

The NRO bids at auctions and acquires by private treaty sales documents of relevance to Norfolk, which fit within its Collections Policy. The prices of documents are increasing all the time, particularly because dealers' attitudes are "to charge what the market can stand". If prices paid by the NRO for documents were to become generally known publicly, this will have the effect of inflating the market. Since public funds are involved in its purchases, the NRO operates a strict value for money policy and strives to pay no more than is necessary, while, at the same time, trying to ensure that no important documents are lost to Norfolk. Releasing information about prices paid for documents would have a significant detrimental impact on NCC's commercial revenue and might put documents out of the NRO's financial reach, thereby losing part of the county's written heritage. It was therefore not in the public interest to release information about prices paid for document purchases.

RESOLVED

- 11.3 That the public be excluded from the following item.

12. Periodic Report: Appendix Manuscripts purchased, 1 October 2011 to 31 March 2012

- 12.1 The exempt report (annex 13) by the County Archivist was received by the Committee.

RESOLVED

- 12.2 That the report be noted.

13. Date and Time of Next Meeting and Future Meeting Dates

- 13.1 The Committee noted that the next meeting would take place at 10:30am on Friday 22 June 2012 in The Green Room, The Archive Centre. Future meeting details were also noted:

Date	Time	Venue
Friday 23 November	10:30am	The Green Room, Archive Centre

The meeting concluded at 12:10pm.

Mr P Duigan, Vice-Chairman



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