

## **Norfolk Records Committee**

### **Minutes of the Meeting held at the Norfolk Records Office on 12 January 2018 at the Archive Centre, County Hall**

#### **Present:**

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

Mr P Duigan (Vice-Chairman)  
Mr R Hanton

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

Mr D Raby

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

Mr D Buck

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

Dr C J Kemp (Chairman)

##### **Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk**

Mrs E A Nockolds

##### **Breckland Council**

Mr R Kybird

#### **Non-Voting Members**

##### **Co-Opted Members**

Mr M R Begley  
Mr A Steynor

##### **Representative of the Norwich Record Society**

Dr G A Metters

##### **Observer**

Dr V Morgan

##### **Representative of the Bishop of Norwich**

Revd C Read

##### **Others Present**

Mr G Tuson, the County Archivist

#### **1. To receive apologies and details of any substitute members attending**

- 1.1** Apologies were received from Cllr Brociek-Coulton, Mrs A Claussen-Reynolds, Ms M Coleman, Ms C Herries, Professor C Rawcliffe and Cllr D Rowntree.

#### **2. Minutes**

- 2.1** The minutes of the meeting held on the 3 November 2017 were **AGREED** as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman, subject to an amendment to record Mrs Claussen-Reynolds' apologies.

##### **Matters arising from the Minutes**

- Ref. paragraph 8.4: The Chairman reported that after the meeting he had discussed with Prof. Wilson the value of his contribution to the Committee over his 20 years of service as a Co-opted Member.

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

- 3.1** No interests were declared.

#### 4. Items of Urgent Business

- 4.1 No items of urgent business were discussed.

#### 5. Appointment of Co-opted Members

- 5.1 The Committee received the report outlining the recommendation for appointment to the third Co-opted Member position, Mr Steynor, a trustee of NORAH.

The Chairman introduced Mr Steynor to the Committee, and **PROPOSED** that the Committee appoint him as the third Co-opted Member, seconded by Mr Kybird.

The Committee unanimously **AGREED** to co-opt Mr Alan Steynor as the third Co-Opted Member of the Committee.

Mr Steynor Joined the meeting at 10:35; Dr Morgan arrived at 10:35

#### 6. Finance and Risk

- 6.1 The Committee considered the report forecasting the financial out-turn for the Norfolk Record Office (NRO) for 2017/18, the NRO revenue budget for 2017/18, reserves and provisions and an update on the service risk register.

- 6.2.1 Some of the staffing underspend shown in the report was due to staff vacancies and some due to an overestimation in the budget requirement for staffing by Finance.

- 6.2.2 Reserves were allocated by the Committee in 2013 for improving archive storage, an ongoing piece of work. In January 2015, the Committee approved money from reserves for partnership and funding work, and in January 2017, £85,000 was approved to continue this work and work on the strategic aims.

- 6.2.3 A mistake was noted on p10, which should read 6, not 5, as an additional risk had been added. The County Archivist gave background to the risks. The newest risk was 2.47, sustainability of metadata

- 6.3.1 Dr Morgan spoke of his experiences accessing microfilm at the Heritage Library Centre earlier in the week. Staff did not know how to use the machines and were unsure what was in the collection; an archive specialist was available at the library however only during part of the week. Dr Morgan suggested that library staff should be trained to be able to access material made available to them by the Archive Centre. He also noted there was a staff training need in relation to knowledge of and use of the digital archive.

- 6.3.2 The County Archivist reported that library staff had been trained in the past, however acknowledged that this needed repeating. The Archive service aimed to move away from use of microfilm and provide this information, such as wills, digitally.

- 6.3.3 The Chairman **ASKED** the County Archivist to speak to his counterpart in the library Service and ensure this was addressed, to stop people being put off from accessing services.

The Committee considered and **NOTED**, subject to the above request by the Chairman:

- The forecast position of the revenue budget, reserves and provisions for 2017/18;
- The management of risk for 2017/18

## **7. Long-Term Strategy 2018-2023**

7.1.1 The Committee received the report outlining the long term strategy to inform long term planning and service planning for 2018-19.

7.1.2 The County Archivist introduced the report to the committee, and discussed links to previous reports such as “Archives Unlocked”; the strategy aimed to bring these projects and approaches together.

### **7.2.1 Enabling the Norfolk Record Office (NRO) to continue receiving accessions**

- It was noted that if a large archive became available this would affect the long term availability of space in the archive;
- 30m<sup>3</sup> of space were being created annually to prolong the lifespan of the archive;
- There was space to accept new accessions until 2024; a detailed assessment would be carried out in 2020 and brought to Committee, after which an options appraisal would be launched if more archive space was required;
- Four years lead time had been allowed for purchase or construction of a new building/extension. It was noted that it would be useful to factor in building revenue creating opportunities;
- The County Archivist recognised that creating revenue for further archive space would be challenging; Heritage Lottery Funding supported projects promoting interaction with and use of the heritage so expanding archive space alone would be unlikely to meet their criteria;
- It was queried whether a crib sheet was available advising people to consider the Record Office for their accessions. The County Archivist confirmed guidance information was available on the website related to specific documents and further work was due to be carried out on this.

### **7.2.2 Digital Archives**

- A pilot project had been carried out with the East of England Consortium regarding archiving digitally created documents;
- The next stage would involve looking into installing the software involved in the pilot in the Archive Centre.

### **7.2.3 Collection Development**

- Collecting tended to be reactive rather than active, which was resource intensive;
- Revd Read shared that the diocese of Norwich was grateful to Norwich for accommodating and making accessible Parish records. It was noted that many Norfolk families had paper records related to lost or dwindling industries and working lives of residents which families may wish to donate to the archive. The County Archivist suggested that this was raised at the Bishops’ Committee for Books and Documents;
- Mrs Nockolds noted that this scenario would also apply to Parish Council records.

### **7.2.4 Searchroom Access**

- 95% of the collection was accessed physically rather than digitally and this was likely to always be the case;
- There had been a decline in microfilm use, while users of the document end of the search room had remained mostly constant. People were now likely to bring a digital camera, to study documents at home. This, combined with the level of use of resources available online, meant the collection was now being used more than it ever had,

### 7.2.5 Cataloguing and Authority Files and sharing metadata

- Subject cataloguing was limited at the time however was reported to be a popular way for people to search for records;
- A collaborative PhD had been put in with the University of East Anglia (UEA) looking at literature in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.
- An intoxicants project had been carried out at the UEA using Norfolk and Cheshire records; it was queried whether the NRO could access this. A meeting was due to be held in London to look at how this type of information could be obtained.

### 7.2.6 Education and Outreach

- Volunteer projects were designed to involve transactional level archiving.

### 7.2.7 Supporting Archive Ecology

- The Record Office, as a large part of the larger ecology of the archive service in Norfolk, had a role in advising and supporting smaller archives and organisations;
- A further 'Exploring your Community' conference would be held in March 2018;
- The benefits brought about by the Museums Service teaming up with metal detectorists were noted.

### 7.2.8 Providing a sustainable Services

- Exhibitions had been charged for and licencing contracts with family history websites were in place. Ordering digital copies of records had the potential to provide additional income;
- The Record Office would be looking at further ways to increase income generation;
- NORAH could provide grants to support Record Office projects;
- The County Archivist clarified that income was generated through activities relevant to the Record Office's mission, and care taken to ensure external work did not prevent them from doing their key work;
- It was noted that the Norfolk Record Office provided remote access to archives in various ways for a cost or on site for free. The County Archivist reported that he was looking into setting up a system for users to pay a set fee for digitising items, or, for larger orders, pay for a sample and be provided with a cost for digitising the rest. Users would still be able to access the records free at the Archive Centre.

7.3 The Committee **CONSIDERED** and **NOTED** the long-term strategic aims outlined in the report to inform both long-term planning and service planning for 2018-19.

### **Future Meetings:**

Date	Time	Venue
6 April 2018	10:30	Green Room, Archive Centre, County Hall
29 June 2018	10:30	Green Room, Archive Centre, County Hall
2 November 2018	10:30	Green Room, Archive Centre, County Hall

The meeting ended at: 11:41am

After the meeting a presentation was given to the Committee on conservation of Archives.

**Christopher Kemp,  
Chairman of the Committee**