

\*The minutes of this meeting were amended at the Norfolk Records Committee meeting held on 2 February 2024. Please see the minutes of that meeting to view the amendment made.

## **Norfolk Records Committee**

### **Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 July 2023 at 10.30 am at County Hall Norwich**

#### **Present:**

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

Cllr Michael Chenery of Horsbrugh (elected Chair)

Cllr A Birmingham

Cllr P Duigan

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

\*Cllr S Penfold

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

##### **West Norfolk**

Cllr S Ring

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

Cllr K Cross

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

Cllr G Nurden

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

Cllr R Kybird (elected Vice-Chair)

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

##### **Observer**

Dr G Morgan

##### **Representative of the Norfolk Record Society**

Dr G A Metters

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

**1.1** Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ben Price, Lady Dannatt, Cllr M Jeal, Cllr S Sands, Rev'd C Read, Prof. C Rawcliffe. Mr A Steynor and \*Cllr Saul Penfold.

#### **2. Election of Chair**

**2.1** Cllr Michael Chenery of Horsbrugh was duly elected for the ensuing year.

(Cllr Michael Chenery of Horsbrugh in the Chair)

**2.2** The Chair welcomed those new Members who were attending their first meeting of the Records Committee.

**2.3** The Chair agreed that the Committee should consider item 7 on the agenda before item 6, to enable new Members to better understand the mission of the Norfolk Record Office (NRO), and how it looked to meet its long-term aims, before they considered the risks that the NRO faced. *(For ease of reference, the minutes record agenda items in the order they appear on the agenda).*

#### **3. Election of Vice-Chair**

**3.1** Cllr R Kybird was duly elected Vice-Chair for the ensuing year.

#### **4 Minutes**

**4.1** The minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2023 were confirmed as an accurate

record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

## **5 Declarations of Interest**

- 5.1** The Chair declared an “other interest” as a trustee of NORAH (Norfolk Archives and Heritage Development Foundation).

## **6 Finance and Risk**

- 6.1** The Committee received a report that covered the Norwich Record Office revenue budget for 2023/24, capital programme and reserves and provisions and gave an update on the service risk register.

- 6.2** The following points were discussed and noted:

- The Record Office was currently forecast to achieve a balanced budget position.
- The Risk Register contained six key risks: one had a risk rating of red, four were amber and one was green.
- All the risks on the register were core risks and some remained long-term risks. The risk scores changed depending on the perceived level of risk at a point in time.
- The risk entitled “discoverability of catalogue records did not always meet user needs” (RM14345) was being mitigated against by collaboration with a student undertaking a PhD at the UEA. The collaboration centred on the opportunity the PhD research offered the Norfolk Record Office for the generation of metadata.
- The risk entitled “the collection at risk through unexpected events” (RM14167) had a green risk rating, however, it remained on the register because this important risk needed to be continually managed.
- The County Archivist explained the NRO staffing structure which comprised of 20.5 FTEs. The impact that staffing reductions had had in recent years on the NRO exhibition programme was documented in the minutes of previous meetings.
- It was noted that user expectations regarding access to archives was continually evolving and this was recognised in the risk scores.

- 6.3** The Committee **CONSIDERED** and **COMMENTED** on:

- 1. Forecast position of the revenue budget, capital programme, reserves and provisions.**
- 2. Management of risk for 2023/24.**

## **7 Norfolk Record Office Service Plan**

- 7.1** The Committee received a report that introduced the mission of the Norfolk Record Office (NRO) and how it sets out to advance these through a set of long-term aims. The report also provided details of the 2023-24 NRO Service Plan.

The following points were discussed and noted:

- It was noted that approximately 20 cubic metres of accessions were received each year, with new accessions received most days from a wide

range of individuals and organisations.

- There was no age restriction on the records that could be deposited with the NRO.
- It was suggested that records about the recent coronation of King Charles should be deposited with the NRO at an early date.
- There were estimated to be some 10 million documents in the NRO, the earliest of which dated back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century.
- Members of the Records Committee were welcome to undertake a tour of the NRO after the meeting or later by request.
- The County Archivist explained the set of objectives and benefits for addressing the NRO's digital storage needs and how these were being developed along with the benefits they would deliver.
- The NRO made extensive use of metadata for cataloguing purposes.
- In reply to questions, it was pointed out that work on the migration and collection of metadata to improve its long-term sustainability and future use continued to take place. One of the advantages of the NRO complying with metadata standards was the sharing of data on the National Archives Discovery Catalogue which acted as a national portal.
- It was pointed out that the NRO had greatly increased its income generation in recent years. The NRO generated around a third of its running costs through the charges it provided for its services. This income came from the issue of certified copies of birth death and marriage certificates, with additional income coming from licencing of images for online use, sale of conservation service and archive boxes, archival storage and project work.
- The County Archivist explained the wide range of work that continued to be done to make the Norfolk Record Office more accessible to new audiences.
- Educational outreach activities were run for adults, and activities were run for schools =.
- The Norfolk Record Office continued to develop the Change Minds project across the UK in conjunction with the Restoration Trust. The Change Minds project had been shown to have a qualitative impact on mental wellbeing.
- It was noted that NORAH (Norfolk Archives and Heritage Development Foundation) raised money from public appeals and from Government sources which were not available to the NRO. NORAH did not collect or preserve any records itself, however it did raise funds, and distributed them to support the NRO, and other organisations who did the preserving and provision of access. Previous beneficiaries, in addition to the NRO, included Girlguiding Norfolk's Archive Resource Centre and the Norfolk Heritage Centre. NORAH also held an interesting wide range of events for members of the Norfolk Archives Supporter Scheme which it maintained.

**7.2 The Committee CONSIDERED and COMMENTED on the contents of the report and the proposed service plans and APPROVES the adoption of the Service Plan for 2023/24.**

**8 Concluding Remarks and Dates of Future Meetings**

**8.1** At the end of the meeting the Committee noted the following:

- Cllr Robert Kybird said that he had recently attended Hampton Court for a blue plaque unveiling for the Princess Sophia Duleep Singh, the daughter of the last Maharajah of the Punjab and goddaughter to Queen Victoria. Princess Sophia had been commemorated with a blue plaque by English

Heritage. The plaque would mark Faraday House, which had been granted to Princess Sophia and her sisters as a grace and favour apartment in Hampton Court by Queen Victoria. Princess Sophia had historical links with the Ancient House Museum in Thetford and had been a great campaigner for women's suffrage.

- It was noted that on 29 September 2023 there would be a series of lectures held at the NRO about the connections between Norfolk and the low countries from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries; Members of the Records Committee were welcome to attend.
- The Committee placed on record thanks to Tim Shaw, Committee Officer, who would shortly be retiring from the County Council. Tim was attending his last meeting of the Committee after serving as Committee Officer to the Record Committee for many years.

**8.2** The dates of future meetings were noted:

<b>27 October 2023</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>
<b>2 February 2024</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>
<b>19 April 2024</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>

The meeting concluded at 12.10 pm

**Cllr Michael Chenery of Horsbrugh, Chair of the Committee**



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