

## **NORFOLK JOINT MUSEUMS COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes of the Meeting Held on 1 April 2022 at 2.00 pm at Norfolk County Council**

#### **Present:**

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

Cllr B Duffin  
Cllr J James  
Cllr E Maxfield  
Cllr S Penfold  
Cllr R Savage  
Cllr K Vincent  
Cllr J Ward (Chair)

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

Cllr E Nockolds

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

Cllr R Kybird

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

Cllr J Easter

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

Cllr V Gay

#### **1A Chair's Opening Remarks**

- 1A.1** The Chair welcomed the representatives of the British Museum International Training Programme and the Norfolk Museums Service Teaching Museum Trainees and Teaching Museum Manager who were present for the meeting.
- 1A.2** The Chair also welcomed Cllr James Easter on his recent appointment to the Joint Committee.

#### **1B Apologies for Absence**

- 1B.1** Apologies for absence were received from Cllr K Mason Billig, Cllr J Brociek-Coulton, Cllr R Everett, Cllr J Huntley, Cllr M Schmierer, Cllr D King, Cllr G Freeman, Felicity Devonshire, Mr L Wiseman and Mr D Keen.

#### **2. Minutes**

- 2.1** The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 January 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 Matters of Urgent Business**

**4.1** There were no matters of urgent business.

## **5 Breckland Area Museums Committee**

**5.1** Cllr Robert Kybird presented the annexed minutes of the Breckland Area Museums Committee meeting held on 28 February 2022 which were noted.

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

- The Ancient House Museum had marked the 150th birth anniversary of Princess Catherine Duleep Singh, who had previously lived at Elveden Hall, with an exhibition in the hall of the Ancient House.
- The main current exhibition at the Ancient House was related to the Thetford Treasure, a hoard of gold and silver found on the outskirts of Thetford in 1979.
- The Ancient House was currently working on a Vikings exhibition involving members of the Teenage History Group in choosing and curating artefacts and themes for display.
- 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 including YMCA Norfolk, had continued to engage with young people aged 11 to 25 throughout the COVID-19 lockdown period.
- The new Gressenhall Curator, Rachel Kidd, was assisting with the Farmer's Foundry Company steam engine project to get this up and running for the new season and a training plan was being developed to ensure it could be safely operated by volunteers during event days.
- With the support of the Friends of Gressenhall, two new Suffolk Punch horses were purchased and welcomed to the farm by the Farm Manager Richard Dalton.
- The Area Committee had received a presentation on the Gressenhall Environmental Hub project which was currently underway at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse to help interpret and engage the public with wider NCC work and its priorities in relation to the environment.

## **6 Norwich Area Committee**

**6.1** In the absence of Cllr J Huntley, who had given his apologies for the Joint Committee, the annexed minutes of the Norwich Area Museums Committee meeting held on 1 March 2022 were noted.

## **7 Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Area Committee**

**7.1** Cllr E Nockolds presented the annexed minutes of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee meeting held on 14 February 2022 which were noted.

**7.2** In introducing the minutes of the Area Committee Cllr E Nockolds referred to the following:

- Thanks were due to King's Lynn Museums staff for their efforts in putting together the loan of the Seahenge timbers that would be on display at the British Museum until 17 July 2022 as part of their major new Stonehenge exhibition. The loan had received a lot of local and national media interest which had provided an opportunity to promote the Lynn Museum and the town

of King's Lynn to a wider and new audience.

- The Area Committee had received an update on how the Kick the Dust Project continued to engage with young people and provide them with opportunities to develop their skills.
- A group of young people had put a film together about the Chapel Street development in King's Lynn which was part of the heritage action zone plan for the town.

## **8 Norfolk Museums Service - Finance Monitoring Report for 2021/22**

**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 2021/22 and details about 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 2021/22 was set out in the table at paragraph 1.1.2 of the report.
- Monitoring of the NMS Revenue Budget indicated that due to the impact of Covid over the year, the Service was currently projected to have significant pressures for 2021/22.
- NMS budgetary pressures continued to be managed by the County Council at CES departmental level.
- NMS had received vital financial support from Government income support funds which helped the Service to provide a county-wide service and support critical projects over the short-medium term.
- The table at paragraph 1.2 of the report set out the capital building programme for 2021/22.
- 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 out-turn for 2021/22.**

## **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 January 2022.

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

- There were no material changes to the risk register since this matter was last reported to the Committee. There was, however, an upcoming risk pertaining to future funding by Arts Council England (ACE), which would be reported with

further detail at the next meeting closer to the point at which the Museum's new ACE funding applications would be announced.

- The Assistant Head of Museums gave an oral update on the Norwich Castle: Royal Palace Reborn Project. Members were advised of decisions made by the Project Board regarding the construction works, and the position of steelwork and where this would fit into the historic fabric of the building. The "WC block area" was expected to be available to visitors from the end of June/start of July 2022. Construction work for other key visitor areas was expected to be completed from the end of 2022 (with NMS fit out work to commence thereafter) and this phase of the project to end by Easter 2023. The construction of the Keep was expected to be completed by August 2023 with fit out thereafter until the end of 2023. Discussions regarding the complexities of the construction of the glazed roof were continuing with interested parties.
- In reply to questions, it was noted that robust arrangements were in place for the oversight of the contract management for the Norwich Castle: Royal Palace Reborn Project. The nature of the project was always going to be such that flexibility was needed around the timing of the programme to take account of unforeseen circumstances that included archaeological discoveries found below ground. The rating in the risk register for the residual risk of failure of the project took account of mitigation measures and was subject to continual review.
- In reply to further questions, it was noted that there remained financial implications for revenue generation resulting from the effects of previous site closures owing to COVID-19, and reduced visitor numbers to museums. This was noted in risk RM14162 (Failure to generate additional income streams for 2021/22 in accordance with service plan).
- Officers were asked to consider options for generating income from the use of high quality digital on-line content and from public attendance at NMS on-line events. Officers spoke about how generating income from this emerging area of work was a complex issue and one to which the Committee would need to return at a future meeting.

#### **9.4 The Joint Committee resolved:**

**To agree the active and dormant risks as per appendices A and B of the report, noting latest updates associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.**

### **10 Norfolk Museums Service - Collections Management Strategy 2022-2027**

- 10.1** The annexed report (10) by the Director of Culture and Heritage was received.
- 10.2** The Joint Committee received a report that included an updated Collections Management Strategy for the next five-year period from 2022-2027 (appendix A to the report).
- 10.3** In addition to the report, the Committee received a presentation (that could be found on the Committee pages website) about the wide range of work undertaken by the Collections Management Team and their involvement in all activities that supported NMS collections.
- 10.4** The presentation explained the work of the Collections Management Team in the following areas:

- Acquisitions, loans, the movement of collections, supporting external events
- Policies and procedures. meeting national standards and legislation
- Emergency planning
- Coordination of ACE Accreditation returns for all sites
- Stores and object moves
- Exhibitions such as Paston Treasure and Stonehenge British Museum
- Support with training including working with UEA, Partnerships and SHARE.

**10.5** Members' attention was drawn to the work that involved the management of digital collections related data and the new collections website facility which could be found at <https://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/collections>

**10.6** In reply to questions, it was noted that before collections could be loaned to local churches, schools and other non-museum accredited organisations they had to be able to show they were able to comply with specific exhibition requirements. The disposal of museum objects involved offering them in the first instance to other accredited museums likely to be interested in their acquisition. They would then be offered to the museum community at large or any other suitable public body.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the Joint Committee note the NMS Collections Management Strategy 2022-2027 as set out at Appendix A to the report.**

## **11 Norfolk Museums Service – Performance & Strategic Update Report**

**11.1** The annexed report (11) by the Director of Culture and Heritage was received.

**11.2** The Joint Committee received a report that provided progress with performance of Norfolk Museums Service over the current financial year 2021/22 including the Service's award-winning learning programmes and the Service's work with 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.

**11.3** The following points were discussed and noted:

- The Assistant Head of Museums explained some of the new and exciting opportunities for further funding for the Norfolk Museums Service Youth Engagement strategy as the Kick the Dust project entered its final year of funding.
- The Assistant Head of Museums said that the planning that was underway to put in place the next steps for Kick the Dust included the potential to build in cross-county partnership working with another Kick the Dust project in Leicester. The National Lottery Heritage Fund had had initial discussions with the Service regarding working with another Kick the Dust project before submitting a funding application (either as a lead applicant or as a project partner) for a new project that built on the successes of current projects. The total value of the project could be anywhere between £1m and £2m.

- The new project would need to focus on developing employability skills for people who had challenges in their lives and on ways to support the wider heritage sector to work more closely with young people.
- Numerous meetings had been held with the Kick the Dust project in Leicester and the Service were due to meet with them again next week.
- The first stage in the application process was to submit an expression of interest to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in the next few weeks. Officers would then report back to the Joint Committee before submitting the full application. The YMCA would remain a key partner for the project throughout the application process.
- In reply to questions it was pointed out that discussions were also taking place with colleagues in public health around the work that Kick the Dust was doing in supporting young people struggling with mental health and on ways in which the Service could contribute to the wider Public Health agenda.
- The Director of Culture & Heritage then explained other strategic developments in the Service which were fully set out in the report. These included NMS-wide Social Media Campaigns, work to support the Government's Levelling Up Agenda, progress regarding the development of the Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England project (considered by the Joint Committee at item 9), progress in terms of key Arts Council England and National Lottery Heritage Fund programmes for 2021/22 and the Service's planning relating to its future Arts Council England funding. and NMS' intention to apply to join Arts Council England's National Portfolio for 2023-26 (which was the subject of a detailed presentation given at the end of the meeting).

#### **11.4 The Joint Committee resolved:**

- 1. To note progress on the 2021/22 position in light of the continued impact of Covid-19.**
- 2. To note progress regarding development of the Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England project.**
- 3. To note progress in terms of our key Arts Council England and National Lottery Heritage Fund programmes for 2021/22 and the Service's planning relating to its future Arts Council England funding**
- 4. To note NMS' status as a National Portfolio Organisation since 2018.**
- 5. To approve NMS' intention to apply to join Arts Council England's National Portfolio for 2023-26**
- 6. To approve submission of an Expression of Interest and Round 1 application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, either as lead applicant or project partner to continue the Service's work with young people currently delivered through Kick the Dust.**

#### **12 To receive a presentation about NMS' intention to apply to join Arts Council England's National portfolio for 20223-26**

- 12.1** Steve Miller, Director of Culture & Heritage, gave a PowerPoint presentation about the NMS' intention to apply to join Arts Council England's National portfolio for 20223-26 which was made available after the meeting on the Committee pages website.

## **12.2** The Let's Create Arts Council England's Strategy 2020-2030 included:

- 109 local authority areas being the focus for additional Arts Council engagement and investment to benefit creativity and culture outside of London. These areas included:
  - Breckland
  - Great Yarmouth
  - King's Lynn & West Norfolk
  - North Norfolk
- Applying to the National Portfolio
  - VERY competitive!
  - A wider geographical spread, and more organisations to join portfolio
  - More representative of communities
  - Delivering the Government's Levelling Up agenda
  - No uplift from current level of funding
  - Possible to request additional funding for projects in priority places
  - NMS will need to:
    - ✓ deliver against all three outcomes
    - ✓ track continuous improvement against investment principles
    - ✓ demonstrate strong leadership and governance
    - ✓ build strong local and national cultural partnerships
    - ✓ be ambitious about working internationally
    - ✓ commit to data collection, evaluation and monitoring of targets
- NMS' current NPO programme
  - £1,225,308 per year
  - 83% of the grant funds salaries
  - 34 members of staff (29 FTEs)
  - Supports delivery of the 25 goals in NMS' 5 year strategic framework
- **Timeline**
  - 23 February Managers' Briefing
  - 28 February Grantium portal opens for applications
  - 16 March All Staff Briefing
  - 21 March Meeting with ACE Relationship Manager
  - 1 April Today's meeting of Joint Museums Committee
  - 14 April Curators' Forum
  - 18 May Deadline for applications
  - 31 October Decisions announced

## **12.3** After discussion of the many benefits that working as part of the Arts Council England's Strategy for 2020-2030 would bring for the people of Norfolk, the Joint Committee thanked the Director for the presentation and reaffirmed the decision that was made earlier in the meeting to fully approve NMS' intention to apply to join Arts Council England's National Portfolio for 2023-26.

**The meeting concluded at 4 pm.**

**Chair**

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