

Norfolk Records Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held at the Norfolk Records Office on 05 April 2019 at the Archive Centre, County Hall

Present:

Norfolk County Council

Cllr P Duigan (Vice-Chairman)

Norwich City Council

Cllr D Bradford

Broadland District Council

Cllr D Buck

South Norfolk District Council

Dr C J Kemp (Chairman)

Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk

Cllr E A Nockolds

Breckland Council

Cllr R Kybird

Non-Voting Members

Co-Opted Members

Prof. C Rawcliffe

Representative of the Norwich Record Society

Dr G A Metters

Observer

Dr V Morgan

Others Present

Mr G Tuson, the County Archivist

Ms Catherine Collins; trainee

1. Welcome and Introduction

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed Catherine Collins, a digital skills trainee, to the meeting; as part of her training Ms Collins was looking at how stakeholders contributed to the work of the Norfolk Record Office and as such was observing the meeting.
- 1.2.1 This was the last meeting of Cllr David Bradford and Cllr Danny Buck as they were not standing for re-election in the upcoming District Council Elections; the Chairman thanked them for their work as Members of the Committee over the years.
- 1.2.2 David Bradford thanked the Chairman and said he had enjoyed being a member on the Norfolk Records Committee.
- 1.3 It was pointed out that the Agenda should now read "Sir Richard Jewson"; Cllr Bradford noted that he had obtained an MBE for services to organisations over his years working in the sector.

2. To receive apologies and details of any substitute members attending

- 2.1 Apologies were received from Mr M Begley, Mr A Steynor, Cllr R Hanton, Sir Richard Jewson, Cllr D Rowntree, Cllr Claussen-Reynolds and Cllr M Coleman, Revd Read. Also absent were Cllr S Button and Cllr Brociek-Coulton,

3. Minutes

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on the 11 January 2019 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Declarations of Interest

- 4.1 There were no interests declared

5. Items of Urgent Business

- 5.1 There were no items of urgent business discussed

6. Financial Report

- 6.1.1 The Committee received the report outlining the forecast financial out-turn for the Norfolk Record Office (NRO) for 2018/19, the NRO revenue budget for 2018/19, reserves and provisions, an update on the service risk register and proposals relating to the Committee to help manage future budget challenges for Norfolk County Council

- 6.1.2 The County Archivist introduced the report:
- Some of the underspend reported on staff and supplies was due to funding from grants not yet having been spent
 - An expenditure of -£18,000 was seen at the beginning of the financial year, 2019
 - Processes were being developed to ensure archives could continue to be collected moving forward
 - Norfolk County Council had business continuity plans in place, however, the Norfolk Record Office also had plans which covered the recovery of documents in the case of a disaster

- 6.2 The following points were discussed and noted:
- There were around 840,000 records held in the CALM system; to mitigate against long-term risk of data loss, data was being cleansed and improved ready for export to a new system. This would also create back-end access to the data

- 6.3 The Committee **CONSIDERED** and **NOTED** the position on:
- Forecast position of the revenue budget, reserves and provisions for 2018/19
 - Management of risk for 2018/19

7. Service Plan 2019-2020

- 7.1.1 The Committee discussed the report providing details of the Norfolk Record Office (NRO) Service Plan for April 2019 to March 2020 outlining goals for the coming year 2019-20.

- 7.1.2 The County Archivist introduced the report
- The target for educational activities had been reduced slightly due to the impact of the recent reduction in service on the education and outreach team
 - Work was underway to fund educational activities in different ways such as through grants obtained by NORAH
 - Around £70,000 income would be generated from the copy birth, death and marriage certificate service

- 30m³ of space had been the target over the past years; as space was becoming harder to find, the target had been halved
- Storage options would be appraised to come up with options for future storage of documents

7.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- There were around 26 NORAH (Norfolk Archives and Heritage Development Foundation) supporters and plans were in place to increase this
- The “delivery of 100 activities” covered the service as a whole and therefore included the King’s Lynn Archive
- There was a set, statutory fee for copy birth, death and marriage certificates; the 15-working-day service cost £11 and the priority, next day service was £35. Most applications were received for legal rather than family history reasons
- The copy certificates service did not generally lead to access of other parts of the Record Office as most applications were received through remote access; access to the building by Members of the public for registrar services increased leaflet pick-up
- Working with registrars for transfer of records had been very positive and resulted in efficiency savings for the County
- ‘Such Facts as Seem to Throw Light Upon Each Other’ Conserving the Papers of Dr Richard Bright project was on target and the second stage application had been sent in to seek funding for completion of the conservation and an archivist to complete cataloguing
- A discussion was held about providing information to District Councils for new Councillors’ induction to raise awareness of the service; it was suggested that raising awareness in the wider public would also be useful to increase support for the work of the Norfolk Record Office
- It was suggested that the television programme “Who Do You Think You Are” could be a way to generate interest in the Record Office
- A joint approach for new Members across both the Museums and Records Committee was suggested as beneficial
- It was noted that Members would find it beneficial to know what percentage of King’s Lynn records were housed in the Norwich Archive
- The County Archivist suggested hosting induction / information sessions for new councillors at the Norfolk Record Office would be most beneficial and **agreed** to set something up
- The Vice-Chairman suggested that sending new Members a link to the NRO blog, or a behind the scenes video, might raise interest about the Record Office’s work
- The County Archivist **agreed** to provide an organisational chart in future reports

7.3 The Committee **CONSIDERED** the Service Plan, and **APPROVED** its adoption for the coming year (2019-20)

8. Performance Report; 1 October 2018 – 25 March 2019

8.1.1 The Committee considered the report giving information on work carried out by the Norfolk Record Office (NRO) over the last six months including educational activities, volunteer work, collection development, conservation and public access.

8.1.2 The County Archivist introduced the report

- The report covered slightly less than a 6-month period due to timing of the meeting
- Written enquiries had been increasing due to an increase in people using the

online enquiry service

- Klucel was a thickening agent used by conservators when treating documents

8.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- A discussion was held about sending information on the Record Office's work out to local papers to raise awareness more widely across the County
- In the long term, the catalogue of the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society library may be included in the NRO catalogue
- "Adopt an object" was an approach which may be looked at as part of the fundraising strategy in the future
- Selling Christmas cards had not raised much revenue in the past; it was suggested that this could be outsourced to a card company to provide a higher revenue
- It was noted that parish registers were accessible via the three main family history websites; ancestry.co.uk, findmypast.co.uk and thegenealogist.co.uk; it was suggested that this information should be more widely advertised. The County Archivist reported that after migration of data onto the new online catalogue, there would be flexibility to update the data to indicate this
- The accession of papers of the former Committee Member Raymond Frostick was noted

8.3 The Committee **CONSIDERED** and **NOTED** performance against the 2018/19 service plan

Future Meetings:

Date	Time	Venue
5 July 2019	10:30	Green Room, Norfolk Record Office, Archive Centre, County Hall
8 November 2019	10:30	Green Room, Norfolk Record Office, Archive Centre, County Hall
7 February 2020	10:30	Green Room, Norfolk Record Office, Archive Centre, County Hall

The meeting ended at: 11.41

**Christopher Kemp,
Chairman of the Committee**



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