

NORFOLK JOINT MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting Held at County Hall, Norwich on 12 January 2018 at 2.00pm

Present:

Norfolk County Council

Mr P Duigan
Mr D Harrison
Mr H Humphrey
Mr G Nobbs
Mr T Smith
Mr M Storey
Mr J Ward (Chairman)

Norwich City Council

Mrs J Brociek-Coulton
Ms A Haynes
Ms M Maxwell

Broadland District Council

Mr D Buck

Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk

Mrs E Nockolds

Great Yarmouth Borough Council

Mr B Lawn

South Norfolk District Council

Mr R Savage

Co-opted Member (Non-Voting)

Museum Friends

Mrs F Devonshire

1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Kiddle-Morris and Ms C Rumsby.

2 Minutes

2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 October 2017 were confirmed by the Joint Committee and signed by the Chairman.

3 Declarations of Interest

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4A Matters of Urgent Business

4a.1 There were no matters of urgent business.

4b Chairman Announcements—Museum Friends and Teaching Museum Trainees

4b.1 The Chairman welcomed Felicity Devonshire to her first meeting of the Joint Committee. Felicity had joined the Joint Committee as the Museum Friends

representative following the retirement of John Knight.

Members placed on record their thanks to John Knight for all the support that he had provided to the Joint Committee and wished him a long and happy retirement.

- 4b.2** The Chairman also welcomed to the meeting the current Teaching Museum Trainees who were well into their 12 month placements and involved in many projects and programmes across the county.

5 Reports of Area Museums Committees

5.1 Breckland Area Committee

- 5.1.1** The annexed report of the Breckland Area Museums Committee meeting held on 27 November 2017 was presented by Mr P Duigan.

- 5.1.2** Members were informed that the Farmers' Foundry engine boiler at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse Museum had been certified by an engineer as unsafe. The Friends of Gressenhall had generously agreed to support the NMS to obtain a suitable historical replacement boiler that could be used to power a range of different processes including threshing work, corn-mills, centrifugal pumps, stone-crushers, dynamos, chaff-cutters, hay-balers and saw benches. NMS was seeking a grant for a replacement boiler from the Arts Council England Preservation of Industrial and Scientific Material (PRISM) fund and was exploring other sources of external funding.

- 5.1.3** The Committee discussed the many challenges that were associated with putting in place public transport to Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse for special event days. It was noted that various public transport initiatives had been tried in the past but they had met with very limited success. NMS was currently in discussions with the Mid Norfolk Railway about whether it would be possible to put in place appropriate transport on special event days between Mid Norfolk Railway venues and Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse. Discussions on this subject were part of an attempt to upgrade joint marketing and publicity for Gressenhall Museum and Workhouse. An update on developments would be reported to the next meeting of the Area Committee.

- 5.1.4** It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

5.2 King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Committee

- 5.2.1** The annexed report of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee meetings held on 2 December 2017 was presented by Mrs E Nockolds.

- 5.2.2** In introducing the report, Mrs E Nockolds, referred to the ways in which the Lynn Museum continued to work with local schools and the College of West Anglia to deliver a broad range of learning activities.

- 5.2.3** It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

5.3 Norwich Area Committee

- 5.3.1** The annexed report of the Norwich Area Museums Committee meeting held on 12 December 2017 was presented by Mrs J Brociek-Coulton.

- 5.3.2** In introducing the report Mrs J Brociek-Coulton said that the Area Committee had received a PowerPoint presentation on the work of the learning team at Norwich Castle which included information about a pilot project *Babies in Museums* and a proposal to establish an Early Years' gallery to welcome families and provide facilities for 2 and 3 year olds.
- 5.3.3** The Joint Committee was also informed that the Area Committee had been kept fully up to date on the progress of the Norwich Castle Gateway to Medieval England Project.
- 5.3.4** The Joint Committee joined the Area Committee in placing on record its congratulations to the learning team at Norwich Castle on having been awarded the prestigious Sandford Award for Heritage Education.
- 5.3.4** It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

6 Finance Monitoring Report for 2017/18

- 6.1** The annexed report (6) by the Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services was received.
- 6.2** Members received a report that covered the Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) budget out-turn for 2017/18, including the revenue budget, reserves and provisions and the capital programme.
- 6.3** Members were informed that progress with NMS Revenue budgets and Reserves and Provisions indicated that the NMS should achieve a break-even position at the year-end.
- 6.4** In reply to questions, Members were informed that the Gressenhall events programme was being promoted by an increased programme of digital marketing and the museum's own social media presence. During the 2017-18 winter closure, the finishing touches were being made to the Voices from the Workhouse project including the completion of the display of objects from the museum's rural life collections. Partnership development of the digital offer at Gressenhall included the creation of new content for the Collections Gallery and Workhouse galleries on iPad tablets available to visitors.
- 6.5** The Joint Committee **resolved** to note:-

Progress with the revenue budget, capital programme and reserves and provisions forecast out-turn positions for 2017/18.

7 Risk Management Report

- 7.1** The annexed report (7) by the Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services was received.
- 7.2** The Joint Committee received a report that provided Members with the latest Norfolk Museums Service Risk Register as at December 2017.

7.3 Members were given an update on progress with the management of risk within the NMS. Members were informed of the positive progress that had been made against the greatest risk on the register, namely the need to secure Arts Council England (ACE) funding as a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO). The NMS was awarded provisional funding for 2018-22 in the new ACE NPO funding programme, with final sign-off of the required Business Plan and associated documents expected by March 2018. A PowerPoint presentation about the Arts Council England Business Plans for 2018-22 would be given to the Committee later in the meeting (see minute 10 for details).

7.4 The Joint Committee **resolved** to note –

The risks at Appendix A to the report and to determine that the mitigating actions identified in the report were appropriate.

8 Norfolk Museums Service – Performance & Strategic Update Report

8.1 The annexed report (8) by the Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services was received.

8.2 The Joint Committee received a report that provided progress with performance over the current financial year 2017/18, details as to museum education and learning programmes, marketing and PR, partnerships, commercial developments, Norwich Castle Keep and other capital developments, NMS fundraising, the Arts Council England funding programme and the DCMS National Museums Review.

8.3 During discussion, the following key points were noted:

- The Joint Committee was informed that Museum visits across all ten NMS sites for the period up to the end of October 2017 were 306,417 compared to 267,157 for the equivalent seven month period in 2016/17, a 15% increase. This positive position for the year-to-date was largely attributable to a very strong events and exhibitions programme, including Titanic: Honour & Glory at Time and Tide and Nelson & Norfolk, followed by the first month of the Rembrandt: Lightening the Darkness exhibition, at the Castle Museum.
- In reply to questions it was noted that Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery remained the most visited heritage attraction of its kind in the eastern region. Its success had an enormous impact on the overall visitor numbers for the NMS.
- Increases in visitor attendances were a direct result of investment in museum buildings, services and the exhibitions programme. Attendance figures would tail-off if investment in the Service was not maintained.
- The numbers of school visits to NMS museums for the period up to the end of October 2017 were 23,386 compared to 25,781 for the equivalent four-month period in 2016/17, a 9% decrease on last year's all time record-breaking figures but still higher than the equivalent period in 2015/16. The school visit figures were also well above the national average. A discussion was held about the vital importance of this key performance measure and the role of learning within the Museum Service's diverse remit.
- NMS arranged a full countywide programme of activities for hard to reach groups such as Looked After Children, young carers, disadvantaged groups and young offenders.

- Members were invited to contact NMS if they wanted to participate in a NMS school learning activity.
- The Joint Committee was pleased to hear that the Learning Teams had secured two prestigious Sandford Awards for Excellence in Education. These national awards recognised the role which museums and heritage sites played in supporting the development of young people in a variety of ways.
- The Joint Committee noted that the Heritage Lottery Fund had awarded the NMS a Round 1 pass for a grant of £776,500 for the project Norfolk Journeys which sought to empower young people to develop their own pathways into the County's heritage under the HLF's new *Kick the Dust* programme. This was a consortium project delivered in partnership with YMCA Norfolk and Creative Collisions (a youth arts network based in Great Yarmouth). Subject to a Round 2 pass by HLF, project activity would start in April 2018 and run until March 2022 (4 years).
- The Marketing and PR focus within the NMS was now on the 2018 programme, especially the next Norwich Castle exhibition *The Square Box On The Hill* early in the New Year and the *Paston Treasure* exhibition programme, including the international exhibition at Yale University, USA. Details regarding the *Paston Treasure* exhibition programme would be reported to the next meeting of the Joint Committee.
- The Joint Committee noted that a large amount of preparatory research and advocacy work had been put into the Castle Keep development project which included the submission of applications to grant-giving trusts and foundations.
- The Joint Committee also noted that the Department for Culture, Media and Sport had published the National Museums Review, (officially titled the Mendoza Review) for which the NMS' Teaching Museum was used as one of a small number of case studies within the report. The current Teaching Museum Trainees, who were well into their 12 month placements, were in attendance at this Committee meeting and introduced to Members.

8.4 The Joint Committee resolved:

- 1. To note progress regarding development of the Keep at Norwich Castle.**
- 2. To note progress in terms of the programme and key Service Plan priorities for 2017/18.**
- 3. To note progress in terms of developing the business plans for Arts Council England's new funding programmes for 2018-22, and to give formal, delegated approval to proceed with the submission of the plans. (Note: The Committee received a power point presentation on this matter during the next item on the agenda).**
- 4. To note progress with the Museums Service's new Heritage Lottery Fund supported project, *Kick the Dust*.**

9 Arts Council England Business Plans for 2018-22

- 9.1** The Joint Committee received a power point presentation from Jo Warr, Head of Development and Jamie Everitt, Regional Museum Development Manager about the Arts Council England Business Plans for 2018-22.
- 9.2** The power point presentation (which can be found on the Joint Museums Committee pages website) included details about the following:

- The National Portfolio 2018-22
- The Arts Council 10 Year Strategy *Great Art & Culture for Everyone*
- Goal 1 –Excellence
- Goal 2 –Audiences
- Goal 3 -Resilience
- Goal 4- Leadership and Diversity (including the Teaching Museum)
- Goal 5 – Children and Young People
- Funding Agreement Requirements
- Museum Development
- Accredited Museums
- SHARE – Expenditure
- SHARE – Excellence
- SHARE – Audiences
- SHARE – Resilience
- SHARE – Diversity & Skills
- SHARE – Children & Young People
- Support for Norfolk museums
- Arts Council Assessment

9.3 The Joint Committee resolved:

To reaffirm the decision taken earlier in the meeting to note progress in terms of developing the business plans for Arts Council England's new funding programmes for 2018-22, and to give formal, delegated approval to proceed with the submission of the plans.

To thank Jo Warr and Jamie Everitt for their presentations.

The meeting concluded at 3.45 pm.

Chairman

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