

Norfolk Records Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 October 2020 at 10.30 am as a Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting

Present:

Norfolk County Council

Cllr Michael Chenery of Horsbrugh (elected Chair)
Cllr P Duigan
Cllr D Rowntree

Norwich City Council

Cllr S Button
Cllr D Carlo

North Norfolk District Council

Cllr V Gay

South Norfolk District Council

Cllr B Duffin

Broadland District Council

Cllr G Nurden

Breckland Council

Cllr R Kybird (elected Vice-Chair)

Non-Voting Members

Co-Opted Member

Prof. Carole Rawcliffe
Mr A Steynor

Observer

Dr V Morgan

Representative of the Bishop of Norwich

Rev'd C Read

1 To receive apologies and details of any substitute members attending

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr E Nockolds, Cllr t Wainwright, Cllr A Waters, Mr M Begley, Lady Dannatt and Dr G A Metters.

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)

3. Election of Vice-Chair

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

4 Minutes

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2020 were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

- 4.2 It was noted during today's meeting that a response was awaited from the February meeting about who was responsible in parish churches to agree to

deposit records.

5 Declarations of Interest

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

6 Items of Urgent Business

- 6.1** There was no urgent business.

7 Appointment of Co-Opted Members

- 7.1** The Committee received the report asking them to consider the appointment of the three Co-opted Members and one Observer Member for the period 2020/21.

- 7.2** The Committee APPOINTED:

- Three Co-opted Members (all without voting rights) for the period 2019/20
 - o Mr Michael R Begley
 - o Prof Carole Rawcliffe
 - o Mr Alan Steynor
- One Observer Member (without voting rights) for the period 2019/20
 - o Dr Victor Morgan.

8 Finance and Risk

- 8.1** The Committee received the report outlining the Norwich Record Office revenue budget for 2020/21, capital programme and reserves and provisions and an update on the service risk register.

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

- The Record Office remained open to the public at a reduced service.
- Emergency grant funding was being sought from the Government to help meet the predicted loss of income for the Service during the extended period of closure and reduction in normal activity due to Covid-19.
- Insolvencies due to the pandemic were likely to lead to more business archives being deposited with the Record Office in the months to come.
- Covid-19 was the first major event to be captured electronically. Because of this the County Archivist had taken steps at the national level with professional bodies to publicise the importance of the preservation of these records and planned to issue a joint statement in November 2020.
- In reply to questions the County Archivist said that the most recent legislation relating to the keeping of records dated back to long before the existence of digital records; there were no regulations relating specifically to the preservation of parish records in a digital format, but Councils were accountable for the records that they needed to create.
- Work had been completed on the migration of collection metadata to improve its long-term sustainability of metadata (as set out in the periodic report that followed) and this risk had now been removed from the register.
- The budget setting process for 2021/22 was set out on page 15 of the agenda. In recent years the Record Office had become increasingly

- dependent on income generation which was now affected by the pandemic.
- Staff were being consulted about how the budget shortfall for 2021/22 identified in the report could be met.

8.3 The Committee **CONSIDERED** and **COMMENTED** on:

1. Forecast position of the revenue budget, capital programme, reserves and provisions.
2. Management of risk for 2020/21.

9 Performance Report

9.1 The Committee received the report providing information on the Record Office's progress towards its service plan objectives over the last six months.

9.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- Throughout the pandemic staff had mostly worked from home, however, the Record Office had remained open to continue to answer urgent requests and provide access to the archives when this was needed for official purposes.
- In reply to questions the County Archivist said that many Record Office users were in high risk groups which had implications for user attendance numbers. Attendance at the Record Office had been at expected levels and at revised capacity limits on some days.
- Attendance required advance booking and access to original documents only. The Record Office was looking at new ways in which microfilm could be made available for use by the public in a safe way.
- Prof. Carole Rawcliffe placed on record the thanks of Record Office users to the staff for the way in which they provided a service to the public during these difficult times.
- The Committee was pleased to hear that NORAH would be holding its Christmas event in 2020, but due to the pandemic this would have to be done mostly in a virtual format.
- Work on educational activities, volunteer work, collection development, and public access continued throughout the pandemic and the ways in which this was done was explained to the Committee.
- The Committee's attention was drawn to the creative ways in which the Record Office was working in partnership with the Restoration Trust and the UpShoot Theatre Company about a mental wellbeing project based upon the Change Minds Methodology (key details about the project were set out in paragraph 1.46 of the report) . Further details regarding this project would be made available at the next meeting.
- It was pointed out that only electronic or posted accessions were received whilst the office was closed During the period covered by the report two important accessions were purchased with the assistance of the Norfolk Archives and Heritage Development Foundation.
- The distinct advantages that the migration of metadata from the NRO's old catalogue to the new Atom system had for the cross- indexing and cross-cataloguing of authority records (index terms) was explained to the Committee.
- The Committee heard that NORAH had provided a grant of £600 towards

the History Begins at Home Project which had the purpose of encouraging intergenerational dialogue about the past. This is a national project which the Norfolk Record Office is leading. Work on the movement of the Historic Environment Record from Gressenhall continued with the Record Office preparations now completed. The photographic part of this record was due to be relocated this autumn and the rest of the collection in Spring 2021.

9.3 The Committee **CONSIDERED** and **COMMENTED** on:

The actions taken by the Record Office to provide a service during this period and comment accordingly.

10 Future Meetings

10.1 The dates of future meetings were noted.

Date

Friday 5 February 2021

Friday 26 march 2021

Date

Friday 5 February 2021

Friday 26 march 2021

The meeting concluded at 11.20am.

Cllr Michael Chenery of Horsbrugh, Chair of the Committee



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