

Joint Museums Committee
Wednesday, 9 March 2016, Randall Room, The Guildall,
Worcester - 1.15 pm

Present:

Minutes

Mr M L Bayliss (Chairman), Mrs L C Hodgson and Mr M Johnson.

Officers

Iain Rutherford, Museums General Manager (Museums Worcestershire)
Helen Large, Marketing and Events Manager (Museums Worcestershire)
Neil Anderson, Held of Community and Environment (Worcestershire County Council)
David Blake, Corporate Director – Place (Worcester City Council)
Gemma Dhami, Learning, Volunteering and Partnerships Manager (Museums Worcestershire)
Simon Lewis, Committee Officer (Worcestershire County Council)

Available papers

The Members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated); and
- B. The Minutes of the meeting held 23 November 2015 (previously circulated).

A copy of document A will be attached to the signed Minutes.

**260 Named
 Substitutes
 (Agenda item 1)**

Mr M Johnson for Mr A Roberts.

**261 Apologies/
 Declarations of
 Interest
 (Agenda item 2)**

Apologies were received from Mr A Blagg and Mr A Roberts.

Mrs L C Hodgson declared an interest in agenda item 4 as her mother was a temporary resident at Rashwood Care Home, Wychbold.

**262 Confirmation of
 Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2015 be confirmed as a correct

(Agenda item 3)

263

**Arts and
reminiscence
activity
programme in
residential
homes (Agenda
item 4)**

record and signed by the Chairman.

The Joint Committee received a presentation and considered the progress made in developing activities for older people in residential care homes.

In the ensuing debate, the following principal points were raised:

- This project provided an excellent service and should be supported by the Joint Committee. It was suggested that the County Arts Officer be contacted to establish whether there were any links with the Art Service work in care homes. In addition, there may be useful connections to be made with the Worcestershire Environment project
- Local Worcestershire County Councillors could be approached to see if they would wish to contribute from their Divisional Fund towards the provision of this service in their particular division
- It might be beneficial for the project to broaden its appeal by introducing items relating to specific subject matter for example, military history or political history. The Learning, Volunteering and Partnerships Manager commented that it was intended to review the content of the boxes to reflect the interests of the residents of the relevant care home
- It would be valuable to be able to demonstrate in some way the real value of the project for example in terms of the benefits to health and well-being
- Presumably labour was the main cost of the provision of the service therefore a number of different boxes could be provided at a care home without any additional cost. It was added that not all care homes were self-funded and therefore the service should look to increase charges to at least cover costs where possible. The Learning, Volunteering and Partnerships Manager indicated that a small charge had been made to care homes during the pilot project which did not cover the cost of the provision of the service as it was able to be subsidised by grants during pilot phase. It was recognised that the service should look to cover its costs at the very least
- Not all care homes catered solely for people with dementia and this project would be beneficial in engaging all residents at care homes.

**264 Shared service -
hosting
(Agenda item 5)**

RESOLVED the progress made in developing activities for older people in residential care homes be noted.

The Committee considered the financial issues to be addressed in relation to proposed changes to shared service management and funding.

In the ensuing debate, the following principal points were raised:

- The Chairman of the Committee was concerned about the lack of progress made on the proposed changes to the shared service hosting arrangements since the last meeting of the Joint Committee. He would wish to see a timeline for the proposed changes to the shared service management including funding arrangements and key issues identified prior to a final decision being made at the next meeting of the Joint Committee
- The Museums General Manager commented that Hartlebury Preservation Trust had expressed concern about the VAT implications for the Hartlebury project as a result of the proposed changes to the hosting arrangements. He confirmed that funding would continue to be made by the County Council and it was hoped that this reassurance would alleviate their concerns
- Consideration should be given to the impact of the proposed changes on the service provided to other museums in the county
- In response to a query, the Museums General Manager explained that a percentage of the funding for the management team was provided by the County Council and therefore the marketing service and other specialist advice would continue to be provided to Hartlebury Museum.

RESOLVED that the financial issues to be addressed in relation to proposed changes to shared service management and funding be noted.

**265 Access Policy
Statement
(Agenda item 6)**

The Joint Committee considered approving the Access Policy Statement for Museums Worcestershire.

RESOLVED that the Access Policy Statement for Museums Worcestershire be approved.

**266 Heritage
Marketing**

The Joint Committee considered the progress made delivering museums and heritage marketing projects.

Report (Agenda item 7)

In the ensuing debate, the following principal points were raised:

- It was important that any promotional material provided by the service included the correct web address
- The City Council had been presented with the Heraldry Award recently and a request could be made to use the crest in promotional material. The Marketing and Events Manager confirmed that a request had been made to the mayor of the City Council for the use of the crest
- In response to a query about the marketing work undertaken to support the Living History project and in particular the involvement of Tudor House, the Marketing and Events Manager explained that she had been working closely with Visit Worcestershire and Worcester Bid on the project although the main focus of the work had been on promoting events at the Commandery
- The Marketing and Events Manager indicated that if members agreed, a report on the digital marketing project could be brought to a future Joint Committee meeting.

RESOLVED that:

- a) The progress made in delivering museums and heritage marketing projects be noted; and**
- b) A report on the Digital Marketing Project be brought to a future meeting of the Joint Committee.**

267 Museums Worcestershire Service Plan 2016-17 (Agenda item 8)

The Joint Committee considered approving the service plan for 2016-17.

In the ensuing debate, the following principal points were raised:

- The target action for the new hosting arrangements for Museums Worcestershire at Worcester City Council should be brought forward from March 2017 to September 2016
- There was no mention in the service plan of the intention of the City Council to achieve Heritage City status and this should be a made a priority target
- Destination Worcestershire was refreshing its

management plan and this needed to be referred to in the service plan

- In response to a query, the Museums General Manager explained that there was a management plan for the rotation of display of items held in reserve. However it was not possible to display all the items at the same time therefore it would always be necessary to keep a number of items in storage
- The recently established museum in Leicester dedicated to Richard III was very impressive and lessons could be learnt from that display to improve this service's offer
- The service plan should make reference to the provision of professional curation advice/support to the City Council for the display of artefacts at the Guildhall.

RESOLVED that the service plan for 2016-17 be approved subject to:

- a) The target action for the new hosting arrangements for Museums Worcestershire at Worcester City Council be brought forward from March 2017 to September 2016;
- b) Contributing to the achievement of Heritage City status be included as a key target;
- c) Contributing to the Destination Worcestershire management plan be included as a key target; and
- d) The provision of professional curation advice/support to the City Council for the display of artefacts at the Guildhall be included as a key target.

**268 Finance Report
(Agenda item 9)**

The Joint Committee considered the financial position of the joint museums service.

In the ensuing debate and in response to a query, the Museums General Manager explained that the projection of £35k costs related to the closure of Café at Hartlebury

RESOLVED that the financial position of the joint museums service be noted.

**269 Performance
and planning -**

The Joint Committee considered the performance and planning information provided for the 3rd quarter 2015-16.

**3rd quarter
2015-16 Agenda
item 10)**

In the ensuing debate, the following principal points were raised:

- Did the service have access to any benchmarking information to enable comparisons to be made with other museums services? The Museums General Manager stated that a new national benchmarking exercise had recently been undertaken and it was anticipated that the data from this exercise would be available soon. Museums services varied nationally but he hoped that some useful comparators would emerge from this exercise
- The visitor numbers for the Commandery were disappointing and reinforced the need for the planned level of investment. The proposals to improve the offer with the accompanying marketing were therefore timely
- Now that a designer had been appointed for the displays at the Commandery, what was the timeline for the remainder of the project? The Museums General Manager commented that it was intended to determine a schedule for the work within the next few days. He anticipated that the outline design would take 6-8 weeks to complete and he hoped to be able to bring the plans to the next Joint Committee meeting
- In response to a query about the time taken to get the Commandery project up and running, David Blake explained that there were issues around the allocation of budgets at the City Council. In response the Chairman expressed his concern that the project was not proceeding quickly enough
- Where were the additional funds for the Commandery project being sourced from? The Museums General Manager explained that £29k had been received from the West Midlands Development Fund. In addition, a bid would be made to HLF for £90k to support Phase 2 which included the Presidents of the USA display
- It was important that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman were kept informed of the progress made on the Commandery project.

RESOLVED that the performance and planning information provided for the 3rd quarter 2015-16 be noted.

270 Work programme (Agenda item 11)

The Committee considered its future work programme.

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted subject the following changes:

- a) **The Shared service hosting report be moved from 9 November 2016 to 14 September 2016; and**
- b) **The Digital Marketing Project be considered at the meeting on 14 September 2016.**

The meeting ended at 2.15pm

Chairman