

Joint Museums Committee**Wednesday, 9 November 2016, Lakeview Room, County Hall,
Worcester - 4.00 pm****Present:****Minutes**

Mrs L C Hodgson (Chairman), Mr R Berry, and
Mr A N Blagg

Officers

Iain Rutherford, Museums General Manager (Museums
Worcestershire)
Helen Large, Marketing and Events Manager (Museums
Worcestershire)
Neil Anderson, Head of Community and Environment
(Worcestershire County Council)
Marc Dorfman (Worcester City Council)
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 on 14 September
2016 (previously circulated).

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

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

None.

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

An apology was received from Mr G Williams.

**293 Confirmation of
 Minutes
 (Agenda item 3)**

**RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting on 14
September 2016 be confirmed as a correct record
and signed by the Chairman.**

**294 Tickenhill Trust
 (Agenda item 4)**

The Joint Committee considered the commissioning of
further work to develop the potential of the Tickenhill
Trust.

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

- In response to a query, Iain Rutherford confirmed that grant giving organisations would check that the Trust was not a local authority charity and therefore advice had been sought from a museums specialist to determine the best approach to access potential financial and operational benefits for the charity. The specialist had advised that the service needed to clarify the extent and location of space occupied by the Tickenhill collection and the relationship between the County Council, the Trust and Museums Worcestershire, in a formal management agreement. There was also issues identified in relation to governance, accounting and branding which required further action
- What sort of items were housed in the Tickenhill collection? Iain Rutherford stated that the collection consisted of examples of general Worcestershire history and included metalwork, costumes, agricultural artefacts and general local history. The collection was potentially very interesting but needed time and investment to reach its potential
- What would the £3,000 be spent on and would it be sufficient? Iain Rutherford explained that advice would be sought from a museums specialist to understand how the collection should be cared for and promoted and to establish the proper relationships with partner organisations. He was confident that £3,000 would sufficient for this purpose. If the next stage proved more expensive then the plans would need to be reconsidered however this initial investment would at least put the service in a position to move forward.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the commissioning of further work to develop the potential of the Tickenhill Trust be approved; and**
- b) the commitment of up to £3,000 from the Museum Reserve be agreed for this purpose.**

Heritage Funding (Agenda 5)

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

- Helen Large indicated that the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) had provided an online diagnostic tool to help organisations assess their resilience and identify any areas that needed action. This has been completed for Museums Worcestershire and the most pressing areas identified were the management of assets, and the generation of income and new funding
- In response to a query, Helen Large confirmed that the potential for museum service sites to be used as film locations had been included in the bid
- Would Museums Worcestershire be encouraging other museums in the county to make a bid? Helen Large explained that museums needed to be in a stable position to be able to make a bid. The programme was aimed at establishing new ways of working rather than rescuing museums
- Should Museums Worcestershire consider putting in a larger bid to the programme, nearer to the maximum amount of £250,000? Iain Rutherford commented that bids over £100,000 would be required to provide match funding.

RESOLVED that the principle of a bid to the Resilient Heritage Programme be approved subject to further discussions with the Heritage Lottery Fund.

296 Commandery Fees and Charges (Agenda item 6)

The Committee considered pricing options for the Commandery.

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

- Iain Rutherford commented that he had attended a meeting last week with the project team to discuss funding and listed building consent to get to a position where a recommendation could be made to HLF to allow phase 2 of the scheme at the Commandery to proceed. Helen Large was considering how best to promote the building therefore it was important at this stage to decide the level of fees and charges at the Commandery. It was recommended that the adult fee be increased to £5.95 which would equate to an additional income of approximately £60,000 admission fees per annum. In order for this substantial uplift in revenue to be achieved,

improved marketing was required to attract visitors to the venue. In considering the increased charges, the following factors had been taken into account: 1) pressures on budgets; 2) the commitment to make the Commandery accessible; and 3) market competition and the need to provide value for money

- In response to a query, Iain Rutherford confirmed that the upper age for a child was 16 years of age. Under the proposals, Worcester residents would pay a £5 fee, with children entering for free. As the Council was not a charity, it would not qualify for gift aid. He confirmed that there was an intention to introduce shared ticket arrangements at a later stage
- Was any pricing structure being considered for special events days, for example Oak Apple Day? Helen Large indicated that this suggestion had been considered but rejected in favour of sticking with the proposals put forward by DCA consultants
- There was a discrepancy between the different wedding packages set out in the report. Iain Rutherford acknowledged the discrepancy and undertook to review the packages
- Iain Rutherford confirmed that community use rates for of the building had been introduced
- It was suggested that consideration be given to liaising with local restaurants to pay for the promotion of visitor tickets through advertisements in promotional literature.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the Joint Museums Committee consider the pricing options for the Commandery as set out in the report;**
- b) pricing proposals be recommended to Worcester City Council as part of the fees and charges for 2017-18; and**
- c) the Museums General Manager be granted delegated authority in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman and the relevant Portfolio holder at the City Council:**
 - to decide on the timing of the introduction of new charges for weddings and room hire
 - to consider the introduction of a visitor

297 Hartlebury Fees and Charges (Agenda item 7)

- **pass**
- **to consider the introduction of special offers**
- **to consider the introduction of season tickets/passports**
- **to review the charging policy for wedding package options.**

The Joint Committee considered the proposed fees and charges for Hartlebury.

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

- Iain Rutherford explained that the proposed price changes had been put forward by the Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust (HCPT). The only other possible variation to the pricing structure would be where the HCPT decided to rent the location for a wedding during the museum opening hours. In those circumstances where the offer would need to be reduced, consideration would be given to providing a discounted ticket or a museum only ticket – the costing of which would need to be agreed with HCPT. A pricing plan would be brought to the Joint Committee for consideration in due course
- Iain Rutherford commented that HCPT was in the process of tendering for the building work at Hartlebury. It was possible that the programme could slip therefore there was a degree of uncertainty about when the reopening would take place
- In response to a query, Iain Rutherford anticipated that the North Wing and the Stable Block would remain open during the construction period however there would be limited access to the building and parking availability would be reduced. It was important that the fact that the building would remain open during the construction period was communicated to the public
- Iain Rutherford confirmed that discussions were being held regarding the possibility of introducing a joint ticket arrangement for Hartlebury Museum and the Commandery
- Would specialist heritage contractors be employed to undertake the work at Hartlebury Museum? Iain Rutherford stated that it very much depended on the nature of the work. HCPT received specialist advice on how the work should proceed and in addition HLF were monitoring the standard of the

work.

RESOLVED that:

- a) **the proposed fees and charges for Hartlebury be recommended to Worcestershire County Council for approval; and**
- b) **he be granted delegated authority in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to decide on the timing of their introduction.**

**298 Finance Report
(Agenda item 8)**

The Joint Committee considered the Finance Report.

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

- Iain Rutherford reported that a small surplus had been recorded for the latest outturn
- It was clear that the performance of the service had been helped by an under-estimation of the income from admissions. In response, Iain Rutherford commented that there was an issue in the way that Hartlebury museum admissions had been calculated and this had artificially impacted on the budgetary performance of the service. It was a matter that would be reviewed.

RESOLVED that the financial position of the Joint Museums Service as detailed in the report be noted.

**299 Performance
and Planning -
2nd Quarter
2016/17
(Agenda item 9)**

The Joint Committee considered the performance and planning information provided for the 1st quarter 2016-17.

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

- In response to a query, Helen Large confirmed that she had been in contact with Monarchs Way via Twitter with a view to establishing a relationship for future promotion of the Commandery
- Helen Large pointed out some errors in the quarter 2 figures for the Museum and Art Gallery set out in Appendix 1 to the report. This would be corrected for the next meeting
- Had a link been established between the revised offer for the Commandery and the County Council's aspiration for World Class

300 Work Programme (Agenda item 10)

Worcestershire? Helen Large stated that her team had been in contact with the County Council's communications unit to provide content because such a link might help to encourage sponsorship

- The budget for 2017/18 assumed the reinstatement of Hartlebury income but no proposed reduction in the shared service. As a result, should the shared service be looking to make future savings for the City and County Councils? Iain Rutherford responded that the budget just applied to funds controlled by the Joint Committee. The Property budget where savings had most recently been applied was outside the remit of this Joint Committee
- Helen Large informed members that a Councillors tour of the new display spaces had been arranged at the Commandery for 29 November 2016 and all members were invited to attend. A further event for stakeholders was being held in December.

RESOLVED that the performance and planning information provided for the 1st quarter 2016-17 be noted.

The Committee considered its work programme.

In the ensuing debate, the Joint Committee noted that this was the last meeting that Neil Anderson would be attending and wished to convey their appreciation for the excellent support he had given them.

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

- **The meeting on 15 March 2017 be held at the Commandery, Worcester; and**
- **The meeting on 21 June 2017 be held at Hartlebury Museum.**

The meeting ended at 5.15pm.

Chairman