

Joint Museums Committee**Wednesday, 10 June 2015, The Commandery, Worcester -
2.00 pm****Present:****Minutes**

Mr M L Bayliss, Mr A N Blagg, Mrs L C Hodgson and
Mr A C Roberts

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)

Alison Rainey, Principal Finance Officer (Worcestershire
County Council)

Ruth Mullen, Corporate Director – Services Delivery
(Worcester City Council)

Simon Lewis, Committee Officer (Worcestershire County
Council)

Available papers

The Members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. A copy of the presentation slides for Agenda item
6 – Annual Review 2014-15 (circulated at the
meeting); and
- C. The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March
2015 (previously circulated).

A Copy of documents A and B will be attached to the
signed Minutes.

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

None.

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

None.

228	Election of Chairman (Agenda item 3)	RESOLVED that Mr M Bayliss be elected Chairman for the ensuing year.
229	Appointment of Vice-Chairman (Agenda item 4)	RESOLVED that Mrs L C Hodgson be appointed Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.
230	Confirmation of Minutes (Agenda item 5)	RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
231	Annual Review 2014-15 (Agenda item 6)	<p>The Joint Committee considered the Museums Worcestershire Annual Review for 2014-15 which was set out in a presentation to members.</p> <p>In the ensuing debate, the following principal points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to a query about the relationship between Museums Worcestershire and the Hartlebury Preservation Trust, the Museums General Manager explained that Museums Worcestershire had a close working relationship with the Trust. The Trust had made the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and were now the landowners (having taken over from the Church Commissioners). The plans included the County Council retaining some leases of properties on the site • Where would the income generated by the activities on the Hartlebury Museum site go? The Museums General Manager explained that income from the site would be directed to supporting the business plan for the whole estate. Discussions were being held with the Trust over the detailed arrangements. The Head of Community and Environment (County Council) explained that the relationship was with the County Council rather than Museums Worcestershire. The overall commitment of County Council funds was less than if the museum had been closed and the artefacts put into storage. The Museums General Manager added that there would be a management agreement to oversee the relationship. It was important that a seamless service was provided to the public • The Corporate Director – Services Delivery (City Council) stated that partnership arrangements and the impact on the shared service were being reviewed as circumstances changed. It was intended to provide a workshop session for members of the Joint

**232 Commandery
Development
Proposals
(Agenda item 7)**

- Committee in due course on this subject matter
- The amount of external funding that the shared service had attracted in the last financial year from a range of sources was impressive. Had the use of volunteers helped to attract additional funding? The Marketing and Events Manager explained that every effort was taken to include volunteers in project development and she confirmed that it had opened up additional funding to the service
 - In response to a query about the World War One in the Words of Worcestershire People exhibition, the Museums General Manager explained that HLF funding had been made available for the anniversary and each venue had agreed on how the funding would be earmarked. The funding arrangements would be monitored but the exhibition had been well-received
 - The Museums General Manager stated that funding for the Museums on the Move project had ended in March. However, working with partners museums in the Marches Network, the service had secured additional funding of £40k from the Esmee Fairburn Foundation. This funding would run for a 12 month period at which point there would be a review of the future funding arrangements for the service.

RESOLVED that the Museums Worcestershire Annual Review for 2014-15 be approved.

The Joint Committee considered the development and business plan for the Commandery.

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

- There were plans, involving the Battle of Worcester Society, for a statue to be erected on Fort Royal Hill to commemorate the visit by the Presidents. Was there any way to incorporate this arrangement with other projects taking place at the Commandery or ways of seeking additional funding from the USA? The Museums General Manager stated that the service was working with the Battle of Worcester Society in a number of ways. The Corporate Director – Service Delivery (City Council) added that it was a question of what was physically possible and whether the funding was available. Historical information could be made available in the Commandery
- Once the arrangements had been agreed, the key was encouraging return visits for example by changing exhibitions/events and connecting with the

next generation of children. Did the planned arrangements for the redevelopment of the Commandery include an element of flexibility? The Museums General Manager stated that flexibility could be built into the plans for the Commandery however this was dependent on the availability of funding. He was keen to provide an offer that encouraged visitors at any time of the year. The Corporate Director – Service Delivery (City Council) added that there were two potential funding packages for the proposals, one of which was more expensive but would allow greater flexibility for managing events. This would open up potential use of the outdoor space for example for summer events

- Introducing treasure hunts and other interactive activities as well as changing the offer to the public would encourage repeat visits. The Marketing and Events Manager commented that from a marketing perspective there were potentially 6 layers of history open for interpretation at the venue. People were very keen that these stories were not lost. It was important first to establish the building as a Civil War venue and that would enable the service to branch out into covering the other stories in the future
- How much flexibility was there to change the front of the Commandery as a means of attracting visitors? The Museums General Manager stated that there were limitations to what could be done to the front of the building. There was planning consent for the display of a single banner. He would examine further what was possible through the planning framework to allow the promotion of events/activities at the front of the building
- The National Trust had established very good arrangements for weddings at Greyfriars. Had the National Trust been contacted with regard to liaising over arrangements for weddings? The Corporate Director – Service Delivery (City Council) commented that it was worth exploring the potential for linking wedding arrangements between the Guildhall, the Commandery and the National Trust premises
- The development proposals for the Commandery were welcomed however it was disappointing that the proposed implementation period was as late as spring 2016. Was it possible to compress the timescale? The Museums General Manager commented that he would look at the detail of the building programme to see if there was any way to speed the process up. The Corporate Director – Service Delivery added that a report would be taken to the Worcester City Council Cabinet meeting in July. It might be possible for the

City Council to approve the project and grant delegated authority to the Museums General Manager to enable him to proceed more quickly with certain aspects of the project. The Museums General Manager stated that the problem with launching the project earlier than spring 2016 was that it missed the key time that people were expecting to see new projects eg at Easter. The Corporate Director – Service Delivery added that perhaps a "soft" launch could be undertaken earlier

- Was there any further potential to seek external funding for the project? The Museums General Manager stated that there was potential for further funding from the HLF. However the HLF were keen to ensure that the project demonstrated added value i.e that it could show a benefit to the public, before granting approval of funding.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the development and business plan for the Commandery be received;
- b) the development and business plan be referred to Worcester City Council for a decision on investment; and
- c) the next steps to be taken by Museums Worcestershire (set out at paragraphs 9-11 in the report) be authorised.

233 Museum Volunteering (Agenda item 8)

The Joint Committee considered the progress made in recruiting and supporting volunteers across Museums Worcestershire and partner organisations.

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

- The Joint Service's web site could include a link to the Act Local website
- It was important that the County Council, through the Voluntary and Community Sector Unit Co-ordinator, was informed of what was happening in relation to volunteering in the museums service.

RESOLVED that the progress made in recruiting and supporting volunteers across Museums Worcestershire and partner organisations be noted.

234 Finance Report

The Joint Committee received an update on the financial

(Agenda item 9)

position of the joint museums service.

The report set out the 2014/15 outturn figures, an explanation of major variances, the subjective analysis 2014/15, the surplus/deficit split, the Hartlebury Café report and the 2015/16 projected outturn figures.

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

- Why had it been necessary to transfer funds from the County Council's reserve? The Museums General Manager explained that there were two elements to the transfer of reserve: the £30k contribution had been planned to allow the service to save £90k over 3 years through a phased approach and the contribution from reserve to underwrite a post at Hartlebury to manage a project – this would disappear by the end of this financial year
- The Principal Finance Officer (County Council) explained that a new budget monitoring system would be introduced from June which meant that future financial reports to the Joint Committee would be more detailed in nature
- The Principal Finance Officer stated that it was anticipated that the transfer of Hartlebury Museum to the Trust would have implications for the budget of the shared service in terms of adjustments to the level of income and expenditure
- Were there any further savings anticipated at Worcester City Council which could impact on the shared service's budget? The Corporate Director – Service Delivery (City Council) stated that it was anticipated that savings of £100k would need to be made at the City Council but a decision as to where these savings would come from had yet to be decided
- The Museums General Manager indicated that a flowchart setting out the details of the Service Level Agreement for the management of Hartlebury Museum would be included in the agenda papers for the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED that the financial position of the joint museums service as detailed in the report be noted.

235 Performance Report (Agenda item 10)

The Joint Committee considered the performance of the joint museums service for the 4th quarter 2014-15.

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

**236 Work
Programme
(Agenda item
11)**

- More should be done to promote the use of the shop at the City Museum
- Had any connection been made with the City Council's corporate priorities for history and heritage in relation to the review of the shared service's performance indicators? The Museums General Manager stated that reference to the corporate objectives would be incorporated in the review process for the performance indicators
- A report should be brought back to the Joint Committee as soon as the necessary review process had been completed on the performance indicators.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the performance information provided for the 4th quarter 2014-15 be noted; and
- b) the proposals for new performance indicators be approved with a report being brought back to the Joint Committee following the review process.

The Joint Committee considered its work programme.

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted subject to following additional items for the September 2015 meeting:

- a) Operational relationship with the Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust; and
- b) Further details on the proposed changes to the shared service budget.

The meeting ended at 3.40pm

Chairman