

Joint Museums Committee**Friday, 27 February 2015, County Hall, Worcester - 12.15 pm**

		Minutes
Present:		Mr A N Blagg, Mrs L C Hodgson (Chairman), Mr A C Roberts and Mr D Wilkinson
Also attended:		Officers Iain Rutherford, Museums General Manager (Museums Worcestershire) Helen Large, Marketing and Events Manager (Museums Worcestershire) Alison Rainey, Finance Manager (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); and B. The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2014 (previously circulated). A copy of document A will be attached to the signed Minutes.
211	Named Substitutes (Agenda item 1)	None.
212	Apologies/ Declarations of Interest (Agenda item 2)	None.
213	Confirmation of Minutes (Agenda item 3)	RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
214	Hartlebury Management	The Joint Committee considered arrangements for a management agreement with the Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust for the future operation of the wider

Agreement (Agenda item 4)

site at Hartlebury Castle and the County Museum.

In November 2014, this Committee received a report that the Trust had been awarded a grant of £4.97 million by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) following the development phase. The grant would enable the Trust to acquire the freehold of Hartlebury Castle with its surrounding 43 acres of parkland and embark on programmes for conservation and activities.

The realisation of these goals required a new business model for the site as a whole in order to satisfy the requirements of HLF. The principles of such an arrangement were as follows:

- a) The Trust would become the freehold owner of the whole estate (and therefore the new landlord of the County Council) including that portion of land and buildings leased to the County Council for occupation by Museums Worcestershire;
- b) The location and care of all collections including both the County's and the Trust was governed by collections and loan agreements setting out appropriate standards and operational responsibilities;
- c) Museums Worcestershire would continue to employ the current team to contribute to the operation of Hartlebury and in due course would be joined by new appointments to the Trust team, funded by HLF, and a significant uplift in volunteering. The Trust would employ a Manager in due course to help coordinate the project and work with Museums Worcestershire to ensure the visitor experience is a seamless one;
- d) Advice and support at a managerial level would be provided by Museums Worcestershire across functions such as collections management, marketing and learning;
- e) A new trading company wholly owned by the Trust had been established to develop, collect and then allocate all income streams to the site, including revenue from admissions. The loss of income to Museums Worcestershire would be offset by savings on property and running costs made possible by changes in management and leasing. The Trust would work to establish new events and venue hire arrangements to support their new

responsibilities in relation to the property; and

- f) A separate funding agreement between the County Council and the Trust would be developed to provide clarity of funding support in the early years of the project.

In order to facilitate all of the above, a management agreement was required to set out the respective responsibilities of the County Council and the Trust and define the parameters of the joint working arrangement. Authority to enter into such an agreement in principle was required to give confidence to the County Council, the Trust and HLF that the project could deliver the benefits set out in the grant application to the HLF.

The Museums General Manager introduced the report and commented that the Trust had primary responsibility for the site and would be in receipt of the lottery funds from the HLF. A management agreement is required to clarify the relationship between the shared service and the Trust. The format of the agreement had not been finalised but it was intended to be an overarching agreement dealing with relationships, data protection, freedom of information et al.

The shared service would have a say as part of the governance arrangements for the site however it was acknowledged that there would be an impact on the role of the Joint Committee. In addition, the funding for the project would be ring-fenced which would impact on the budget of the Joint Committee.

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

- In response to a query, the Museums General Manager explained that there were 3 separate lease arrangements between the County Council and the Church Commissioners for the property. Under the new arrangements, these leases would continue but in an amended form. It was likely that the Council would release some of the leases which in turn would reduce costs. The relationship in terms of property management would now be with the Trust rather than the Commissioners
- What was the legal status of the relationship between the Trust and Museums Worcestershire? The Museums General

Manager explained that the Trust had charitable status with a subsidiary trading company. The shared service did not have the ability to enter into the contract – this was the responsibility of the County Council as host authority. The County Council's responsibilities also flowed through its property obligations. The shared service's responsibilities flowed through the management agreement to provide professional support including marketing, collections management and volunteering

- What were the implications for the City Council of the management agreement? The Corporate Director – Services Delivery (Worcester City Council) commented that the agreement would enable the sustainability of the Hartlebury site and ensure that the shared service made savings through for example, management costs and rationalisation of resources. This would allow the City Council to focus on the City Museum so that similar management arrangements could be introduced there. The Museums General Manager added that the County Council had also agreed to inject additional capital funds to help to secure the HLF funding
- Had plans been introduced to address the issues associated with the deterioration of the fabric of the building? The Museums General Manager replied that there was a Management and Maintenance Plan in place to address these issues. A team of architects/surveyors/specialists had been put together to check the fabric of the building and the grounds. The Trust was a small group of individuals of considerable knowledge and expertise supported by a professional project team. They were aware of the issues associated with the fabric of the building and the complexities of the project.

RESOLVED that:

- a) **the principles of a management agreement with the Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust for the future operation of the wider site at Hartlebury Castle and the County Museum be approved; and**

- b) the Museums General Manager be authorised in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Joint Committee to enter into a Management Agreement with Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust.

The meeting ended at 12.38pm

Chairman