

**MUSEUM MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP held at the COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 4.00 pm on 30 JANUARY 2007**

Present:- Councillor J I Loughlin (Uttlesford District Council), D Laing, E Planterose and R Wallace (Museum Society).

Officers in attendance:- M T Purkiss and C Wingfield.

**MM22 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R P Chambers, D J Morson and V Pedder and from J Bullen and S Hollingworth.

**MM23 CHAIR**

In the absence of the Chairman of the Committee it was agreed that Richard Wallace would chair the meeting.

**MM24 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2006 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**MM25 HERITAGE QUEST CENTRE AND TRUST**

David Laing reported that the Registrar of Companies had registered the Trust as a company on 26 January and an application to the Charity Commission was virtually complete. He said that a letter would also be required from the bank stating that it was willing to open accounts for the company once the registration was complete.

Carolyn Wingfield reported that donations had been received since the last meeting which now took the total amount raised to over £92,000. She said that a letter had also been received from the Essex Environment Trust stating that the expression of interest had been accepted which would mean that the bid could go forward as a full application. She also mentioned that the Saffron Walden Initiative might be interested in adopting the application as a market town project and this could provide some access to financial assistance. She also reported that there would be a fundraising concert entitled "The Angel, the Serpent and the Iron Cello" on 17 February, a sponsored walk in April and a possible charity clay pigeon shoot later in the year. Members of the Task Group were surprised that no response had been received from Saffron Walden Town Council to the request for funding.

**MM25 REPORT OF THE SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM SOCIETY**

Richard Wallace reported on recent meetings of the Executive Committee and the Management Committee of the Museum Society. He said that it appeared that many Councillors did not have a thorough understanding of the Museum and proposed developments and he had drafted a letter to all Councillors and would ask for the comments of Councillor Morson before this was sent.

He referred to the current "Blades" exhibition and said that attendances would be monitored to see if new audiences were brought into the Museum. He referred to recent purchases which had been made and said that subscription income was at an all time high.

He said that Carole Law had been appointed as the events organiser and a full programme for 2007 had been developed. He concluded that the Museum Society had agreed the purchase of a laptop computer and projector for the use of the Society and Museum staff and a portable public address system had also been purchased. It was hoped that this equipment would improve the quality of talks and presentations and would also be used for training purposes.

**MM26 CURATOR'S REPORT**

Carolyn Wingfield submitted the Quarterly Report for the period from October to December 2006. Progress with the Heritage Quest Centre had already been reported and she informed Members of progress with the Forward Plan II – Museum and Castle site project and reported on the responses which had been received to the consultation.

She reported on works which had been undertaken to the buildings and site and, in particular, referred to the recent emergency works which were required following a broken water main. She said that quotations were being obtained for the replacement of this. It was also hoped that the new telephone system would bring benefits to customers.

She said that there had been an increase in visitor numbers and that a company called Visible Edge had been appointed to carry out design work on leaflets.

The Chairman said that the Task Group was encouraged by the increase in visitor numbers and the excellent programme of activities and outreach work.

**MM27 PERFORMANCE SELECT COMMITTEE**

Carolyn Wingfield reported that following the review of Museum activities undertaken by the Performance Select Committee she would try to arrange a site visit for Members of that Committee prior to its meeting on 25 April 2007. The Task Group considered that this meeting should be held during the day time so that Members could see the Museum in full operation.

**MM28 FUTURE MEETINGS**

Carolyn Wingfield reported that a Museum workshop would be held at the Council Offices on 26 February 2007 starting at 7.30 pm. It was also agreed that the next meeting of the Task Group would be held on Thursday 29 March 2007 commencing at 4.00 pm at the Museum.

The meeting ended at 4.30 pm.