

MUSEUM MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 6.00 pm on 2 FEBRUARY 2010

Present: Councillor K L Eden – Chairman
Councillor D J Morson (Uttlesford Members), J Bullen and P Salvidge (Museum Society).

Officers in attendance: C Wingfield (Curator) and M Cox (Democratic Services Officer).

MM20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Chamberlain, S Schneider, Mr D Laing and Mr A Watson.

MM21 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2009 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

MM22 BUSINESS ARISING

i) Minute MM17 – Curators Report

It was noted that the workshop on the impartiality of planning applications had yet to be held.

MM23 REPORT OF SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM SOCIETY LTD

The Working Group considered the report of the Museum Society LTD.

Paul Salvidge said that at a recent meeting of the Museum Society members had unanimously supported the action taken by the Society in respect of the offer made by Sainsbury's.

At the last meeting a question had been asked about the Museum Society's lecture programme. The speakers had now been confirmed and the list would be distributed to members.

MM24 CURATOR'S QUARTERLY REPORT

The Group considered the report of the Curator covering the quarter ending December 2009. She commented further as follows:

- **Management** – The review of the Museum service and staff structure was progressing. Meetings had been held with directors and the Museum Society.
- **Buildings and Site** – The leak through the roof during the heavy snowfall in December appeared to be a one off event and no insurance claim was required. However thought needed to be given to providing access to the roof to assess condition and problems, in a way which met Health & Safety requirements.
- **Collections and Research** - . Members noted the upcoming purchase of 3 bronze hoards which would make an interesting collection of late Bronze Age metalwork. This would be the subject of an archaeological lecture at the Museum Society in June.
- **Education, events and outreach:**– There had been a 95% drop in school visits due to the absence of a learning officer post. Although independent visits were still possible the schools wanted a taught session with objects. The future of this post was waiting for the outcome of the service review which would hopefully be available by the end of the financial year. Talks had been held with ECC about free lance teachers using using the Museum as a venue for lectures to school children, but so far no teachers were available and the Museum was losing potential school bookings for the summer term. The attendance figures and shop takings had recovered due to the good response to the Henry Moore exhibition and the increase in ticket prices. It was not possible to tell, without detailed analysis, whether the increase in ticket price had reduced the footfall.
- **Publicity marketing and website**
Following an inspection by Visit England the Museum had been awarded Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme accreditation. Members suggested advertising this in the press and at the TIC.

MM25

HERITAGE QUEST UPDATE

The planning application for the HQC was submitted on 20 January and would be decided at the Development Control Committee on 10 March. All the partners had been informed of the change in the timetable and had agreed to an extension. It was still unclear when the Sainsbury's application would be considered but in order to keep within the legal timetable the work on the site needed to be started by the end of September. The agreement between Sainsbury's and the Council had a cut off date of January 2011 at which time the proposal would revert to the original site.

The next grant draw down from the Heritage Lottery Fund would be mostly concerned with professional fees and recruitment costs. For all

design work and planning fees in respect of the new site, the architect's fees would be paid by Sainsbury's.

MM26 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Paul Salvidge gave details of the 175 year anniversary events that were planned for May

- Monday 10 May – A public lecture on the history of the Museum.
- Wednesday 12 May – A reception and tea party in the Museum grounds.
- Saturday 15 May – Magic lanterns and Punch and Judy, Museum by night including torchlight tours.
- The Museum Society would fund free entry during the Whitsun half term and also the printing of posters and banners.

The group discussed how these events could be publicised.

The group had been invited to tour the Newport stores and it was agreed that members would meet Carolyn Wingfield at the stores at 11.00am on 18 February.

MM27 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on Monday 24 May at the Museum School Room Saffron Walden, Saffron Walden.

The meeting ended at 6:40 pm.