

MUSEUM MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP held at SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM, MUSEUM STREET SAFFRON WALDEN at 6.00 pm on 26 JULY 2010

Present: Councillor K L Eden – Chairman (Uttlesford Member)
J Bullen, D Laing, P Salvidge and A Watson (Museum Society).

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

MM1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Chamberlain and D J Morson.

MM2 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2010 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

MM3 REPORT OF SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM SOCIETY LTD

The Working Group considered the report of the Museum Society Ltd which was circulated at the meeting.

Mr Watson referred to the presentations made following the Annual General Meeting of the Society by three members of the Museum Staff. They had been enthusiastically delivered and were very well received.

MM4 CURATOR'S QUARTERLY REPORT

The Group considered the report of the Curator covering the quarter ending June 2010. She added that the grant had now been received from The Headley Trust, and she updated the meeting as to treasure finds effectively donated by finders and landowners who had kindly waived their fees.

She referred to the visitor services statistics in item 4.3 of the report and informed the meeting that the generosity of the Museum Society in financing free entry during half term had resulted in substantially increased numbers of visitors during May (613) compared with the previous year (463).

Likewise, the annual visitor figures for 2010-2011 had exceeded the annual averaged target by some 50%, a reflection of the support of the Society which had voluntarily produced quantities of helpful coloured leaflets, reports etc.

The Curator also relayed updated information from Thaxted Primary School that 120 pupils had benefited from use of the special loan box with archaeological items and information about the town's medieval history and cutlery industry.

MM5 HERITAGE QUEST UPDATE

The Curator thought it unlikely that there would be a decision on the Sainsbury application before September.

She updated the meeting on the effect of this upon outstanding promised grants and the Council's option to withdraw if the situation remained unresolved by January.

The Chairman asked that an indication be obtained from Richard Auty of what he thinks is happening and what options are available.

MM6 ACCREDITATIONS AND POLICIES FOR REVISION

The Curator circulated a letter received from the Museum Accreditation Scheme confirming the Museum's continued full accreditation, however she also drew attention to requirements for reporting back by 31 March 2011 on progress with improvements to collections' storage and documentation, both of which were dependent on the Heritage Quest Centre project. She also indicated that revision of the Acquisition & Disposal Policy would be necessary to incorporate the latest guidelines, and that the Museum's Forward Plan was due for a major revision as soon as the HQC timetable and the outcome of the Museum Service Review were known.

MM7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Monday 11 October at the Council Offices Saffron Walden.

The meeting ended at 6:30 pm.