

**SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM/UTTLESFORD MUSEUM SERVICE
RESOURCE CENTRE PROJECT TEAM held at 2.00 pm in the MUSEUM
SCHOOL ROOM on 27 MAY 2005**

Present: - Councillors B M Hughes, D J Morson, J P Murphy and S C Jones and Victoria Borges, Diane Burrige, Maureen Evans, Sarah Kenyon and Carolyn Wingfield (Uttlesford District Council) and David Haylock and David Laing (Saffron Walden Museum Society).

Also present: - Martin Shaw of Midas.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M A Hibbs and A R Row and Tony Watson and David Demery and Sara Chapman.

2 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 PUBLICITY AND APPEAL LAUNCH AND FUNDRAISING AND GRANT APPLICATION

Martin Shaw showed the team an article from the Saffron Walden Reporter, which featured the "Pot of Gold" competition. He reported that the closing date for competition entries was 8 June 2005. He added that the Reporter seemed to be very enthusiastic and had offered to fund the £50 pot of gold.

Martin Shaw then handed the team the initial design for the headed notepaper and asked for any matters arising from this design. The team all agreed to the design on the condition that the footer was altered to "A Partnership of Uttlesford District Council and Saffron Walden Museum Society". They then further agreed that the header looked better on cream paper. The Team then reviewed the core text, which explained the launch project. Members were reminded that the core text could be added to.

Martin then asked the group for feedback on establishing Patrons for the project. Councillor Morson reported that he had received a reply from Lord Braybrooke and Lord Petre, the Lord Lieutenant of Essex both stating that they would be happy to become patrons and attend the project launch. Carolyn Wingfield added that Sir David Attenborough had responded with regret, as he already was a patron to a wide selection of projects.

In relation to potential patrons the following actions were agreed: -

Councillor Hughes to contact Sir John Ruggles Brise of Spains Hall,
Councillor Morson to contact Lady Butler, Sir Alan Haselhurst and to ask Lord
Petre if he would act as a signatory for the project, a letter to be sent to

Carenza Lewis, Sir George Bull, Charles Dunston, Lord Buxton, Lady Archer, Richard Reed and Andrew Streeter.

Martin informed the team that BAA as a company were to be approached with a view to donating a large contribution of money and supplying the details of the employers forum. He added that he had built a list of charitable trusts and foundations and he was now at the stage where applications could be sent.

Councillor Morson updated the team with the proposals for the launch party venue. He said that Neil Cole from Audley End would allow the use of their facilities for the launch. However a date had not been resolved but the aim was for a Tuesday in June. The team then discussed ideas for a theme and agreed that the theme would be a Pimms Party on the Lawn and it would start at 6:30pm.

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SITE OPTIONS

Carolyn Wingfield handed the team a report informing the team of a plot of land owned by Uttlesford District Council off Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden as a potential new site for the proposed Resource Centre. The Council's Architect and Property Advisor had recommended the land as a highly suitable site for the proposed Museum Resource Centre. Until recently issues of ownership, access and development had prevented the site being considered. However there were plans for a 2 year development programme of the surrounding land and clarification of access and ownership had now made it possible for this site to be considered. She added that the site was within 1 mile travelling distance from the museum and on the main road to Thaxted, Dunmow and the south of Uttlesford. The site was well above road level and offered good conditions for building without any possibility of flooding. However a secure perimeter fence with CCTV would be needed and would be costed into the project. The one-off removal costs for the collections would also be included in the bid.

Carolyn explained that there were no significant differences in cost between the two-similar sites in either the building or the running of the Resource Centre. She then asked the team for a firm decision on the choice of site.

After a discussion it was

RECOMMENDED that the Team approved the choice of the Thaxted Road site as first preference and pursue this option, subject to further discussions and planning consent. The Newport Depot option would remain should the Thaxted Road option unexpectedly fall through.

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AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

Carolyn Wingfield handed the Team a draft summary of the Marketing Strategy. She explained that the Museum's core market was made of local regular visitors and family learners. She added that the new target markets would be young adults, rural communities, special interest groups and any tourists and visitors. She said that exhibition posters had always been

distributed to all parishes as well as public venues, and there had been a major leaflet distribution in Thaxted for the exhibition on Thaxted Pharmacy. However she highlighted that some posters may not be publicised in a visible location, as a third party was relied upon to display the posters. Comments were made regarding the possible use of a website, the potential for family e-mailing and the possibility of sending text messages using the youth services system.

Maureen Evans informed the team that August would be an admissions free month, following a recent decision by the Museum Management Task Group. Carolyn Wingfield added that pricing was a big part of the marketing strategy and so the option of a family season ticket might be considered as well as a local residents discount ticket with the potential to be in partnership with other services within the district. She added that they would be working with Elizabeth Blackie to design a trail of the district's four public museums plus Bridge End Gardens.

Maureen Evans added that there was a need to raise the profile of the museum. Carolyn Wingfield suggested that this might be achieved through a museum poster, which would be distinct from the exhibitions posters and done in conjunction with a re-design of the museum leaflet. Maureen Evans added that the posters and leaflets should be professionally printed on better quality paper and an additional fourth fold should be added, which could be torn off and act as a subscription for museum events information and general updates and provide the museum with a visitor database detailing their home address, e-mail address and a mobile telephone number, and inviting donations to upcoming projects.

Carolyn then informed the team of the budget and asked the team to select a priority from the actions and expenditure list. The team unanimously agreed that signage was a number one priority, as it would help increase the museum's profile within and around Saffron Walden.

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NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held at 2.00 pm on Friday 24 June 2005 in the Museum School Room.

The meeting ended at 4.10 pm.