

**MUSEUM RESOURCE CENTRE PROJECT TEAM MEETING
23 NOVEMBER 2006 at 2.00 pm in THE MUSEUM SCHOOL ROOM**

Present:- Councillor David Morson (Chairman).
Councillors Stephen Jones and Barbara Hughes and Sarah Kenyon, Jane McKie and Carolyn Wingfield (Uttlesford District Council), David Haylock and David Laing (Museum Society).

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Richard Wallace, David Demery, Maureen Evans, Mick Purkiss and Diane Burrridge.

2 **MINUTES**

The Chairman signed the minutes of the last meeting as a true record.

3 **MATTERS ARISING**

Minute 3 – Matters Arising

- (i) Carolyn Wingfield said that a reply had still not been received from the BBC.
- (ii) Sarah Kenyon reported that the spraying of the ivy on the Castle walls had been completed and she had been advised that the ivy should be left for 2 years to die off, before being removed.
- (iii) Councillor Hughes had agreed to become a trustee from the Council for the Heritage Quest Trust.

Minute 4 – Project Timetable

A short progress report had been submitted to the Community and Operations Committees in November with a full report going to the Operations Committee in February 2007.

Minute 5 – Any Other Business

No reply had been received from English Heritage concerning the display of agricultural carts at Priors Hall Barn.

4 **FORWARD PLAN**

Carolyn reported that consultation letters, signed by Cllr Morson and Richard Wallace, were being sent out to local residents, councillors and organisations with a reply date by 31 January 2007, if possible. The staff plans were to be discussed with the architect. The most pressing needs were for a

multifunctional education/activities room, with additional WCs, storage of equipment, handling collections and an office for the Education Officer; proper office accommodation for some staff and a new special exhibitions gallery (which would enable the current one to be released for potential use by TIC).

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HERITAGE QUEST CENTRE

(a) The Trust

The Trust was expecting a typed memo and articles from Catherine Nicholson on the objectives for the centre. These would be looked at by Barbara Hughes and Tony Watson. There would be a further meeting before Christmas for the Trust to be registered. The Museum Society had agreed to pay the registration fee of £20. The team expressed its thanks to the Society.

A report would need to go to a meeting of Community Committee, followed by Operations Committee. It was agreed to wait until the later round of meetings with Community on 15 March and Operations on 22 March. Carolyn had spoken to the Executive Manager (Finance and Asset Strategy) and Sara Chapman (Accountant) in the summer to put them in the picture. There was a sum of £60,000 currently in the Capital Programme for 2007-08, but officers had discussed the possibility of a total of £150,000 which might be spread over 3 years. A grant of around £700,000 could be applied for from the Lottery Fund. To make up the matching funding, it was necessary for the Heritage Quest Trust to register with Entrust for landfill tax grants, for which the Heritage Quest Trust could then apply to Biffa and Viridor Credits. Councillor Jones agreed to speak to the Executive Manager (Finance and Asset Strategy) regarding putting the suggested amount of £150,000 in the budget.

(b) Fundraising

A fundraising letter signed by Richard Wallace had been sent to Saffron Walden Town Council, together with other Town and Parish Councils. Private donations were still coming in, however no response had been received so far from the Saffron Walden Business Forum, whose members had all been mailed as a follow-up to the Forum's launch at the Museum in July. The concert planned for 17 February called "The Angel, the Serpent and the Iron Cello" was progressing. Carolyn had corresponded with the Grants Officer at Uttlesford District Council, but this had produced no new ideas. Carolyn would contact Sarah Saward for a list of the companies which had been approached for donations for the Saffron Walden Skate Park and the amounts received.

(c) Building

In David Demery's absence, Sarah Kenyon updated the meeting on this item. Museum staff had met on 6 November to identify their requirements and a more detailed specification for the building.

(d) Project timetable

A progress report had been submitted to Community and Operations committees. Subject to matching funding being in place, or a realistic plan to complete matching funding, an application should be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund in April/May 2007, and this would take at least 6 months for the HLF to process.

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ANY OTHER BUSINESS

One of the options raised by the consultants was spending £10-15,000 to improve the Museum shop. Cllr Morson and committee members re-iterated that the better option would be to extend the Museum, which would enable a larger reception/shop to be developed. Carolyn confirmed the reasons why it was necessary to build the Heritage Quest Centre first, before the extension to the Museum could be made. The two phases (Heritage Quest Centre and Museum extension) were actually consecutive phases of one through-planned project.

David Haylock asked if Uttlesford District Council would match what the Museum Society could be spending (£250,000).

Carolyn advised that Community Committee had approved a marketing strategy for the Museum and some additional money was available until March 2007 to realise this but the annual revenue for Museum publicity was only £2,400. Most of this was needed to cover costs of exhibition posters and newspaper advertisements. £1,000 had been spent on fingerpost signage in Saffron Walden. The rest of the money would be spent on a tender for 3 new Museum leaflets, including one giving details of forthcoming exhibitions, and a district 'museum trail' which would also be distributed outside the District. The Museum was also a member of the Great Days Out from Cambridge consortium, in partnership with the Tourism Officer. Another idea being developed was to establish an email list for the exhibitions and activities programme.

It was suggested that the Museum could sell Christmas cards. Carolyn pointed out that the Museum does not have the budget to print quality cards for sale, but would investigate the possibility of the Printroom at the Council offices producing these and the likely cost.

Carolyn would do an item for the next Members' Bulletin, on 1 December.

Carolyn advised that the Great Hall would be closed from 12 December to 22 December for re-painting. This coincided with a quiet time at the Museum, but free admission would be offered during this time, in return for donations. It was hoped to reopen the whole Museum between Christmas and the New Year.

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DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 22 January 2007 at 2.30 pm. Sarah Kenyon advised she would be on holiday.

The meeting finished at 3.05 pm.