

MUSEUM RESOURCE CENTRE PROJECT TEAM MEETING held in the MUSEUM SCHOOL ROOM at 2.30pm on 12 MARCH 2007

Present: - Councillor D J Morson – Chairman
Councillors B Hughes and S Jones and C Wingfield, S Kenyon and E O'Malley
D Haylock, D Laing and T Watson (Saffron Walden Museum Society)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Maureen Evans, Richard Wallace, Councillor Murphy and Councillor Row.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the chairman.

3 BUSINESS ARISING

It was confirmed that Councillor Hughes had become a trustee on the Heritage Quest Trust.

4 FORWARD PLAN – MUSEUM AND CASTLE

(i) Results Of Consultation

Sarah Kenyon, Natural Sciences Officer reported that twenty four replies had been received providing the Museum with a number of ideas. It was suggested that extra space is needed perhaps making the shop larger or extending the museum to the East creating a multipurpose lecture room. The Grounds were a popular suggestion for change; replies asked whether a second entrance/exit could be made via The Common. Councillor Hughes commented that this however may raise a security issue as public entering and leaving the vicinity could not be monitored easily. Sarah Kenyon said that replies suggested using the grounds for more communal activities and perhaps the possibility of access to the castle ruin. Councillor Morson asked whether visitation to the castle would require supervision. Sarah Kenyon replied that it would depend on the state of the ruin internally.

All Members agreed that the consultation provided them with a communal base to go forward. Carolyn Wingfield told Members that she planned to send a brief letter of acknowledgement to those who replied, giving a summary of results which would be circulated to Members also.

(ii) Visit by Karen Eyre 23 February

Karen Eyre a consultant on Museum Exhibitions visited Saffron Walden Museum to give feedback on development plans. As yet there has been no feedback received, as her visit was purely to find facts. Whilst visiting she commented that the Museum

was heading in the right direction and the date for receiving feedback from her would be discussed at the coming Executive Committee.

5 HERITAGE QUEST CENTRE

(i) Heritage Quest Trust

David Laing reported that the Heritage Quest Centre Trust had become an incorporated body on 26 January 2007. The application to the Charity Commission was submitted in February however problems have arisen from this. He explained that the forms did not provide the Charity Commission with a sufficient amount of information. Members agreed a meeting with Christine Tully was required to ensure communication was effective and a response was received.

(ii) Discussion With HLF

Since the last project meeting Carolyn Wingfield explained that she had been in contact with HLF discussing both funding and timetable. HLF had advised that the application should be submitted in mid June to reach the December board meeting. Furthermore she had arranged to meet with them, subject to confirmation at the end of March. Councillor Morson asked Carolyn what she felt the initial reaction from HLF had been. She replied that it was clear that they sounded encouraging about the Heritage Quest Centre project. Previous discussions had established that the HLF would not fund further developments on the museum site, however it was necessary for the forward plan to be in place as this would be an important element of the HLF bid.

(iii) Members Workshop and Reports to Committees

Councillor Morson thanked Carolyn Wingfield and museum staff for the excellent presentation despite the poor turnout at the recent workshop. He added that the report should be circulated to the committee before being discussed at both the Community and Operations committee and at Full Council in either April or May (to be confirmed at a later date).

(iv) HLF Application and Fund Raising Timetable

Carolyn Wingfield spoke of details in the report. It had become clear that both the landfill tax grant organisations, BIFFA and Viridor Credits, required application deadlines which meant that they would need to be completed simultaneously with the HLF application. Viridor Credits would also take 6 months to determine the application and landfill tax applications required similar documents and plans to the HLF. Funds from other sources had been received; nine parishes had donated including Broxted who donated the largest sum of £250.00. Members decided that pressure needed to be placed on Saffron Walden Town Council. If more funds were raised from various organizations it would allow the Museum to request less from HLF which would mean that their request to HLF becomes more viable.

Carolyn Wingfield reported that she had received a letter from Finella Boyle who had an extensive professional experience in grant-giving organisations in the cultural sector. Members agreed that due to her background she should be involved with funding.

Councillor Jones had spoken to the Town Clerk Mr White and he explained that if the museum applied in April they would be eligible for a grant of £10,000 for the following year. Carolyn Wingfield would follow this up with a letter of request.

(v) Building and Site

Due to David Demery retiring, Carolyn Wingfield reported that soon someone will be required to oversee the architectural aspect. Councillor Morson noted that this could be addressed once the funding situation was confirmed.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Carolyn Wingfield will be making a short presentation at a South Midlands Museums' Association seminar on 20 April 2007 to both archaeologists and museum staff in the region on issues museums face, using Saffron Walden as a case study.

Carolyn Wingfield had also been in contact with other museums that are undergoing storage projects and it had become clear that Saffron Walden Museum was in an unusual position, in that it was eligible for lottery funding whereas most depended on local authority funding. Members agreed this was extremely useful information.

7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held at 2.30 pm on 2 April 2007 after the photo shoot.

The meeting ended at 3.30 pm.