

Meeting of the SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM RESOURCE CENTRE PROJECT TEAM held on 15 SEPTEMBER 2008 AT 2.00 pm at the Museum School Room, Saffron Walden

Present: Councillor K L Eden – Chairman
Councillor R M Lemon, D J Morson and C Smith
(Uttlesford District Council Member); Mr D Haylock, Mr
D Laing, Mr Paul Salvage and Mr A Watson
(Museum Society).

Uttlesford District
Council Officers present: Toby Cowper (Capital Accountant) and Angela Knight
(Accountant), Maureen Evans (Visitor Services Officer),
Sarah Kenyon (Nature Sciences Officer), Maggie Cox
(Democratic Services Officer), Carolyn Wingfield
(Curator)

MRC8 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Schneider and David Demery.

MRC9 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2008 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

MRC10 PERMISSION TO START HERITAGE QUEST CENTRE PROJECT

The meeting received a report which would be considered by the Community Committee on 18 September and would be recommend the signing of the permission to start form for the Heritage Quest Centre Project.

The Project Team was advised of progress with the fundraising to meet the matched funding. The figures now included the full amount of the Biffa and the Virador 1 and 2 landfill grants. With these grants secured there was £69,480 left to be raised. The Accountant confirmed that for a grant to be considered 'secure' it was sufficient to have a letter of confirmation from the grant body. The group noted the grants that had already been applied for to cover the shortfall. The outcome would be heard in October and there was reason to be cautiously optimistic that the shortfall would be met from these sources. However there was also a list of grants that could be applied for, if necessary, after the project had started.

In order for the scheme to progress quickly and with all the funding secured, the Saffron Walden Museum Society had at its last meeting agreed to underwrite an amount of £100k. This meant that the Community Committee could now be asked to give the Chief Executive delegated Authority to sign the Permission to Start form on behalf of the Council as soon as the remaining matched funding to be secured fell below the £100,000 that the Saffron Walden Museum Society had agreed to underwrite.

The Project Team then noted the timetable for construction. After the Permission to Start form had been signed by Chief Executive it would also need to be signed by the Saffron Walden Museum Society Ltd and then sent to the Heritage Lottery Fund for

signing off. When it was returned a start date could be set for the project and it was anticipated that this would be 3 November 2008. The contractor would then be appointed although the work would not start before April 2009. Prior to that date work would be undertaken on ground preparation and to comply with the existing planning permission and this could be met from within existing budgets.

The Full Council meeting on 22 July had queried whether the land gifted for the Heritage Quest Centre could revert back to the Council. The report recommended that measures be put in place to ensure that the site would revert to the Council in the event of the project failing or the Saffron Walden Museum Society Ltd ceasing to exist.

The Chairman said he was very encouraged by the progress that was currently being made with the project.

It was AGREED that the Project Team support the recommendations in the report to the Community Committee on 18 September 2008.

MRC11 SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM SOCIETY LTD

Mr Watson said that two consortium had been established following the AGM. The first one had achieved £5,102 and the second one, lead by the Saffron Walden History Society had promised £4250. This left £852 for the 3rd consortium to raise. Mr Watson thanked Councillor Lemon for his help in chairing the AGM.

MRC12 TIMETABLE

The Curator circulated a revised timetable for the project that assumed a formal start date in November 2008. It was envisaged that there would be three main phases although the dates could still be subject to change. The first phase was for tenders and recruitment between November 2008 and end March 2009. This would be followed by Construction and fitting out, up to the opening of the Heritage Quest Centre from April 2009 to March 2010. The final phase would be the period after the public opening to the end of the project from April 2010 to March 2012. The report set out the dates for the key milestone reports.

The Curator said that before this timetable got underway she would be meeting with the architects and working on issues such as budgets and insurance. The first milestone report would be prepared at the start of the project. She reported that the Museum Staff and David Demery would be visiting the new museum collection centre at West Stowe as this was a similar project to the proposed Heritage Quest Centre.

MRC13 FORWARD PLAN

The Curator said that due to work continuing on the Heritage Quest Centre Project there was no further progress to report under this item.

MRC14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Monday 1 December at 2.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 2.30 pm.