

MUSEUM MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP held at the SCHOOL ROOM, SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM at 6pm on 14 AUGUST 2013

Present: Councillor K Eden – Chairman
Councillors R Chambers, D Morson and H Rolfe (Uttlesford Members)
D Laing, R Priestly, P Salvage and A Watson (Museum Society Limited).

Officers in attendance: R Auty (Assistant Director Corporate Services), M Cox (Democratic Services Officer), A Webb (Director of Corporate Services) and C Wingfield (Curator).

MM1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received.

MM2 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2013 were received and signed as a correct record.

MM3 MATTERS ARISING

(i) Minute MM41 – Museum Society report

In answer to a question, there was nothing yet to report on discussions around the possibility of enabling the Museum Society to be granted free access to the Museum by removing the need to refund season ticket costs.

MM4 CURATOR'S QUARTERLY REPORT

The Curator presented the report for April to June 2013. She highlighted the following points

Staffing -The Documentation and Exhibitions Officer had left in June and had not yet been replaced. Casual assistants were being deployed more frequently to maintain minimum cover. There had been some success in recruiting more Museum Assistants to supplement the existing pool.

Visitor services – The visitor figures and user figures had been high over the summer months, due to the extensive activity programme and increased publicity. She was pleased to report that the Museum had made the long list of the top 20 'kids in Museum' award. The Chairman appreciated that it had taken considerable effort to achieve these figures

and asked if this trend would this continue. The curator said this was unlikely as during the winter the focus would be on transferring to the Museum store but she intended to keep a basic programme going.

Councillor Morson asked if events were planned in 2014 to commemorate the 100 year anniversary of WW1. The Curator said that to coincide with the move to the new store she planned a 'secret in the stores' exhibition to display the exhibits currently being stored. In August there would be an exhibition commemorating both World Wars.

Future programme – Councillor Chambers commented on the ecological surveys of the Uttlesford special roadside verges. He was concerned about the verge from Audley End to the school which was a well used route and now very overgrown. He said there should be a balance between preservation and practicality and the Curator agreed to discuss this with Sarah Kenyon.

MM5 MUSEUM SOCIETY REPORT

Tony Watson presented the report of the Museum Society, which outlined a number of changes within the organisation.

The Society was making good progress in appointing volunteers, who it was hoped could be called on to assist with the move to the museum store.

MM6 STORE UPDATE

The Director of Corporate Services gave an update on the provision of the store for the Museum's collections. The tenders had now been sent out and a decision on the award of the contract would be made in early September, all members would be informed at that time. It was hoped that work would start in October and be completed by February 2014.

The Curator said that together with Martin Stocks she would be visiting the Chelmsford Museum store in South Woodham Ferrers on Friday 23 August. There was space available if a couple of members would like attend.

MM7 MUSEUM ACCESS POLICY

The Curator presented the Museum Service Access Policy 2013. This was required for accreditation. An access audit had been undertaken as part of the process with the assistance of the District Council's Access Officer and an action plan had been prepared which highlighted improvements to be made, although the general level of compliance was good. Some small

measures could be dealt with straight away, whilst other medium longer term matters would be addressed through the Forward Plan.

It was AGREED that the Museum Access Policy be recommended to Cabinet for approval.

MM8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 27 November at 6pm.

MM9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Curator reported that Saffron Walden Initiative would be visiting the Museum on the evening of Tuesday 1 October between 6 –7.30 to find out more about the operation of the Museum with a view to future support. The Chairman confirmed that he would attend this event, together with members of the Museum Society.

Councillor Rolfe said that a similar event could be arranged for the Saffron Walden Town Team as this group was looking at ways to attract people to the Town and the Museum could be an important part of this work.

The meeting ended at 6.35pm.