

MUSEUM MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP held at THE SCHOOL ROOM SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM at 6pm on 10 SEPTEMBER 2014

Present: Councillor K Eden (Chairman)
Councillor R Chambers (UDC)
D Laing, R Priestly and A Watson (Museum Society Limited)

Officers present: M Cox (Democratic Services Officer), A Webb (Director of Finance and Corporate Services) and C Wingfield (Curator)

MM8 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors D Morson and V Ranger and also P Salvidge (Museum Society).

MM9 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2014 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

MM10 DEMONSTRATION OF NEW WEBSITE

Tony Morton attended the meeting to demonstrate the latest version of the proposed new Museum website. This was in response to Museums Society's wish for a more positive and user friendly site for the Museum.

The members of the working group were pleased with the functionality and design of the proposed site. The site would be kept up to date by the Museum staff.

The site would be hosted by the Museum Society but it was hoped there could also be a direct link from the UDC site. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services said that the Museum would be the only department with its own website and there was a potential conflict with the council's policy that there should be a uniform approach to all website pages in terms of colours and fonts.

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services said he would discuss the implications with the Assistant Director Corporate Services and Tony Morton and report to the next meeting.

MM11 MUSEUM SOCIETY REPORT

Mr Watson spoke to his report. He said the sale of 40 Castle Street had been completed and the funds were being held in the Society's account pending the completion of the lease on the new store. He reported that August had been a very busy month and was pleased at the success of a number of events in particular the world war one singer Alexander Jones.

MM12 CURATOR'S REPORT

The Curator highlighted matters from her report. Essex Police had made a routine inspection of the firearms storage and had also given advice in the light of the future potential change to the stores.

The Museum had met basic targets for visitor numbers, although it was inevitable there would be a reduction as the Museum was now closed on a Monday. There had been a particularly good attendance for the Easter holiday and half term events. The amount spent per head at the Museum shop had increased from 32p – 58.5p, due to new lines being added, aimed at family and school visitors.

MM13 DISPOSAL OF HORSE DRAWN VEHICLES

The Curator reported that two of the vehicles, the broom and the tip cart had been sold at auction for £1800 and £520 respectively. The net amount would be placed in the budget for future acquisitions. Of the three remaining vehicles, the haywagon and the hearse would be stored at Shire Hill whilst the tip cart would be donated to English Heritage for use at Audley End House. It was expected that the barn would be cleared by the end of September.

MM14 ACCREDITATION SUBMISSION AND POLICY DOCUMENTS

The Curator said that the Museum's submission would be considered by the Accreditation Panel on 18 September. Before full accreditation the council would need to submit the published Cabinet minutes and a signed and completed management agreement and accompanying lease document.

It was expected that the Museum would obtain temporary provisional accreditation, with the full accreditation being achieved when the requested documents were received.

MM15 PROGRESS WITH SHIREHILL STORE

The order had been placed for the next phase of the project to install the racking. This would be implemented in 3 phases and it was hoped that this might be completed by Monday 8 December.

The group discussed a start date for the move to the store and were aware of the importance of the early development of an implementation plan. The Curator said she would work on an outline plan and discuss this with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and the Assistant Director of Corporate Services.

MM16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 26 November at 6.00pm.

The meeting ended at 7.00pm.