

**MUSEUM MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP held at SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM at 6pm on 30 SEPTEMBER 2015**

Present: Councillor R Chambers (Chairman)  
Councillors B Light and G Sell (Uttlesford District Council)  
Mr R Priestley, P Salvidge and A Watson (Museum Society).

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

**MM11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest.

**MM12 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Chairman signed the minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2015 as a correct record.

**MM13 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Mr Watson presented his report. He said most of the report would be discussed in later items. At the Society's AGM, Peter Walker had been appointed as a Director and Treasurer and Christine Sharp had been appointed as a Director.

**MM14 MUSEUM UPDATE**

The Curator gave an update on the Museum since the previous meeting. The Community of Collectors exhibition had started and was proving to be successful and had attracted a wide range of people to the Museum. Funding had been made available for a community case which would allow the Museum to permanently feature local collections.

The new website continued to perform well and more details would be provided in the Quarterly Report. Members agreed that the new website had been a success and wanted to extend their thanks to Tony Morton for his work on the website. Councillor Chambers said he would write to Mr Morton to thank him for the work he had put into the website.

In response to a question by Councillor Sell, the Assistant Director Corporate Services said the website was now managed by the Council.

**MM15 EPOS TILL, CARD READER AND REVIEW OF ADMISSION CHARGES**

The Assistant Director Corporate Services the cost of implementing card payments would have to be explored to ensure the financial viability of the project. The Council had identified three possible suppliers and would look at the different cost structures associated with using each supplier. The review of admission charges was also taking place and any changes to admission fees would be fed into the budget.

The Curator provided an update on the review of admission charges and provided a list of admission charges from nearby museums. Currently, many of the museums in the surrounding area did not charge an admission fee, but those which did charged around £3-4. Museums also offered a variety of different discounts which were dependent on their local markets.

In response to questions by Councillor Sell, the Curator said that admissions were dealt with by volunteers on every day except for Saturday as it had proven difficult to attract volunteers on Saturdays. Attendance at the Museum did increase when special exhibitions were being held, but the focus was on attracting people who were not regular visitors to attend. It would not be possible to administer special charges for certain exhibitions because visitors couldn't be prevented from moving from regular collections to special collections.

Councillor Chambers said the Government was looking to cut funding for museums so it was likely that more museums would begin charging for admission.

MM16

### **SHIREHILL STORE**

The Curator said work on the new store was almost complete, with telephone lines, alarms and access to the internet the main outstanding issues to resolve before the move could take place. She would be arranging training to ensure staff were familiar with the new security system, with fire drills to be arranged shortly after. It was expected the move would be completed before Christmas.

In response to questions by Mr Watson, the Curator said a rota was being devised to ensure that there were always enough members of staff at the Museum to allow it to safely operate. It was possible that if a staff member was unavailable due to unforeseen circumstances such as illness there may have to be an emergency closure of the Museum.

MM17

### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed the next meeting would be held on 27 January 2016 at the Shirehill Store.

The meeting ended at 6.35pm.