

**MUSEUM MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP held at ZOOM, on  
WEDNESDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2021 at 6.00 pm**

Present: Councillor G Sell (Chair)  
Councillors R Freeman, N Gregory and B Light

Officers in attendance: R Auty (Assistant Director - Corporate Services), C Edwards (Democratic Services Officer), A Webb (Director - Finance and Corporate Services) and C Wingfield (Curator - Saffron Walden Museum).

Also present: K Eden, R Priestley, C Sharpe and T Watson (Museum Society).

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

There were no apologies for absence received.

**2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021 were approved as an accurate record.

**3 REPORT TO APPROVE A NEW FORWARD PLAN 2021/22 – 2025/26 FOR SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM**

The Curator presented the report. She said it was necessary to gain approval for the new Forward Plan before further applications were made for the National Lottery Heritage funding and the Arts Council England's accreditation review.

She said it did not commit the Council to any expenditure or a particular course of action. There would be a contract to sign with the National Lottery if funding was approved at a later date.

The report set out the key aims for the Museum which were:-

- A museum which everyone knows and where everyone is welcome.
- A museum where people are excited and inspired by outstanding collections.
- A museum which treasures learning and reaches beyond the building.
- A museum which conserves its architectural heritage, as one of the oldest purpose-built local museums, while meeting modern requirements in a manner compatible with its historic environment on the Walden Castle site.
- A museum which is sustainable and with an enhanced diversity of income streams and community support.

She said the document would evolve and change over time, however this report was a first step for the Museum's development plans over the next 4 years. She asked that the Working Group approved the report to be taken onto Cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Curator said that she was satisfied with the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis carried out by an external body and said it was an accurate reflection of the Museum's current position. She said it did not fully reflect the nuances and the particular knowledge of the facilities and infrastructure that were held by her and the Museum staff which was why some brief comments had been added at the end.

The Museum Society Chair said that the Curator had captured everything that needed to be included in the report. He said there were a number of different stakeholders and that there would need to be fine tuning along the way as it was not a definitive document.

Councillor Freeman said that the Museum would benefit from money raised through the use of its facilities as a venue for receptions etc. He said it was important to maximise this type of revenue opportunity.

The Chair said the document showed synergy between the Museum and the Castle and hoped this would extend to other attractions like the Fry Gallery and Bridge End Gardens in the future.

In response to a question from the Chair about funding, the Curator said that it was likely that the highest amount of funding granted would be 70% of the total costs. She said the National Lottery Heritage Fund no longer supported projects over £5m.

The Chair asked how difficult it would be to raise the £807,000 required.

The Museum Society Chair said it would not be easy to raise the money but they had received professional advice training for fundraising and there were approximately 150 different places to apply for the funding. He said there was a 2 year period in which to raise the funds. He was confident this could be achieved.

The Chair said he agreed to recommend the report to Cabinet and the Working Group unanimously supported the Forward Plan.

AGREED: To recommend the report to Cabinet.

#### 4 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was agreed for Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> January at 6.00pm.

*The meeting ended at 6.25pm*