

Minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee held on 22nd May 2012 at 7pm in the Committee Room, Old Abbey House, Abingdon-on-Thames.

Present

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|--------------------------|---------------|
| Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer | Chairman |
| Cllr Jason Fiddaman | Vice Chairman |
| Cllr Monica Lovatt | Mayor |
| Cllr Sandy Lovatt | Leader |
| Cllr Helen Pighills | |
| Cllr Andrew Todd | |

In Attendance

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|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Mr Nigel Warner | Town Clerk (Clerk to the meeting) |
| Mrs Jane Bowen | Curator |

1 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Patrick Lonergan; Hermann Matheson and Aidan Melville

2 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs Jason Fiddaman; Sandy Lovatt; Julie Mayhew-Archer and Helen Pighills declared personal interests as members of the Vale of White Horse District Council which provides grant aid towards the Museum.

Cllr Sandy Lovatt also declared a personal interest as a member of Oxfordshire County Council, with which the Town Council have an agency agreement in relation to the Museum.

3 **Election of a Chairman**

It was proposed by Cllr Monica Lovatt, Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames, seconded by Cllr Helen Pighills and **resolved** that Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer be elected as Chairman of the County Hall Museum Management Committee for the municipal year 2012-2013.

4 **Election of a Vice Chairman**

It was proposed by Cllr Sandy Lovatt, seconded by Cllr Andrew Todd and **resolved** that Cllr Jason Fiddaman be elected Vice Chairman of the Hall Museum Management Committee for the municipal year 2012-2013.

5 **Co-opted Members**

It was **resolved**: that Mr. Peter Clare be co-opted onto the County Hall Museum Management Committee as the representative from the Abingdon Museum Friends for the municipal year 2012-13.

Members received and considered a letter from the District Council regarding representation on the Committee. The letter stated that the District Council did not propose to appoint a representative to serve on the County Hall Museum Management Committee, and detailed the reasons for this. This was in accordance with the policy adopted by the District Council in relation to outside bodies.

Members were considered that the County Hall Museum Management Committee had a role beyond that of concern for a “local community issue” (as described in the letter). Members considered that the District Council representation was of value to the work of the Committee and felt that the circumstances of the appointment were different to those of some other groups. The District Council gave an annual grant to the Museum of £27,000 and the work of the Museum was in accordance with the priorities of the District Council. Consequently, it was **resolved** that the Town Clerk write to the District Council requesting that they continue to send a representative for co-option to the County Hall Museum Management Committee.

6 **Minutes**

Resolved to sign as a correct record the minutes of the Museum Management Committee held on 24th April 2012.

7 **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

8 **Financial Report**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk in relation to the above. It was noted that during 2011-12 there had been a saving against the revenue budget of just over £20,000 and having regard to the continuing improvement programme at the Museum it was **recommended to the Finance and General Purposes Committee** that a sum of £20,000 be transferred to the Council's earmarked reserves in relation to the County Hall Museum. The recommendation referred was subsequently approved.

The Town Clerk reported that for this meeting he had not issued a separate report in relation to the Heritage Lottery Funded Improvement and Access Project. He stated that the project was now nearing completion, and both the building and the fit out contractors would be leaving site shortly. He reported that there had been a number of meetings with the building contractors, the project managers and the Council's quantity surveyor regarding the final account on the building. This work was progressing and he would shortly be taking this forward to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Monitor. He stated that the project remained within budget, drawing on some of the contingency set aside. He stated that the Council had delegated authority to him to manage all the financial aspects of the project through to completion as long as the project remained in budget (including use of the contingency sum) and he requested that this be re-confirmed by the Committee. The Committee **resolved** that this delegation be reconfirmed.

The Town Clerk stated that he would make a further report back to the next meeting and that in any case the matter would come back for further discussion should the HLF project budget be exceeded. The Town Clerk explained that in relation to the contingency, if a proportion of the contingency was not utilised then the grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund would be reduced accordingly.

Resolved: that the report of the Town Clerk be accepted.

9 **Council Forward Plan 2012/13**

The Town Clerk reported that the above Plan had been approved by the Audit and Performance Committee for initial consideration by each Committee. The relevant sections of the Plan had been circulated with the agenda. The Committee would also

have the opportunity to consider the Plan further at its August meeting, as it was intended that the Plan be approved by the Council in September.

The Committee considered that the Museum sections needed to be looked at in more detail as they very much focused on the Implementation Project and there needed to be more emphasis on the future development of the Museum Service.

Resolved: that authority be delegated to the Town Clerk (through the Museum Curator) in consultation with the Chairman and the Vice Chairman of the Committee to consider the Museum sections of the Forward Plan and to present a revised version to the next meeting of this Committee.

10 **County Hall Museum Improvement and Access Project**

The committee received and considered the report of the Curator in relation to the above. It was reported that good progress had been made in relation to the fit out of the Museum in line for re-opening to the public in July. There would be tours of the building for the Jubilee Weekend. The Curator also reported that the recruitment had also taken place for the “front of house” staff in readiness for the Museum re-opening.

Resolved: that the report be approved.

11 **Abingdon Museum Friends**

In the absence of the Friends’ representative, Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer, Committee Chairman, reported that the Friends were continuing to make great efforts to raise money for the Museum. This was very much appreciated and had been important to the success of the project.

Dates of meetings for 2012/13

It was noted that the calendar of meetings included the following dates for meetings of the Committee:

Tuesday 28th August
Tuesday 6th November
Thursday 3rd January 2013
Tuesday 26th February

12. **Exclusion of the Press and the Public**

Resolved:

“In accordance with section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.”

See also confidential appendix to the minutes for detail of confidential items relating to the matters detailed below.

13. **Confidential appendix to minutes of 24th April 2012**

Resolved: that the confidential appendix to the minutes of the meeting of 24th April 2012 be approved.

14. **County Hall Museum Improvement & Access Project**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Curator in relation to the above, and agreed a **recommendation for referral to the Finance and General Purposes Committee**, as detailed in the confidential appendix to the minutes.