

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

Draft Minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee held on Thursday 27th February 2020 at 7.00 pm in the Bear Room, Roysse Court, Abingdon-on-Thames

Present

Cllr Patrick Lonergan	Chair
Cllr Gabby Barody	Substitute for Cllr Andy Foulsham
Cllr Charlie Birks	Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames (ex-officio)
Cllr Samantha Bowring	Chair of F & G P Committee (ex-officio)
Mr Peter Clare	Friends of Abingdon Museum

In Attendance

Mrs Susan Whipp	Treasurer/Responsible Financial Officer
Mr Dan Sancisi	Museum Operations Officer
Ms Elin Bornemann	Museum Collections Officer (Clerk to the Meeting)

M50 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Cheryl Briggs, Cllr Andy Foulsham and Cllr Lorraine Oates. Cllr Gabby Barody was substituting for Cllr Andy Foulsham.

M51 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

M52 Public Participation

No representations or questions from the public.

M53 Minutes

The committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting of 8th January 2020.

It was **resolved** that the minutes be signed by the Chair as a true record of the meeting.

M54 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

M55 Report of the Operations Officer

The committee received and considered the report of the Operations Officer as circulated with the agenda.

The Chair, Cllr Patrick Lonergan, requested more details about the Audience Champions programme, which the Operations Officer gave.

The Mayor, Cllr Charlie Birks, asked how the museum copes with the high visitor numbers observed during half term. The Operations Officer replied that the museum is equipped to deal with high visitor numbers. The Mayor, Cllr Charlie Birks, noted that the staff and volunteers should be commended for their hard work, especially during the busy craft sessions.

It was **resolved** that the report be approved.

Cllr Samantha Bowring entered the meeting, the time being 7.06 pm.

M56 Report of the Collections Officer

The committee received and considered the report of the Collections Officer as circulated with the agenda.

The Chair, Cllr Patrick Lonergan, asked why the museum is still unable to fully comply with the requests for information regarding Accreditation. The Collections Officer replied that compliance with the requests is dependent on decisions at the Oxfordshire County Council which have not yet been taken.

The Mayor, Cllr Charlie Birks, noted that Christ's Hospital are going through a process of disposal of some items in their collection. If the museum was interested in taking items of historical interest, he would liaise between the museum and Christ's Hospital. The Collections Officer replied that the museum could be interested in taking such items. The Mayor, Cllr Charlie Birks, agreed to liaise.

The Mayor, Cllr Charlie Birks, noted that the museum is planning an exhibition on World War 2, and as he had conversations with veterans, he asked whether could reach out to them in conjunction with the exhibition. The Collections Officer noted that visits to retirement homes or oral history interviews could be done independent of the exhibition. The Chair, Cllr Patrick Lonergan, stated that it can be left to the museum officers to organise appropriate activities.

It was **resolved** that the report be approved.

M57 Abingdon Museum Friends

The committee received and considered a report on the activities of the Abingdon Museum Friends given by Mr Peter Clare. The committee noted that the Annual General Meeting of the Abingdon Museum Friends will take place at St Helen's Church Centre at 7.30 pm on Thursday 2nd April 2020.

Mr Peter Clare reported that he was going to retire from his post as Treasurer of the Abingdon Museum Friends.

The committee noted the report.

M58 Financial Report

The committee received and considered the report of the Treasurer, including the management accounts for 1st April 2019 – 31st January 2020, the actual income and expenditure for the financial year to date, the current year's budget and comparative figures from 2018-19.

The Chair, Cllr Patrick Lonergan, reminded members that the earmarked reserves could be used to pay for maintenance issues in case the budget is exceeded. The committee agreed that no further movements on the reserves should be made.

It was **resolved** that the management accounts for 1st April 2019 to 31st January 2020 and the report be approved.

M59 Risk register annual update

The committee received and considered the report of the Treasurer on the annual review of the Risk Register.

The Treasurer noted that the coordination with English Heritage with respect to the division of responsibilities was ongoing, but progress was being made. No risk to the health and safety of the public was posed by the fact that the process was still ongoing.

The committee noted the report.

M60 The Mousehole Café

The committee received and considered the report of the Treasurer in relation to the recommendation from the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The committee decided to extend the scope of the review to cover alternative uses of the café area, firstly in terms of the museum itself, and then also regarding other services provided by the Council.

The Chair, Cllr Patrick Lonergan, noted that the space could be used as a community space and as a meeting space for clubs and societies.

On behalf of the absent Cllr Lorraine Oates the Chair, Cllr Patrick Lonergan, proposed the handing out of small leaflets at reception, advertising the cafe, as part of the welcome process, and officers agreed to implement this and monitor the impact on café user numbers.

It was **resolved** that the committee review the situation of the Mousehole Café in relation to the recommendations from the Finance and General Purposes Committee and report at the next committee meeting on 11th June 2020.

M61 Police Community Support Officers

The committee considered the current involvement with the town's PCSOs.

Cllr Samantha Bowring noted that the museum's relationship with the PCSOs should be a mutual one and that the museum should consider offering the PCSOs something in return for their support.

The Operations Officer noted that the museum's relationship with the PCSOs is very positive, and that PCSO Ali Blood attended the recent staff training session to give instruction on the use of personal alarms.

M62 Green Advisory and Scrutiny Committee

The committee received and considered the report of all matters raised by the Green Advisory and Scrutiny Committee relating to the work of the committee as circulated with the agenda.

Cllr Gabby Barody noted that the museum should consider conducting an energy efficiency audit.

The committee noted the report.

.M63 Environmental implications

No matters not already discussed at other items on the agenda were identified.

M64 Publicity

The Treasurer reported that the museum had lost the use of the InDesign software in the transition to the new computers. The Council is now paying a subscription for this software for use at the museum, as a one-off license is no longer available. The software is needed to produce the publicity for the museum such as posters and What's On brochures.

No other matters not already discussed at other items on the agenda were identified.

M65 Dates and times of future meeting

The committee noted the date of the next committee meeting: 11th June 2020, subject to confirmation.

DRAFT

M66 Exclusion of the public, including the press

The Chair moved:

That 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.

M67 Confidential Appendix

The committee received and considered the confidential appendix to the minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee held on 8th January 2020.

It was **resolved** that the minutes be signed by the Chair as a true record.

M68 Confidential report of the Town Clerk

The committee received and considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk.

The committee **recommended** the proposal outlined in the confidential report of the Town Clerk to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. *See the confidential appendix to these minutes.*

The meeting rose at 8.00 pm.