

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

Minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee held on Tuesday 19th May 2015 at 7.00 pm in the Bear Room, the Guildhall, Abingdon-on-Thames

Present

Cllr Monica Lovatt	Chairman
Cllr Patrick Lonergan	Vice-Chairman
Cllr Margaret Crick	
Cllr Dennis Garrett	
Cllr Brian Hedley	
Cllr Angela Lawrence	

In Attendance

Mr Nigel Warner	Town Clerk
Ms Jane Bowen	Museum Curator
Mr Matthew Stevens	Museum Officer
Ms Elin Bornemann	Museum Collections Assistant (Clerk to the Meeting)

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Lorraine Oates.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

3 Co-opted Members

It was proposed by Cllr Monica Lovatt and seconded by Cllr Patrick Lonergan and **resolved** that Peter Clare of the Abingdon Museum Friends should be co-opted onto the Museum Committee.

4 Minutes

Resolved that the committee receive the minutes of 3rd February and of 17th March as a correct record to be signed by the Chairman.

5 Matters arising

The Vice-Chairman, Cllr Patrick Lonergan, asked if the museum had applied for the premises licence. The Curator replied that the application had been made and the process was ongoing.

The Chairman, Cllr Monica Lovatt, queried the need to have the cartouche on the outside of the museum commemorating the recent renovation of the museum. There was already a plaque inside the museum and having a cartouche made might not be the best use of council money.

It was proposed by the Chairman, Cllr Monica Lovatt, and seconded by the Vice-Chairman, Cllr Patrick Lonergan, and **resolved** that money should not be spent on having the cartouche made.

6 Report of the Museum Officers

The Committee received and considered the report of the Curator and Museum Officers.

It was noted that last year (2014 – 15) the Museum received 32,323 visitors, the largest number recorded for very many years. This was 10,000 more than in the year prior to the HLF project and over double the annual visitor numbers in 2005/6 and 2006/7.

The Committee noted the current exhibition schedule as follows:

Date /Events	Session Gallery	Attic Gallery	Notes
16 – 22 March / ATOM Festival Market Place event on 21 March	Port Meadow – photos by Adrian Arbib Closes 19 April	Abingdon in WW1	The Science of Art – lecture 17 March Eclipse on the roof 20 March
April – May 2015	Gateway to the Gods: the ancient temple site at Marcham Opens 25 April	Abingdon in WW1 Closes 31 May 2015	Easter 3 – 6 April 2015 13 May Museums at Night

June – September 2015	Gateway to the Gods: the ancient temple site at Marcham Closes 1 st September 2015	Star Power: 50 years of fusion research at Culham Opens 13 June 2015 Closes 18 October	3 SUNDOME days during summer holidays Culham Choir for Autumn late night at the Museum
September – October 2015	The Thames – Shifting Perspectives Haptic Art textile artists group Opens 12 th September	Unicorn School Art exhibition – links with Dyslexia awareness 23 Oct – 1 Nov 2015	Haptic PV 11 Sept 2015 Adult Workshops Also family workshop in half term 24 Oct – 1 Nov 2015
November – December 2015	The Thames – Shifting Perspectives Haptic Art textile artists group Closes 20 th December	From the Collection - New Acquisitions to the museum collection 7 November – 3 January	
January – April 2016	WW1 posters 9 Jan – 10 April 2016	Continuation of previous exhibition or alternatives as listed below	Easter 25 – 28 March 2016
April – June 2016	Bun throwing linked to the 90th Birthday of HM The Queen on 21 April and official birthday on 11 June, 2016 19 April – 19 June		
July – September 2016	Judi Harris Quilting Opens late June 2016		
October	Judi Harris Quilting Ends late October 2016		
November 2016 -	Life and times of Sir John Mason Link to Charter Day in November 2016		

In addition the Curator suggested an exhibition by another artist, Clova Stuart Hamilton.

The Curator stated that , If it would assist with secure storage, whilst works are carried out at the Guildhall, the Museum could stage an exhibition of Town Treasures in the Attic Gallery during 2016. The Vice-Chairman, Cllr Patrick Lonergan, stated that he would be in favour of such an exhibition even if the Guildhall was not closed. The Town Clerk stated that the museum showcases were a secure place to keep the treasures but the matter would need to be referred to the full Council. It was agreed to postpone a decision on this issue until the next committee meeting, when the work schedule for the Guildhall would be clearer.

The report outlined the work in relation to family activities, education and publicity.

It was reported that average monthly sales gross in the shop grossed c.£500. In order to reach the proposed budgetary targets the Museum would be maximising the use of 'Preparing for Profit' grant funding and preparing a new stock range to supplement existing ranges. Surveys and meetings had shown that more Town Council related products may be popular.

The Curator was also continuing to expand the volunteer base. Currently the Museum had 12 regular volunteers, but were aiming for 20 by the end of August 2015.

The Curator asked the committee to consider a price change for the roof tickets to a charge of £2 for adults and £1 for children (including VAT), with concessions for English Heritage members (in accordance with long-standing policy and the buildings status as being under a guardianship agreement with English Heritage), but no other concessions. It was proposed by Cllr Patrick Lonergan, and seconded by Cllr Margaret Crick and **resolved** that the above prices be adopted by the museum.

Resolved: that the report of the Curator and Museum Officers be adopted together with any recommendations contained therein.

7 Financial Report

The committee received and considered the Treasurer's financial report.

Resolved: that the report of the Treasurer be adopted.

8 Abingdon Museum Friends

The committee received and considered a verbal report from the Curator on the activities of the Museum Friends. The Chairman of the Friends was now Sue Stevens and the Council remained Corporate Members.

The Chairman, Cllr Monica Lovatt, stated that the Friends had provided excellent support for the Museum and had raised significant sums for the recent Improvement Project.

9 Dates of meetings for 2015/16

The committee noted the dates of the Committee meetings for 2015/16:

28th July 2015
10th November 2015
2nd February 2016.

It was noted that the timings of meetings were in the competence of individual committees. It was proposed by Cllr Angela Lawrence and seconded by Cllr Margaret Crick that the meetings should commence at 2 pm instead of 7 pm. The committee agreed with this proposal and **resolved** accordingly subject to the agreement of Cllr Lorraine Oates before this change is implemented.

10 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Chairman moved and it was **resolved** that:

In accordance with the 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 press) be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

11 Confidential appendix to minutes

The Committee received and considered the confidential appendix to the minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee of 3rd February 2015 and 17th March 2015.

Resolved: that the Committee approve the confidential appendix to the minutes of the above meetings as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

12 Confidential report of the Museum Curator

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Museum Curator.

The report detailed matters in relation to storage, the documentation service, building works and staffing matters. Further details are contained in the confidential appendix.

The meeting rose at 9 pm.