NORWICH City Council

**MINUTES**

**NORWICH AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE**

**2:05pm to 3pm** **17 June 2014**

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| Present: | **City Councillors:** | **County Councillors:** |
| | Button (chair) | Bremner |
| | Blunt | Dearnley |
| | Bradford | Watkins |
| | Brociek-Coulton (substitute for Maxwell) | |
| Co-opted Non-voting members: | Brenda Ferris (Norfolk Contemporary Art Society) and Charlotte Crawley (East Anglia Arts Fund) | |
| | Councillor Bracey (Broadland District Council) | |
| | Councillor Hornby (South Norfolk Council) | |
| Apologies: | County Councillors Sands (M) and Gihawi and City Councillors Price and Maxwell | |

## 1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

As Norfolk County Council had not yet made their appointments for the civic year, a chair was appointed for this meeting only.

**RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Sally Button as chair for this meeting.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 3. MINUTES

A member asked if there had been any developments with replacing and updating signage. The head of the museum service said that a two pronged approach was being undertaken. A museum bike was to be chained to railings outside the Museum of Norwich with signage attached and he was also in discussions with the executive head of communications, customers and culture at Norwich city council to update the finger posts.

**RESOLVED** to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2014.

## 4. THE NORWICH MUSEUMS – MEMBERS' BRIEFING JUNE 2014

Rachel Kirk, the museums manager presented the report and answered member's questions.

She reported that the high visitor figures recorded at Norwich Castle had meant that the secondary spending the gift shop and café was also higher than usual. Visitor numbers had increased by 22% on this time last year.

She confirmed that due to the support of the Friends of Norwich Museums, Strangers Hall would continue to have increased opening hours and would be open Wednesday through to Saturday until the end of September.

In response to a question from a member, the Norwich museums manager said that a ticket offer would be trialled with a half price voucher being given for the Museum of Norwich and Strangers' Hall with every ticket purchase at Norwich Castle. She said that a 'rover' ticket for all three museums had been trialled in summer 2013 but had not been as successful as hoped. The Head of museums said that as Norwich was a tourist destination, they wanted to give some flexibility to the ticket offer. Online ticketing would also be looked into in the future.

A member asked if school visits took place at all three museums or just the castle. The museums manager explained that visits were guided by the curriculum and which areas each museum covered, and that the recent Roman exhibition fitted in with the current curriculum, leading to a higher number of school visits to the castle this year. The museums service worked closely with schools to tailor activities and were in the process of developing new sessions which focused on archaeology and mathematics.

Members were given an invitation to the opening of the 'inspired by birds' exhibition. Brenda Ferris said that the activities happening at the castle had inspired other organisations such as artists at the Norfolk Contemporary Art Society who were currently working with feathers.

The head of the museums service updated the members on the strategic developments. He said that if the ACE funding is awarded to the museums service, they would be able to continue at the same level of activity with large exhibitions, working with schools and looked after children. This funding supported the whole of the service and not just the castle. It was expected that he would be told in early July if the funding bid had been successful and he would update members as soon as possible.

An application had also been put in to be a 'Bridge organisation' to develop the relationship between the Arts Council and schools.

**RESOLVED** to note the report.

CHAIR