



## NORWICH AREA MUSEUMS

2.00 p.m. - 3.45 p.m.

13 July 2009

Present:	<u>City Councillors</u> Councillor Bradford (in the Chair following election) Councillor Banham (sub for Councillor Lay) Councillor Bearman Councillor Fairbairn	<u>County Councillors</u> Councillor Ward Councillor Mooney Councillor Toms Councillor Scutter (sub for Councillor Williamson)
Co-opted Non- Voting Members	District Councillor Bracey (Broadland District Council) District Councillor Kemp (South Norfolk District Council) Charlotte Crawley (East Anglia Art Fund) Felicity Hartley (Norfolk Contemporary Arts Society) Rosemary Salt (Friends of Norwich Museums)	
Also in attendance	County Councillor Dunn (Chair, Norfolk Joint Museums Committee) Vanessa Trevelyan (Head of Museums and Archaeology) Rachel Kirk (Norwich Museums Manager) Emma Taylor (Norwich Museums Development Officer) Jeanne Southgate (Costume Vivienne Weeks (Chair of Costume and Textile Association)	
Apologies:	City Councillor Jenny Lay County Councillor Nobbs County Councillor Fiona Williamson	

### 1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

**RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Bradford as Chair for the ensuing Civic Year.

### 2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

**RESOLVED** to appoint County Councillor Ward as Vice-Chair for the ensuing Civic Year.

### 3. CITY COUNCILLOR JENNY LAY

**RESOLVED** to convey the thoughts and best wishes of the Committee to Councillor Jenny Lay.

#### **4. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2009 subject to the words 'Sainsburys Centre' on the third and fourth line of the first paragraph on page 2 of minutes; be amended to read 'Sainsbury Centre'.

#### **5. CASTLE MOUND, CASTLE GARDENS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY**

Steve Goddard, Scrutiny Officer for Norwich City Council attended the meeting for this item.

As requested by members at the last meeting, Steve Goddard updated the Committee on the work of the Council's Scrutiny Committee who had been looking at the problems in the Castle Gardens area including anti-social behaviour and the area in general.

He explained how in March 2009, a consultation session had been held which had involved the young people who congregated there, Council officers, Councillors and representatives from various external agencies including Norfolk Constabulary and the Castle Mall. For information, a copy of the subsequent newspaper article from the local press and a copy of a letter that had been sent to the Head of Community Safety at Norfolk County Council was distributed to members. He said that representatives from Norwich Castle had been invited to the consultation session but had not been able to attend.

He said that the consultation had been useful to begin a dialogue with the young people who felt that a lot of the public perception of their behaviour was sometimes unfair but they acknowledged that they unintentionally caused concern on occasion. He said that in a recent environmental audit of the area, undesirable objects such as needles had been found. As a result of the Scrutiny activity, Council officers were be liaising with CityCare, the current contractor, and asking them to do more regular clean-ups.

The area was sub-divided up into three areas with three subsequent responsibilities; the Castle Mall, Norwich City Council and Norfolk County Council. This was seen as a problem by the Scrutiny Committee and members had urged consideration of a cross boundary and uniformed approach. He said that the Scrutiny Committee would be re-visiting the topic in the Autumn to see if the situation had improved and all partners including a representative from the Norwich Area Museums Committee would be invited to take part in the meeting.

The Chair said that one solution could be to remove the concrete seats that were situated down the middle near the entrance to the area. This would not just discourage people congregating in the centre of the entrance which the public found intimidating, but would stop rough sleepers and drug users using them.

In response to questions, Steve Goddard said that the young people wanted to build relationships with Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) and that incident statistics from the Safer Norwich Area Partnership (SNAP) were made available every 6 months. A member suggested that PCSO's should be in the area every Saturday morning as that seemed to be when the largest groups congregated. Steve

Goddard said that consideration had also been given to install a coffee cart proprietor in the area which would give an extra presence.

Discussion ensued in regards to the role of the Scrutiny Committee and their involvement in the action plan for the area. Steve Goddard said that any members who were members of both the Norwich Area Museums and the Scrutiny Committee should raise any issues they had at a future meeting of Scrutiny and reminded members that the matter was due to be discussed further in the Autumn.

A member suggested that a dedicated area be created for skateboard users similar to the one that was located at South Bank in London. She also said that the existing notice boards in the Castle area needed attention as they had not been replaced since they had been erected in 2001 but she understood that funding might be available through Norwich HEART to do this.

In response to a question, the Chair said offensive graffiti was removed within 24 hours but that other graffiti was removed in the order that reports were received. The Norwich Museums Manager said that once reported, graffiti was always removed promptly from the lift area.

**RESOLVED to:-**

- (1). note the position.
- (2) ask the Scrutiny Officer to report the comments of the Committee to the Scrutiny Committee and to ask those who were members on both to also raise any concerns they might have at Scrutiny.
- (3) ask the Scrutiny Officer to provide details of the review of the matter by the Scrutiny Committee in Autumn 2009 so an invitation to attend can be sent to a representative from the Norwich Area Museums Committee.
- (4) ask the Head of Museums and Archaeology to investigate the possibility of gaining funding through Norwich HEART for the replacement of the notice boards at the entrance to the Castle Gardens.

**6. GENERAL UPDATE ON NORWICH MUSEUMS AND CURRENT POSITION AND FUTURE PLANS FOR NORWICH MUSEUMS AND STUDY CENTRES**

The Norwich Museums Manager presented the reports and updated members on the work in the Norwich Museums over the last 3 months and forthcoming activities. She also updated members on the current position and future plans for Norwich Castle, Strangers' Hall, Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum, Bridewell Museum, Norwich Castle Study Centre (Shirehall) and Carrow House Costume and Textile Centre.

The Norwich Museums Manager answered questions as follows:-

**Visitor Numbers**

The Norwich Museums Manager outlined the target and actual visitor numbers up to May 2009 and explained how the Norwich Museums and Study Centres met their visitor target numbers in 2008/09.

The Head of Museums and Archaeology explained how the targets were calculated and the factors that were taken into account each year when setting the targets. She said that income from admission fees had increased and was holding but revenue from the shop and café had fallen.

The Norwich Museums Manager explained that school parties did not pay admission fees nor did they pay for self guided tours. However, if a school requested a specific session or workshop, any costs incurred by the Museums would be charged to the school who could pass the cost on to parents or guardians. However, no profit on these charges was made by the Museum. She said that a higher percentage of schools wished to book sessions and workshops than those who wished to do self guided tours. The Head of Museums and Archaeology added that although it appeared that the numbers for visiting schools were down so far this year, they would know more at the end of the month when the figures for up to the end of summer term were known. The cost of travel expenses for the schools may also have an impact on lower numbers.

**RESOLVED to:-**

- (1) note the position.
- (2) to ask the Norwich Museums Manager to include the following figures and statistics in future reports:-
  - (a) income statistics comparing against previous years
  - (b) breakdown of statistics of schools who paid for workshop sessions against those who chose to take free self guided tours
  - (c) breakdown of statistics of Pop in for a Pound visitors
  - (d) breakdown of statistics of return visitors
  - (e) breakdown of statistics of visitors to the Study Centres

**Strangers Hall**

On behalf of the Norwich Civic Association, a member expressed concern on the condition of the Civic Coach and asked if any progress had been made in finding the coach a new home.

The Norwich Museums Manager said that it was not possible to completely eradicate the moth infestation that had affected a lot of the pieces at Strangers Hall. However, as pesticides were now banned, they had been freezing the items and a regular moth count now took place which had showed a reduction in the infestation. She said that she had been speaking to the Civic Office at the Council in regards to finding a new home for the Civic Coach and was waiting to hear back.

**RESOLVED to:-**

- (1) note the position.

- (2) ask the Norwich Museums Manager to report back any progress in regards to the re-homing of the Civic Coach to the next meeting of the Committee

### **Carrow House Costume and Textile Centre**

The Norwich Museums Manager said that they would be arranging an official re-launch at the Carrow House Costume and Textile Centre after they had re-opened in autumn 2009. She said the centre was open free of charge to the public by appointment two days per week, and that they would also be looking at running events, activities and training sessions which would be at a charge to cover costs. She said that the centre was not a museum but a library, research and study centre to which people could come and look at the objects and collections.

The Head of Museums and Archaeology said the aim was still to make Carrow House a regional centre of excellence in the East of England for costumes and textiles, and that they were making regional links through Renaissance in the Regions and hoped to attract future funding.

**RESOLVED** to note the position.

### **Bridewell Museum**

The Norwich Museums Manager explained how, with the help of the consultation programme, the whole range of aims for the Bridewell Museum could be achieved without conflicting with each other. The Head of Museums and Archaeology said they would model the redevelopment on the Time and Tide Museum which had integrated a wide range of collections and approaches to interpretation successfully and was easy to navigate.

**RESOLVED** to note the position

### **Forthcoming Activities**

The Norwich Museums Manager said that in order to engage families in the summer holidays, they would be holding drop-in family activities every day, alongside a few pre-booked workshops. Two full weeks of holiday clubs were also planned, one week of which was targeted specifically at looked after children. Families could also enjoy the bird gallery which was re-opening in time for the holidays. She said that small flyers to promote the museum had been widely distributed, and that electronic bulletins were sent to regular users via a database. The Museum also advertised events and exhibitions in the local press including the free publications, and on local radio, which would provide information to harder-to-reach groups and those living in deprived areas.

The Head of Museums and Archaeology added that the Museum worked with target groups and schools which they hoped would build and maintain a good working relationship.

**RESOLVED** to note the position.

## **Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum**

The Norwich Museums Manager said that big television screens had been recently installed inside the entrance to Norwich Castle which promoted the Regimental Museum. New signs were being developed to show Castle visitors the route through to the Regimental Museum from the Castle, as this was trickier to find during the mammal gallery redevelopment closure.

**RESOLVED** to note the position.

## **7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED** to agree the following meeting dates for the remainder of the current Civic Year and up to October 2010 :-

- Monday 30 November 2009 at 2:00pm
- Monday 8 March 2010 at 2:00pm
- Monday 7 June 2010 at 2:00pm
- Monday 18 October 2010 at 2:00pm

CHAIR