

JOINT MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

19th November 2021

Present: Councillor Mrs L Hodgson in the Chair
Councillors Agar, Mrs L. Hodgson and Roberts

Officers: Hannah Perrott, Assistant Director of Communities
Philippa Tinsley, Museums Manager
Deborah Fox, Senior Curator
David Nash, Social History Curator

Apologies: Councillor Dormer

26 Appointment of Substitutes

None.

27 Declarations of Interest

None.

28 Public Participation

None.

29 Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising:

Minute 20 – Income Generation Report

The Museums Manager highlighted that an article related to free entry to the Commandery would be in the March 2022 edition of City Life Magazine.

30 Quarter 2 Performance Report 2021-22

The Joint Committee received a report on the performance for the 2nd Quarter of 2021-22.

The Museums Manager highlighted the key points for each of the Museums, appendix 1 attached to the report identified the performance comparisons.

Joint Committee Members noted the progress against contents of the Service Plan, attached as appendix 2 to the report, particularly the press coverage of the Titanic Exhibition, which they thought was impressive. It was also noted that despite the work carried out around the VAT issues, this could be reviewed again the future using a cultural VAT specialist.

The Museums Manager stated that the majority of work set out in the service plan is on track to achieve, albeit with some delays due to having kept posts vacant when income was uncertain.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee note the performance information for Quarter 2 2021-22.

31 Quarter 2 Finance Report 2021-22

The Joint Committee received the financial monitoring details, including budget variances for the 2nd Quarter ending 30th September 2022. The report provided information on the position at Quarter 2, an explanation of main variances, draft budget proposals 2022-23 and reserves.

The Head of Finance presented the report and informed Joint Committee Members that the forecast year end position for the City hosted teams at Quarter 2 is £13,827 surplus with the Government providing an estimated £18,900 for loss of income in Quarter 1. The forecast year end underspend was explained by the Museums Manager which related to vacant posts.

The 2022-23 draft budget for the City Council is being prepared for review by the Policy and Resources Committee on 14th December 2021, the final approval by Council in February 2022. As noted by the Joint Committee at their last meeting the County Council will not be increasing the base budget in line with inflation in 2022-23.

The Museums Manager was confident that a balanced budget would be reached in the coming year.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee note the financial monitoring details, including budget variances for the 2nd Quarter ended 30th September 2021.

32 Social Impact Development Work

The Joint Committee received a report on Social Impact Development Work. The Museums Manager presented the report on behalf of the Museums Learning Manager.

Since the introduction of the new performance indicator in March 2021 to measure improvement in wellbeing for museum visitors and participants there has been an average of 13% improved wellbeing in 2020-21 for quarter one and a 17% increase in quarter two.

The Museums Manager informed Joint Committee Members that Museums Worcestershire will use secured Culture Recovery Funding and programme funding over the next 12 months to trial how community programmes could evolve from project-funded temporary offers into longer term, commission ready programmes. This was highlighted at paragraphs 3.1 onwards of the report.

Joint Committee Members identified the need for the different cultural groups in the city to be catered for and that communication barriers are broken down so they understand.

The Museums Manager stated that work already carried out has given the museums staff the opportunity to learn differently and would like to see that Museums are not just about 'old things.'

A suggestion to take this out to communities, such as community centres, and not just care homes was made, although the Museums Manager stated that a funding model would need to be found to make this work.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee note the progress in developing programmes that support the health and wellbeing needs in local communities.

33 Museums Accreditation

The Joint Committee considered a report on Museums Accreditation.

The Senior Curator, in presenting the report, informed Joint Committee Members that all three Museums Worcestershire museums have been accredited since the start of the scheme and were last assessed in April 2017.

The schedule of assessment by Arts Council England has been impacted by Covid and was paused for over a year in order to support museums through a challenging period. Museums are now being invited in waves for re-assessment and it is anticipated that Museums Worcestershire will be invited in 2023.

In November 2015, the Joint Museums Committee approved policies for adoption by Museums Worcestershire. These policies were originally scheduled for review by the Joint Committee in November 2020 in preparation for an expected Accreditation assessment in 2021. It is proposed that the existing policies, as outlined in paragraph 3.1 of the report, be extended until March 2023. The Collections Development Policies require the most updating before 2023, the work proposed on these before they return to the Joint Committee in March 2023 was highlighted in paragraph 3.2 of the report.

The Joint Committee were also being asked to approve the deaccession proposal, attached as appendix 1 to the report which related the Angela Caravan (County Museum accession number 4142). The disposal report identified the background and current position to this item.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee:

- 1. note the national position on Museum Accreditation and Museums Worcestershire's preparation plans;**
- 2. approve the extension of the current museum policies until March 2023; and that**
- 3. approve the deaccession proposal.**

34 Museums Charitable Bodies Update

The Joint Committee received an update report on the Museum Charitable Trust. The background to the Tickenhill Collection Trust was provided at paragraphs 2.1-2.3 of the report.

A working group from Worcestershire County Council's legal and finance teams reviewed the position of the Tickenhill Trust and investigation considered if this charity should be merged with the establishment of the new fundraising charity. The Charity Commission stated that merging the activities would make the responsibilities of a single charity very complicated. The actions required to compliantly retain the existing structure were pursued.

Maintaining the Tickenhill Collection charity in its current form requires actions from Worcestershire County Council as the charity's sole trustee, these actions were highlighted in paragraph 3.4 of the report. These actions will be undertaken from 2021-22 onwards.

The Joint Museums Committee received the annual report 2020-21 for the Tickenhill Collection, which was attached as appendix 1 to the report and presented by the Social History Curator.

The annual report would form part of the future annual work programme for the Joint Museums Committee. Any approvals required for the Tickenhill Collection will be brought to the Joint Museums Committee via the work programme and will be a decision for the County Council members.

The establishment of a fundraising charitable body was outlined in paragraphs 3.6-3.11 of the main report.

The Chair, on behalf of the Joint Museums Committee, congratulated all those involved in pulling this together. It was noted that some of the items in the collection were unique.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee:

- 1. note the oversight protocols for the Tickenhill Collection Trust;**
- 2. note the progress in establishing a fundraising charitable body; and**
- 3. receive the annual report regarding the activities of the Tickenhill Collection in 2020-21.**

35 Joint Museums Work Programme

The Joint Committee considered its future work programme.

The Museums Manager, in presenting the report, drew the Joint Committee Members attention to the workshop on future development planning, to take place on Friday 21st January 2022 at the Guildhall.

It was felt that minority groups in the city were not well represented at the Museums and some have been in the city since the 60's. In response the Museums Manager agreed to add 'working with communities' to the agenda for the January workshop.

There were no additional items added to the work programme.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee note the work programme.

36 Museums Admission Charges

The Joint Committee considered a report on Museums Admission Charges.

Under the terms of their agreement with Worcestershire County Council, Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust should propose any changes to the joint admissions charges before November each year.

The Museums Manager, in presenting the report, informed Joint Committee Members that Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust had submitted a proposal for new admission charges to Hartlebury Castle in 2022. The new charges along with their benchmarking review and information about their medium-term planning regarding admission charges were attached as an appendix to the report entitled Hartlebury Castle Admissions, Agenda Item 14, in the exempt part of the agenda.

The Committee resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting to consider the confidential report. The meeting then resumed in public where the Joint Committee Members expressed support for the proposal.

The Museums Manager also asked Joint Committee Members to consider the piloting of an admission charge for special temporary exhibitions at Worcester Art Gallery. The background to the proposal was provided at paragraphs 2.4-2.8 of the report.

It is proposed to set a new charge range, with a discussion on dynamic pricing, incentives, discounts and free admission categories to be included on the agenda of the Joint Museums Committee January workshop. If approved, it will be added into the City Council's Policy and Resources Fees and Charges report, scheduled for February 2022. Members highlighted examples of other charges for exhibitions elsewhere and a range of £2-£10 was agreed.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee:

- 1. approve Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust's proposed 2022 admission charges for Hartlebury Castle; and**
- 2. approve the piloting of an admission charge for special temporary exhibitions at Worcester Art Gallery and recommend this new charge to be added to Worcester City Council's 2022-23 fees and charges.**

37 Any Other Business

None.

38 Item Involving the Disclosure of Exempt Information

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A(4), the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of information defined I Schedule 12A of the said Act.

39 Hartlebury Castle Admissions

The Joint Committee noted Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust's (HCPT) position on admission charges to Hartlebury Castle. The report was not for publication as it contains commercially sensitive information regarding HCPT's forward planning.

40 Museums Staff Review Business Case

The Joint Committee considered and approved the proposed changes to museums staff roles, contract status and responsibilities.

41 Minutes (Exempt Items)

RESOLVED: That the minutes (exempt items) of the meeting held on 17th September 2021 be received.

Duration of the meeting: 10.00a.m. to 11.35a.m.

Chair at the meeting on
3rd March 2022