

JOINT MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

7th June 2022

Present: Councillor Marcus Hart in the Chair
Councillors Agar, Mrs L. Hodgson (Vice-Chair) and Roberts

Officers: Hannah Perrott, Assistant Director Communities
(Worcestershire County Council)
Philippa Tinsley, Museums Manager
Helen Large, Museums Audiences Manager
Mark Baldwin, Head of Finance

1 Appointment of Substitutes

None.

2 Declarations of Interest

None.

3 Public Participation

None.

4 Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings held on 3rd March 2022 and 13th April 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5 Election of Chair

RESOLVED: That Councillor Hart be elected as Chair for the ensuing year.

6 Appointment of Vice-Chair

RESOLVED: That Councillor Mrs L. Hodgson be elected as Vice Chair for the ensuing year.

7 Museums Worcestershire Annual Review and Performance in 2021-2022

The Joint Committee considered the Museums Worcestershire Annual Review and Performance for 2021-22.

The proposed Annual Review for 2021-22, required by the Joint Museums Service Agreement, was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. This to be circulated to key partners and stakeholders, as well as publishing on the museums services website, it will also be circulated to all City and County Councillors.

A summary of annual performance indicators also gave an account of progress in delivering the work programme against service priorities and targets throughout, this was attached as Appendix 2 to the report. The performance data is used by Museums Worcestershire's management team to shape the priorities of upcoming work.

The Museums Manager went through each of the appendices with the Joint Committee Members and drew their attention to paragraph 3.3 of the report which highlighted the key points of performance in 2021-22. Their attention was also drawn to an error on page 17 of Appendix 1, second bullet point which should have read May 2021 and not May 2022. Also page 27 of Appendix 2, accession number 2021.3 should read Josiah Stallard is and not was; accession number 2021.5, should read James Abbot McNeill Whistler 1834-1903 and not 1934-1903.

The Museums Manager responded to questions from Joint Committee Members. It was agreed that the annual review and performance for 2021-22 would be presented to the Place and Economic Development Committee and Communities Committee for information as previously.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee:

- 1. approves the Museums Worcestershire Annual Review for 2021-2022 ; and**
- 2. note the information provided regarding performance in 2021-2022 compared to previous years.**

8 Quarter 4 Finance Report 2021-2022

The Joint Committee received the financial monitoring details, including budget variances for the 4th Quarter ending 31st March 2022 and an explanation of main variances and reserves.

The Head of Finance presented the report and informed Joint Committee Members that a healthy surplus had been achieved for the year-end performance at Quarter 4 which is £34,312 for Worcester City hosting and £10,601 surplus for Hartlebury Operations. The reason for the surplus was highlighted in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 (Tables 1 and 2) of the report.

The Joint Committee's attention was drawn to Table 2 where it was highlighted that the variance figure for employees should read -24,494 and not -58,806.

In referring to the transformation savings the Head of Finance stated that the VAT status in the Commandery admissions had been reviewed and it has been concluded that no changes can be made as this may affect the City's VAT exemption threshold. However this was achieved in this financial year because the Government temporarily reduced the VAT rate on museum admissions.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee note the financial monitoring details, including budget variances for the 4th Quarter ended 31st March 2022.

9 **City Museums Development**

The Joint Committee received a report on the progress on planned developments at the City Museums.

Worcester City Council confirmed proposals for the allocation of its £19.6 million Townsfunding in September 2021. This included investment for the City's museums as highlighted in paragraph 2.2 of the report.

The Museums Manager in presenting the report stated that the detailed Town Investment Plan that includes these developments 'Heritage and Riverside' were approved for submission to the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities at the Policy and Resources Committee on 22nd March 2022.

The Town Investment Plan sets out £185k towards the new Worcestershire Soldier gallery at The Commandery, to which the Mercian Regiment Museum (Worcestershire) Trust and the Worcestershire Yeomanry Museums Trust will additionally contribute £105k of matched funding. The City has a hosting agreement with each trust that ends in 2026 and discussions are underway to draft new agreements that set out the next phase of these relationships.

The Museums Manager also reported on the new collection for the Art Gallery and Museum. The fundraising charity Worcestershire Heritage, Art and Museums has been established and has received the first two instalments of Professor Olsen's donation, which in total, with Gift Aid, will give £400k restricted to further develop the art collection for display in a new gallery. This will be used to buy artworks that complement the City's collection by adding high profile names and rounding out the story this collection tells. Paragraph 3.10 of the report outlined in detail how this will take place.

The first purchase funded by the Shirley & Rolf Olsen Art Fund is hoped to be two paintings by Dame Laura Knight offered by a private vendor. The Charity will shortly launch its first fundraising campaign for these works matching Professor Olsen's support for their acquisition.

The Townsfund has also set aside £20k to prepare the infrastructure following the move of the Worcestershire Soldier display. The new collection Art Gallery has been planned as the first phase with phase with additional phases to improve facilities. The City Council is currently investigating whether other Government funding could support these phases and development and business model options will be brought back to a future meeting.

The Joint Committee Members endorsed and supported the proposals.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee note the progress on planned developments at the City Museums.

10 **Joint Museums Committee Work Programme**

The Joint Committee considered its future work programme.

The Museums Manager presented the report and highlighted the main items for consideration at future meetings.

There were no additional items added to the work programme by Joint Committee Members.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee note the work programme.

11 Any Other Business

None.

Duration of the meeting: 10.00a.m. to 11.00a.m.

Chair at the meeting on
16th September 2022