

JOINT MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

2nd March 2023

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

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

37 Appointment of Substitutes

None.

38 Declarations of Interest

None.

39 Public Participation

None.

40 Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 17th November 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

41 Quarter 3 Performance Report 2022-23

The Joint Committee received a report on the performance for the 3rd quarter of 2022-23.

The Museums Audience Manager, in presenting the report, informed Joint Committee Members that as reported last quarter, visitors and user numbers appear to be back pre-Covid levels at all sites. This contrasts with the results of the West Midlands Annual Museum Survey 2022 which found that, in mid-2022, 45% of visitors to museums across the region had been lost compared to 2019-20.

Joint Committee Members were informed that new income initiatives not yet included in the reported targets such as the Commandry's Escape Room and the County Museum's blacksmithing course are growing successfully, meaning the service is managing to absorb the increased staff costs this year.

The Museums Audience Manager drew the Joint Committee's attention to the post Covid visitors changes in comparison to 2018-19 data. This document only applied to the Worcester Art Gallery and Museum, the Commandry and Hartlebury data to be replicated.

The Joint Committee Members welcomed the report which provided very positive data.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee note the performance information provided relating to the 3rd quarter 2022-23.

42 Quarter 3 Finance Report 2022-23

The Joint Committee received the financial monitoring details, including budget variances for the 3rd Quarter ending 31st December 2022. The report provided information on the position at Quarter 3, including and explanation of main variances and reserves.

The Head of Finance presented the report and informed Joint Committee Members that the forecast year end performance at Quarter 3 is a surplus of £31,782, which was a testament to the management of the budget by the Museums Manager. The surplus would be transferred to the general reserve at year end.

The Museums Manager and Head of Finance responded to questions from Joint Committee Members on points of clarification.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee note the financial monitoring details, including budget variances for the 3rd quarter ended 31st December 2022.

43 Canaletto Exhibition Review

The Joint Committee considered a report on the review of the Canaletto Exhibition.

The exhibition had three aims which were highlighted at paragraph 2.2 of the report. To fund the costs of putting on such an ambitious exhibition, grant funding was sought and a charge was made for exhibition admission.

The Museums Manager in presenting the report outlined what impact the exhibition had for Worcester and its visitors and the learning points from holding the exhibition.

The exhibition was conceived as the next stage in the programme of 'Destination Exhibitions' the gallery has curated over the last ten years, aimed at bringing visitors into Worcester attracted by a significant artists' name. The annual exhibition budget of £13.5k has been at a standstill since 2010 and now usually only manages to pay for the summer exhibition. The next stage of planning needs to find the right demands on capacity and management for the exhibition programme going forward.

The Museums Manager stated that the service needs to either plan towards a new structure to fund the continuation of 'Destination Exhibition' programming or significantly reduce this work. The preferred option was outlined in 3 action points at paragraph 4.1 of the report.

The Museums Manager and the Museums Learning Manager responded to questions from the Joint Committee Members who congratulated the staff on putting together such an excellent exhibition.

The Joint Committee Members approved the proposed 3 actions as set out in the report.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee

- 1. note the success, impact and learning points from the 2022 Canaletto exhibition at Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum; and**
- 2. approve the proposed three actions, outlined in the report, regarding future exhibitions.**

44 Supporting Health and Wellbeing Outcomes

The Joint Committee received a report on supporting Health and Wellbeing outcomes.

The Museums Learning Manager presented the report and provided Joint Committee Members with background to the County Museum Community Wellbeing, its core programming and project work highlighting several case studies. This was supported by a powerpoint presentation.

The three areas of programming were highlighted – informal community groups; health outcomes and skills development, Appendix 1 attached to the report referred. Examples of partnership working were outlined in paragraph 2.5 of the report.

The next steps were to bring together these areas of knowledge and expertise and expand the offer in a sustainable way to provide the most for communities. The County Museum aims to use the expertise of its experience in wellbeing to create a robust community programme. The vision for the work was set out in the draft Museums Worcestershire Wellbeing Manifesto, attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

The Museums Manager highlighted that permanent and casual staff are trained in delivery with community work, children and young people and health and wellbeing. Funding potential was covered in paragraphs 3.4-3.7 of the report.

The Assistant Director, Communities stated that the Health and Wellbeing Strategy had recently been approved and was proud that the Joint Museums were leading the way.

The Assistant Director, Communities and the Museums Learning Manager responded to questions from Joint Committee Members.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee note the work undertaken so far to support improved health and wellbeing outcomes for Worcestershire residents, and the opportunities for this work in future service delivery at the County Museum.

45 Museums Worcestershire Service Plan

The Joint Committee considered a report on the Museums Worcestershire Service Plan for 2023-24.

The Joint Museums Committee is required to approve an annual service work plan under the terms of the Museums Agreement. The plan provides a detailed work programme for the forthcoming financial year based on the overall direction and strategic objectives within the strategic plan agreed in June 2019, there were highlighted in paragraph 2.2 of the report. The proposed 2023-24 Service Plan is attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

Worcestershire Heritage, Art and Museums, the registered charity established to support the Museums Worcestershire museums, has started looking at its strategic funding priorities.

The Museums Manager, in presenting the report, informed Joint Committee Members that the format for the 23-24 Services Plan has been adjusted from previous years to additionally include information about resources and staff to support meeting the Museums Accreditation Standards.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee approve the service work plan for 2023-24.

46 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.

47 Any Other Business

None.

Duration of the meeting: 10.00a.m. to 11.07a.m.

Chair at the meeting on
15th June 2023