

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

Minutes from the Meeting of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee held on Monday, 18th March, 2024 at 2.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT:

Borough Councillors

Councillors P Bland, A Bubb (Chair), M de Whalley and A Kemp (Vice Chair)

County Councillors

Councillors L Bambridge and M Chenery of Horsburgh

Ex-Officio Non-Voting Members

Councillor J Ward, Norfolk Joint Museums Committee
Councillor R Kybird, Norfolk Joint Museums Committee

Co-opted Non-Voting Members

Lindsey Bavin, True's Yard Museum

Officers

Oliver Bone, Lynn Museum
Robin Hanley, Norfolk Museum Service

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Mr B Davison.

2 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

3 **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

5

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF MUSEUMS

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The Assistant Head of Museums introduced the report on the King's Lynn Museum activities in the period from December 2023 to February 2024.

The Assistant Head of Museums drew the Committee's attention to section 1 of the report on Covid-19 and Infection Control service update and explained that it had been proposed with other Area Museum Committee's that they would no longer report on this specifically going forward as they were coming out of the winter period but assured the Committee that they would continue to monitor the situation closely across the service in terms of both risks around Covid and other infections.

The Curator of the Lynn Museum drew the Committee's attention to the following areas of the report:

- Exhibitions and events at Lynn Museum
 - The Tiger Who Came to Tea Exhibition
 - Current Exhibition: The Moon: Meet our Nearest Neighbour
 - Family events
 - Family Trails
 - Mini Museum
 - Coffee Mornings
 - Talks Programme

The Curator of the Lynn Museum invited the Committee to ask any questions in relation to section 2 of the report.

Councillor A Kemp referred to the family trails and asked whether postcodes were recorded to find out how many people were coming from particular wards. In response, the Curator explained they did not currently take postcode information from people but advised when people book they would get a sense of where people were coming from.

Following on from the question raised by Councillor A Kemp, the Chair, Councillor A Bubb commented that people may be interested in signing up to receive emails around upcoming events and asked whether there was something already in existence. In response, the Assistant Head of Museums confirmed they had a newsletter which visitors could sign up for and highlighted that they encourage visitors to join their Museum Pass Membership Scheme which enables them to keep up to date with all sorts of things happening across the service.

The Committee's attention was drawn further to the following areas of the report:

- Newman Legacy project
- Other Museum developments
 - Publicity and promotion
 - Building Work at Lynn Museum

The Chair invited questions and comments in relation to those areas of the report.

Councillor M de Whalley referred to the building work at the Lynn Museum and asked whether it would enable a refresh of the Seahenge Exhibition. He advised there was some additional work commissioned by the British Museum for the display of the loan of Seahenge and asked whether any of that work could be incorporated into the Exhibition. He added the Borough Council was hoping in the winter to install 7 Oak trees as part of an Acorns Project and wondered whether the Museum Service were interested in creating a link to this at Seahenge. In response, the Curator explained they did not have current plans to refresh the Seahenge displays as part of the building works closure period but confirmed they did have plans to refresh and enhance the Seahenge Gallery. He added that he liked the idea of the link with the planted Oak trees. Councillor M de Whalley advised he would be in contact with regards to that.

The Chair, Councillor A Bubb made reference to the fortnightly picture in the Lynn News and asked whether it would be possible to talk to the Lynn News and promote Museum developments in the Your Local Paper and the Eastern Daily Press (EDP). In response, the Curator explained Chris Bishop from the EDP included a piece on the Moon Exhibition and added that he liked the idea of publicising in the Your Local Paper and confirmed he would speak to colleagues.

County Councillor L Bambridge commented that it could be worth contacting the Manager Director for the latest figures on how many people purchase the Lynn News whether it be a paper issue or online. The Assistant Head of Museums added that the team based in King's Lynn had really good connections into local media outlets and other networks to help promote what they do and explained they also have a really experienced Communications Officer who supports Oliver Bone, the Curator of the Lynn Museum and are always looking at ways of promoting their work. The Museum Curator at True's Yard added and explained they were currently providing the Your Local Paper with photographs.

The Committee's attention was drawn further to the following areas of the report:

- Borough Council partnership working
- Learning & Outreach

- Kick the Dust Norfolk – project update. A verbal update was given following publication of the agenda.

The Assistant Head of Museums highlighted to Members within that section of the report that they had completed the recruitment of the Stories of Lynn Learning & Engagement Officer post and were pleased to report to the Committee that Elizabeth Joice would be joining Norfolk Museum Service and Borough Council colleagues based at the Stories of Lynn at the beginning of May.

Councillor A Kemp asked whether under the Service Level Agreement (SLA), if there were any plans for refreshing the Stories of Lynn collections and listed examples such as costumed actors or holograms. In response, the Assistant Head of Museums explained that their colleague Dayna Woolbright curates the collections at the Stories of Lynn. He added the Stories of Lynn Exhibition was originally funded through the Heritage Lottery Fund and explained the funding for any improvements, Borough Council colleagues would need to lead but he advised they would be happy to have conversations with Borough Council colleagues to explore on opportunities to think about fundraising and priorities in terms of refreshing the Exhibition.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor J Ward in relation to section 3 of the report on the Newman Legacy project, the Curator of the Lynn Museum explained the Newman Assistant Curator and the Newman Teaching Museum Trainee would be focusing their work on auditing and documenting collections.

In response to a comment made by the Chair, Councillor A Bubb, the Assistant Head of Museums explained that their Learning Teams looked into what schools need to study through the National curriculum and would then see any opportunities to make it relevant in terms of their collections and advised this was why the Great Fire of London was listed.

The visitor figures for the period December 2023 to the end of January 2024 were circulated to the Committee at the meeting and noted. A copy of the visitor figures is attached to the minutes.

Councillor M de Whalley congratulated Officers on a fantastic recovery and asked how these figures compared with pre Covid figures. In response, the Assistant Head of Museums explained the Exhibitions were a key part of achieving the figures and added the Lynn Museum had gone beyond the figures which they had pre Covid.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The Committee identified an item in relation to the possibility of a refresh of the Stories of Lynn for consideration at their next meeting and asked the Democratic Services Officer to contact Councillor Simon

Ring, Cabinet Member for Tourism, Events and Marketing and invite them to their next meeting.

6 **TRUE'S YARD REPORT**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on YouTube](#)

The Committee received the report of the Museum Curator at True's Yard.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the following areas of the report:

- Temporary exhibitions and events at True's Yard Fisherfolk Museum
 - True's Talks
- Learning and Outreach
 - Half term activities
 - Festival of Archaeology
 - Oral History Project – Capturing Memories

The Museum Curator at True's Yard invited questions and comments from the Committee in relation to the report.

The Chair, Councillor A Bubb referred to the Festival of Archaeology and asked whether there were plans to do dredging in the moat around Loke Road in North Lynn. In response, the Museum Curator at True's Yard was unsure but would raise this question.

Councillor M de Whalley raised a question in relation to the push for the stories of North End and asked whether there was anything the Borough Council could do to publicise this work. In response, the Museum Curator explained print media would be more likely to be seen and suggested working with libraries and putting up posters.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

7 **REPORT OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK**

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The Chair, Councillor A Bubb read out the Tourism Department Update for January to February 2024. The Committee noted the update.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

8 **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2024/2025**

The Schedule of Meetings for 2024/2025 were agreed and noted.

Councillor R Kybird asked the Assistant Head of Museums for an update on the Norwich Castle Project and future of SHARE Museums East.

The Assistant Head of Museums provided an update on Norwich Castle and explained they had the first section handed back 18 months ago which was the new toilet facilities including accessible toilets and changing place. He added the next section to be handed back was the new entrance including the shop, the new café restaurant and the new school space and expected that to be handed back to them during April. The Assistant Head of Museums advised they were hoping to open the front doors of Norwich Castle again in May.

The Assistant Head of Museums provided an update on SHARE Museums East and reminded the Committee that Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) had been in receipt of additional funding from Arts Council England for many years to provide museum development support to museums across the East of England. He explained last year, Arts Council England announced that they wanted to review the structure of museum development within England as a result of which they wanted to see areas being combined so that they could deliver efficiencies. He added NMS partnered with Brighton & Hove Museums and worked together to submit a joint bid which was successful and advised from the 1st April they would be jointly providing Museum Development South East with NMS continuing to be the lead.

9 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee would be held on 17th June 2024 at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, King's Lynn.

The Chair explained to the Committee they had an invitation to visit The Moon: Meet our Nearest Neighbour Exhibition prior to the next meeting commencing at 1.00pm.

The meeting closed at 3.03 pm