

**NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL**

**BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK**

**KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE**

**Notes of a Meeting of the above Committee held on  
Monday 18 October 2010 at 2.15 pm  
in the Committee Suite, Ground Floor, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn**

**PRESENT:**

Councillor Mrs E A Nockolds	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Councillor Mrs S Smeaton	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Councillor I Gourlay (substitute)	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Mr C Bamfield	- Executive Director, Leisure and Public Space, Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Mr T Humphreys	- Tourism Manager, Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Mrs W Vincent	- Democratic Services Officer, Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
County Councillor M Chenery of Horsbrugh	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor M Langwade	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor B W C Long	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor A J Wright	- Norfolk County Council
Dr R Hanley	- Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service
Laura Cole-Matthews	- NMAS Growing Communities Officer (Item 5 only)

**OBSERVING:**

Councillor C Walters	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
1 member of the public	

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Borough Councillors A Tyler and R Searle, County Councillor S Dunn, Mana Avey (Youth Representative).

**2 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 June 2010 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **3 MATTERS ARISING**

There were none.

### **4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

#### **Item 6(b) – Town House Museum Closure Implications**

It was noted that Councillors Mrs E Nockolds and B Long were Cabinet Members of the Borough Council who at their Cabinet Meeting on 7 September recommended to Council the following:

- Agree the termination of the lease with Norfolk County Council for the Town House Museum
- Agree to the closure of the Arts Centre Visual arts facilities at their transfer to the Town Hall.
- Agree the proposal to locate the Registrars into the Town Hall and give delegated authority to the Property Services Manager to negotiate and agree terms with Norfolk County Council for the re-location.
- Agree proposals for extended use of the Town Hall including authority to commence the required building works within existing budget.
- Delegate authority to the Executive Director, Leisure & Public Space in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Special Projects and other appropriate Cabinet Members to implement proposals.
- Delegate authority to the Property Services Manager to negotiate with the National Trust for a variation of the lease of the Arts Centre.

### **5 PRESENTATION BY NMAS GROWING COMMUNITIES OFFICER ON WORK UNDERTAKEN WITH THE KING'S LYNN GROWTH POINT TEAM**

The Committee received a presentation from Laura Cole-Matthews, NMAS Growing Communities Officer on her work undertaken with the King's Lynn Growth Point Team. A copy of the presentation is attached at Appendix 1 to the minutes.

The NMAS Growing Communities Officer circulated copies of the Memories of Lynn Touring Exhibition.

Following the presentation, the Committee was invited to comment/ask questions, a summary of which is set out below:

- The Memories of Lynn Touring Exhibition had received excellent press coverage which had encouraged people to contribute to items for the exhibition. The Exhibition would be touring the following venues: Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Fairstead Community Centre, Hillington Square Community Centre, South Lynn Baptist Church, King's Lynn Library, Gaywood Library and True's Yard Fisherfolk Museum.
- The Touring Exhibition would be displayed at the Lynn Museum from January to June 2011.

- The Touring Exhibition panels currently being used would be available to loan for future consultation purposes.
- It would be interesting to find out what people remember of how King's Lynn used to be and how they would like it to be in order to steer direction for the future. **Response:** *Events and memories were being recorded which would help to inform future decisions.*
- Had there been anyone available to contribute to the exhibition prior to Hillington Square being built? **Response:** *Yes, a lady who had lived in the old Hillington Square area prior to it being built. She had then moved away but returned and now lived in Hillington Square.*

**RESOLVED:** The Chairman thanked the NMAS Growing Communities Officer for her most informative and interesting presentation.

## **6 REPORTS OF WESTERN AREA MANAGER**

### **(a) King's Lynn Museums Report – June to September 2010**

The Western Area Manager presented a report which provided Members with information on King's Lynn Museums from June to September 2010.

The following points were highlighted by the Western Area Manager.

- The Lynn Museum had now entered its free admission period, which extended from October to March.
- The current temporary exhibition at Lynn Museum is *World War Two: Local Secrets and Stories*, which would run until 8 January 2011. This exhibition explored the subject of everyday life in Norfolk during World War Two as told by local people. Following its run at Lynn Museum, the exhibition would move on to Gressenhall and Ancient House Museum, Thetford. A range of complimentary family and school events had been planned.
- A broad programme of events was organised by the Community Outreach Officer for the school summer holidays, delivered both on museums sites and as outreach to local communities. 584 children and adults participated in activities throughout July and August 2010.
- A range of half term Seahenge-themed events were delivered in June to mark the re-opening of the Lynn Museum following the installation of the Seahenge stump display.
- The Lynn Museum had continued to benefit from excellent coverage in the Lynn News through the weekly *History on our Doorstep* series of articles highlighting different objects from the museum's collections.
- External maintenance works would commence on the reception roof of the Lynn Museum during October.
- The Friends continued to support a long-term programme of painting conservation for King's Lynn oil paintings.
- The latest edition of the Friends newsletter had been published. The Friends held their Annual General Meeting at the Lynn Museum on 11 October 2010. Bryan Howling had been elected as the new Chairman.

- King's Lynn Museums continued to lead the Greater Fens Museums Partnership as part of the NMAS role as lead partner for the East of England Hub for *Renaissance in the Regions*. Some twenty museums and heritage sites continued to be involved with the partnership.
- The latest traveling exhibition and events programme organised by the Fenland Partnership was *Fenland Stories*, exploring both traditional and modern Fenland tales and stories. A range of community films created specifically for this exhibition feature on an interactive willow tree that formed the centerpiece of the display. Sixteen museums and other venues currently featured on the exhibition tour, which would end at Lynn Museum in Summer 2011. Members were invited to take a copy of the DVD and a bookmark at the end of the meeting.
- The NMAS Renaissance-funded Growing Communities Officer had worked with the Borough Council's Growth Point team to develop the Memories of Lynn project. This work was being complemented by a film made by local young people exploring how the town had changed since the 1960s through intergenerational interviews with local residents.
- Both the Lynn Museum and Town House Museum were open with free admission for Heritage Open Day on 12 September resulting in 828 visits to the Town House Museum and 591 visits to the Lynn Museum. The town had benefited from the bus service arranged by the Civic Society.
- Between June and September the Learning Officer had worked with 250 school children in the museum. School bookings levels for the Autumn term were looking promising, with another 200 children already booked to visit before December.
- The Learning Officer was also involved in an extended schools outreach programme at Reffley Primary School. The project would run until December 2010.
- From October there would be a children's History Club running every Thursday in term time at the Lynn Museum which had been funded by the Gifted and Talented scheme aimed at KS2 children.
- The Community Outreach Officer was continuing to deliver programmes for young people categorised as NEET (not in education, employment or training). Further Renaissance funding had been secured for a successor project with a group of young people who participated in recent film-making projects. The next NEET course would commence on 13 October for ten weeks. The project would link in with the Memories of Lynn exhibition.

The visitor figures to King's Lynn Museums were tabled and the Western Area Manager provided an overview from April to September 2010. He explained that the Lynn Museum had been closed during April and part of May which had affected the number of visitors to the museum. Since the re-opening of the Lynn Museum there had been a significant number of visits. With the Museum being in the free admission period it was anticipated that there would be a boost in visitors to view the Seahenge display.

The visitor figures for the Town House Museum had increased for the same period last year and the performance appeared to be consistent.

Councillor Langwade made reference to the Reffley Temple site which was on land leased by the Borough Council to the Local Community Association. He added that the display could be stored in the Community Association Hall.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds informed the Committee that there was a new walks booklet available entitled "Coast Alive" and featured walks in and around King's Lynn, including a walk within Reffley Wood. The project was supported by NCC with funding from the EU. The project aims to encourage more people to use the local footpaths for recreation.

In response to a question on the Heritage Open Day, the Western Area Manager explained that the Lynn Museums supported the open day. The Town House Museum historically had an increased number of visitors on the open day. He added that this was an excellent testimony of organisations working together.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds asked if visitors travelled a greater distance to see the Seahenge display. In response, the Western Area Manager explained that a postcode survey was undertaken which indicated the distance people travelled to visit the museum. The core of visits were local within a 30 minute travel time.

In response to questions regarding the Friends of the Museum, the Western Area Manager explained that the Friends had committed £1,000 to support a rolling programme of conservation of art work. The Friends often provided match funding to enable the Museum to purchase paintings.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds enquired if young people from the Barroway Drove and Downham Market area had attended the school holiday activities and Fenland Stories. In response, the Western Area Manager explained that the NMAS had tried to hold events in a wide spread of locations. He offered to bring a report to the next meeting which outlined details and attendance at events.

In response to questions on the Children's History Club, the Western Area Manager advised that the club was being promoted by the Community Outreach Officer in schools. There was a limited number of spaces available and a list was being co-ordinated. The club was being offered at no charge.

The Chairman thanked the Western Area Manager for the detailed report.

**RESOLVED: (1) That the report be noted.**

**(2) The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds on behalf of the Committee undertook to write to the Friends of the Museum thanking them for the valuable contribution towards the Museums.**

**(3) The Western Area Manager to submit a report outlining details/attendance at learning and outreach events.**

**(b) Town House Museum Closure Implications**

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds explained the reasons why the Committee had not been invited to participate in a tour of the Town House Museum prior to today's formal meeting, and made reference to the Council's Cabinet report of 7 September 2010.

Chris Bamfield, Executive Director Leisure and Public Space at the Borough Council attended for this item.

The Executive Director Leisure and Public Space addressed the Committee and explained that elected Members were aware of the proposals as reported to Cabinet and Full Council. He congratulated the Western Area Manager on his excellent report and although there was an element of sadness with the closure of the Town Hall Museum, there were enhanced opportunities within the revised plans for the Town Hall. There were ongoing discussions with NMAS and handheld audio devices would be able for those participating in the new heritage tour. There would also be displays to complement events and the history of the Town Hall.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds highlighted the reasons for the closure of the Town Hall and explained that with the decision to close St Margaret's House, the Registrars Service had indicated that they wished to be located within the Town Hall.

The Western Area Manager presented the report which detailed the initial implications of the Borough Council's proposal to close the Town House Museum. The report also identified opportunities for maintaining and enhancing NMAS service delivery through a re-developed Town Hall complex.

The Committee was informed that the Borough Council had indicated that it intended to seek the closure of the Town House Museum as part of a wider efficiencies-based project to relocate Visual Arts and Registrars services to the Town Hall and enhance public access to the Town Hall's historic spaces.

NMAS also had office accommodation, collections and non-collections storage in the Town Hall building. The Town House currently provided the focus for NMAS schools and community outreach programmes in King's Lynn, elements of which made regular use of hired spaces in the Town Hall. The last day of opening of the Town House Museum would be 30 October 2010.

It was highlighted that NMAS service delivery in King's Lynn was governed by an annual Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Borough Council. The SLA covered the cost of offering 6 months free admission at the Lynn Museum.

The Western Area Manager advised that NMAS and the Borough Council officers had discussed the Town House closure proposals and were currently exploring opportunities for NMAS to support the delivery of a range of interpretation, curatorial and learning services within the redeveloped Town Hall Complex. It was anticipated that a revised SLA would be agreed following the completion of those discussions.

The Borough Council had indicated that it would provide appropriate alternative office and storage accommodation for NMAS use following NMAS vacating existing spaces in the Town House and Town Hall.

NMAS staff would liaise with Borough Council colleagues to agree an appropriate timescale for the museum pack-up. The Western Area Manager outlined the key issues to be addressed as detailed in section 2.3 of the report and reassured the Committee that NMAS was confident the Town House Museum could be packed up within the timescale agreed.

The opportunities for NMAS to deliver future services through a redeveloped Town Hall complex were outlined as set out in section 3 of the report.

The Western Area Manager explained that NMAS staff would continue to liaise with colleagues from the Borough Council in regard to the following key areas:

- Timetabling and resource requirements for the Town House Museum pack-up project.
- Provision of appropriate alternative office and storage accommodation.
- The role for NMAS in providing new displays and interpretation in the re-developed Town Hall.
- The role for NMAS in delivering long-term specialist museum services in the re-developed Town Hall.

The resource implications were outlined as set out in section 5 of the report.

In conclusion, the Western Area Manager drew the Committee's attention to the following recommendations:

- (i) That the Area Museums Committee notes the report.
- (ii) The Area Museums Committee supports NMAS involvement with the development of future heritage services in the re-developed Town Hall complex.

Councillor Langwade expressed concern at the condition of undercroft where some items were being stored. In response, the Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds advised that the undercroft was not the responsibility of the Museums Service, but a storage area located within the Town Hall Car Park was used for storage purposes.

In response to questions regarding being able to view all objects following the closure of the Town House Museum and records being kept, the Chairman

drew Members' attention to 2.3 of the Western Area Manager's report which outlined the key issues to be addressed. The Western Area Manager advised that in accordance with adopted procedures, a record of all items/displays in the Town House Museum would be made by the NMAS staff. He added that it was unlikely that any item would be de-accessioned or disposed of.

In response to further questions, the Western Area Manager explained that all staff employed by Norfolk County Council were aware of the proposals.

County Councillor M Chenery of Horsbrugh enquired if there were any artifacts on loan and if any were dispersed with, would they go out of Norfolk. In response, the Western Area Manager explained that there were a small number of items currently on loan. NMAS were presently working to end loan agreements. However, the Bridlewell Museum in Norwich had expressed an interest in displaying items from the 1950s room currently in the Town House Museum.

Councillor Gourlay commented that at a recent Full Council meeting he had gained the impression that objects would be displayed on a rotational basis. The Western Area Manager explained that it was hoped items could be incorporated into the proposed Town Hall displays or Lynn Museum and there would be scope for temporary exhibitions.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds, suggested that specific items such as toys be displayed in the Registrars Area where families would be visiting and children would be able to view the toys. The Western Area Manager advised that there would be opportunities to explore displaying a wide range of items to engage a broad range of people within the redeveloped Town Hall complex. Toys would continue to be a key to activity which schools would be participating in.

**RESOLVED: 1) That the Area Museums Committee notes the report.**

**2) That the Area Museums Committee supports NMAS involvement with the development and delivery of future heritage services in the re-developed Town Hall complex and in addition include reference to the following:**

- **if financially possible to maintain and develop activities for schools**
- **support joint working with the visual arts**
- **maintain access to key collections including toys.**

## **7 SITE UPDATE REPORT**

Green Quay six monthly activity report for period ended 31 March 2010

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds explained that no report had been received. However, she reported that the Green Quay was busy regarding the hiring of rooms.



**RESOLVED:** The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds on behalf of the Committee would visit the Green Quay.

## **8 REPORT OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

The Tourism Manager presented a report that updated Members of the Committee on tourism marketing and the operation of the tourism and heritage facilities operated by the Borough Council during the period June – September 2010.

The key points were highlighted as set out below:

- West Norfolk Holiday Guide and advertising campaign 2010 - The promotional campaigns aimed at generating enquiries for the West Norfolk Holiday Guide had delivered good results to date.

	<b>Target</b>	<b>To date</b>
Direct request through West Norfolk campaign	46,000	42,651(to 06.10.10)
Direct requests through East Anglia Seaside Campaign (completed)	14,000	16,055

An additional 40,000 copies were distributed to Tourist Information Centres within the UK, and distributed locally including exhibitions and events. The Tourism Manager advised that the Council was confident that a higher target would be achieved than the previous year.

- West Norfolk Marketing Campaign 2011 – West Norfolk Holiday Guide 2011 was currently in production and would be printed in December 2010. The marketing campaign aimed at generating enquiries would commence in early January. Where to Go and What to Do in West Norfolk would be published in January with distribution across Norfolk and surrounding areas would take place from February onwards. New editions of Discover King's Lynn, Hunstanton mini guide and Downham Market mini guide would be published in March 2011.
- The Borough Council in partnership with the West Norfolk Tourism Forum were continuing to develop and explore opportunities for developing new strategic marketing approaches, in particular, in the current environment of change at local, sub regional and national level which may influence future approaches to marketing and development of the tourism economy. Opportunities for more collaborative marketing of the tourism product based around the North Norfolk coast would be explored.
- Destination Management System and website – The new accommodation section on the website [www.visitwest.norfolk.com](http://www.visitwest.norfolk.com) using the facilities and content of the new Destination Management System was nearing completion and would go live within the next few weeks. The existing accommodation section appearing on the website would remain functional until the new facilities went live.

- Tourist Information Centres - Visitor numbers have been good, although lower than the record levels achieved in 2009. Both King's Lynn and Hunstanton TIC's saw figures lower than normally expected during the January – March period. Figures for August were also lower than expected. In King's Lynn the August figures were also lower than 2009 when the Hanse Festival exhibition attracted significant additional numbers. September figures were high at both TIC's. Overall to date, figures were around 9% lower than 2009, but around 2% above the average for the four preceding years.
- Heritage Open Day 12 September 2010 – The event featured an increased number of 39 locations or venues open to the public as well as historical re-enactments and a vintage bus service. Publicity for the event was increased for 2010 with wider distribution of the Heritage Open Day programme and production of a promotional flyer targeting potential visitors within around 30-40 miles of King's Lynn.
- Red Mount and South Gate – The programme of public open days at Red Mount Chapel and South Gate ran from 29 May to 11 September 2010 on Wednesdays and Saturdays plus the introduction of Sunday opening in August. Both sites were promoted on a joint ticket basis, £2 adults, children free. Visitor numbers were lower than in 2009, the first year that Red Mount was open to the public.
- Tales of the Old Gaol House/Regalia Rooms and the King's Lynn Archive – Due to reductions in staff levels, opening times during April – October were reduced from 6 days per week in previous years to 5 days per week during 2010. Following the recommendations from the tourism service review, the site was due to close to the public after 30 October, with access to the Archive and Regalia Rooms maintained on Fridays. The site was scheduled to re-open to the public in April subject to changes now proposed for the wider Town Hall complex. The Gaol House did not feature in the 2011 holiday guide and visitor figures were 24% down on 2009 figures.
- Pilgrimage Trail – Based on the Pilgrimage Trail developed in 2007, plans had been developed for the introduction of Royal National Institute of Blind People – React system was being launched on 25 October 2010.
- Normans in Norfolk – The Borough Council, Museum Service, Norfolk Record Office, Civic Society and other organisations worked with Norfolk Tourism and BBC Learning to co-ordinate a wide range of special events and activities from August to October as part of BBC Hands on History and to tie in with the BBC's Norman season on TV, radio and online.
- Ambassadors Programme – The Ambassador Programme had continued to enroll more people as West Norfolk Ambassadors. The current Autumn programme had included sessions in September, October and November, with most sessions run to capacity and with over 650 people now having completed the programme. The special free guided walks now offered to delegates who had completed the Ambassadors programme had continued to prove popular.
- Regeneration Service Review – Through the regeneration service review, part of the Borough Council service review process, the

operational management of tourism and heritage facilities including The Town Hall, Gaol House and TIC's had been transferred to the Leisure and Open Spaces Directorate. Tourism marketing and development remained a key part of the regeneration function which would be incorporated into the Development and Regeneration Services Directorate.

In response to questions regarding the number of visitors to the Red Mount and South Gates on Sundays, the Tourism Manager advised that on the 5 Sundays in August there were 112 visitors to Red Mount.

Responding to questions on the Heritage Open Day, the Western Area Manager explained that 30,000 single sheet flyers had been distributed to main tourist outlets and larger accommodation locations which included Spalding, Boston and Peterborough and were aimed at approximately one hour travelling distance.

In response to questions on the Pilgrimage Trail and the installation of the React System, the Western Area Manager explained that this would be included in next year's promotional campaign particularly in the main West Norfolk Holiday Guide and Discover King's Lynn. The Chairman added that the React System would be available in the Tower Gardens and that she would be encouraging the planting of sensory plants within the gardens.

County Councillor Long commented on the number of visitors to Tourist Information Centres being lower than in 2009 and that visitors used the internet to obtain information prior to arriving at their holiday destination. The Tourism Manager stated that national research had been undertaken in 2009 and that visitors in Britain used the internet only, TIC only or a combination when holidaying. The study had concluded that 46% of those people who had visited the Tourist Information Centre whilst on holiday had extended their stay in the area.

Following questions on information being available at railway stations in London through to King's Lynn, the Tourism Manager explained that information display racks were provided by major distributors and companies could pay to display leaflets. There were no display stands specifically dedicated to West Norfolk.

The Chairman thanked the Tourism Manager for his informative report.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

## **9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### Archaeology Dig at Whitefriars

Councillor Langwade asked for a progress report on the archaeology dig being undertaken at Whitefriars.

**RESOLVED: The Western Area Manager undertook to provide an update report at the next meeting of the Committee.**

**10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 10 January 2011, 2.15 pm in Meeting Rooms 1, 2 and 3, Borough Council Offices, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn.

***If any Member is unable to attend meetings of the Committee, please could they forward apologies to the Democratic Services Officer well in advance of the meeting.***

**The Meeting closed at 3.58 pm**