

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, 20th March, 2023 at 2.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT:

Borough Councillors

Councillors T Bubb, M de Whalley, A Kemp, Mrs E Nockolds (Chair) and A Tyler

County Councillors

Councillors L Bambridge and M Chenery of Horsburgh

Norfolk Museums Service

R Hanley and O Bone

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors N Daubney, C Dawson, J Ward, Councillor R Kybird, P Eke and R Williams.

An apology for absence was received from L Bavin the following day.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2022 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

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

The Assistant Head of Museums presented the report on the King's Lynn Museum activities in the period from November 2022 – February 2023.

The Committee was advised the service continues to manage challenges around Covid and wider infection control. Members were reassured that the site infrastructure was still in place including hand sanitisation and cleaning regimes and continuing to be very careful around monitoring ventilation levels as a means of reducing risk of people passing Covid or other infections particularly during the winter period.

The Assistant Head of Museums explained that they continue to make effective use of CO2 monitors across the service including here in King's Lynn. This has been helpful in enabling Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) to make sure staff and visitors are kept safe. These measures have enabled NMS to be confident about gradually increasing visitors and has helped with increasing levels of staff and volunteers.

The Committee's attention was drawn to item 1.6 regarding volunteering. The Assistant Head of Museums highlighted the importance of volunteering in the operation of NMS and reported that volunteering is nearly back to pre-covid levels. NMS continue to accommodate individual concerns from volunteers and have updated their code of conduct to ensure that volunteers who are more anxious can be supported appropriately.

The Assistant Head of Museums invited the Committee to ask any questions about section 1 of the report.

Councillor Mrs Nockolds asked questions around volunteering and if the NMS had any plans to take part in volunteering at the Civic Society Heritage Sites event in June. It was noted that the King's Lynn Society would be organising an event in June which would be a recruitment day for more volunteers at the Heritage sites in King's Lynn.

Councillor Mrs Nockolds mentioned that King Charles has requested more advertising around volunteering and wants it publicised more to encourage more volunteers to come forward and asked NMS to find out how it's being advertised. The Assistant Head of Museums confirmed that he would make sure the volunteer coordinating group is aware of that.

Councillor A Tyler asked whether any volunteers from the Borough Council or NMS were going to meet with the pilgrims who come annually to the Red Mount in King's Lynn. Councillor Mrs Nockolds confirmed the Borough Council are publicising that the Southgate and Red Mount will be open this season and asking for volunteers.

The Assistant Head of Museums provided an overview of the exhibitions and events at the Lynn Museum and future exhibition plans which included:

- Hoards: Archaeological Treasures from West Norfolk (25 October 2022 – 11 November 2023)
- The Tiger Who Came to Tea exhibition (Winter of 2023 – 2024)
- The Moon, our Nearest Neighbour
- Woof! (Next Summer)

The Assistant Head of Museums invited the Committee to ask any questions about section 2 of the report.

In response to a question from Councillor Kemp regarding publicising events, the Curator explained that they have a variety of different ways of approaching people, social media being the most popular, Facebook in particular for the family events had been very good and explained they use traditional media such as the Local Newspaper, the NMS website and additionally handing out leaflets which promote any future activities and events.

Councillor de Whalley asked whether they had trialed targeted advertising through social media. The Assistant Head of Museums explained that wasn't something he was aware of but explained they had used Google advertising which they think has been successful and enables them to target in terms of geography and demographics.

Councillor de Whalley referred to agenda item 2.1 and passed on positive feedback which he had received from the Hoards exhibition and passed on his thanks to the Assistant Head of Museums and Curator. Councillor de Whalley then referred to agenda item 2.2 and asked if there was any thought to promote the understanding of biodiversity species. The Curator explained they have natural history expertise and that their natural history Curator would be working on The Tiger Who Came to Tea exhibition and explained that would be a good opportunity to promote this idea.

Councillor Bubb asked whether the coffee mornings were to end at the end of March. The Curator confirmed the coffee mornings would continue through the year.

Councillor Bubb referred to the NMS website and commented that it is hard to navigate and find certain information such as opening times and information regarding free entry to the museum. The Assistant Head of Museums explained they were continuing to look into improving the website and confirmed he would pass on feedback to the team.

Councillor A Tyler asked whether the NMS had a good relationship with TV and radio both locally and nationally. The Assistant Head of Museums explained they have a PR Communication Manager who

maintains positive relationships with Norfolk County Council press teams but also regularly with regional and national press and media which helps promote the services which they offer.

Councillor Mrs Nockolds asked whether a decision had been made to hold an event to celebrate King Charles' coronation. The Curator explained the Lynn Museum would be open on that Saturday for members of the public to attend and confirmed the teams were working on ideas such as holding a family trail event.

The Assistant Head of Museums and Curator responded to questions and comments in relation to item 3.

Councillors raised comments and questions regarding savages and it was explained this was another area they wanted to work on as an upcoming project, particularly with the savages drawings.

Councillor Kemp asked a question around digitalising collections. The Assistant Head of Museums explained the collections which are digitalised are all available through the collections catalogue which is accessible through the museums website and confirmed they were looking to get as much online as possible and is working progress in increasing the number of objects people can access online.

In response to a question from Councillor A Tyler, the Assistant Head of Museums explained they operate a comprehensive retail service across the County. Councillor A Tyler asked whether you can only obtain and buy the souvenirs from the Lynn Museum by visiting it or whether there was another way. The Assistant Head of Museums explained they were in the process of setting up an online shop for NMS retail but advised that this would have to comply with Norfolk County Council's systems and confirmed they had a meeting scheduled that week to look at that.

The Assistant Head of Museums and Curator responded to questions and comments in relation to item 4.

Councillor Bubb referred to agenda item 4.6 and asked if The Stories of Lynn was back to normal and whether they had put something in place to stop it from happening again in the future. The Curator confirmed it was getting back to normal and explained the question relating to whether any measures were in place to prevent it in the future would be a question for the Borough Council.

Councillor de Whalley congratulated the Assistant Head of Museums and Curator on the British Museum relationship and asked whether they were looking to expand their relationship with other museums. The Assistant Head of Museums highlighted to the Committee they were working with Time and Tide Museum in Great Yarmouth and were looking to form partnership with National Maritime Museum and also

work with colleagues in Greenwich and confirmed they would continue to work with those organisations.

In response to questions from Councillor Kemp, the Assistant Head of Museums explained they feature costume within the displays at the Lynn Museum but were no plans for a costume museum.

Councillor A Tyler asked whether there was any consideration for a future exhibition celebrating performing arts. The Assistant Head of Museums explained they work closely with King's Lynn Festival and have worked with them on a number of festival exhibitions and confirmed they would continue to try and support the Festival as much as they can.

The Assistant Head of Museums and Curator responded to questions and comments in relation to item 5.

Councillor de Whalley referred to agenda item 5.3 and asked whether there was funding available for schools struggling with transport costs so they could get to events. The Assistant Head of Museums explained they had measures in place to support school transport.

The Assistant Head of Museums highlighted agenda item 6, Kick the Dust project, to the Committee and explained the number of interventions with young people had increased. The Assistant Head of Museums reassured the Committee that the project continues to deliver really successfully.

The Assistant Head of Museums updated the Committee in terms of where they are with funding. The Assistant Head of Museums explained the current national lottery heritage fund funding for Kick the Dust comes in March and they have secured 3 years additional funding through Arts Council England to enable them to continue to deliver Kick the Dust branded activities. He explained the project continues to delivery really strong impacts.

Councillor de Whalley passed on his thanks to everyone involved in the Kick the Dust project.

Councillor Mrs Nockolds referred to the attendance figures. In response to a question from Councillor Mrs Nockolds, the Curator explained pre-covid, they were expecting the total for Lynn Museum to be just under 17,000 visitors and confirmed they would be above that figure.

6 **TRUE'S YARD REPORT**

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

In the absence of the Museum Curator, the Chair, Councillor Mrs Nockolds explained they had all received the report. The report was noted.

7 **REPORT FROM THE LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT OFFICER -
STORIES OF LYNN AND PROJECT WORKER FOR KICK THE DUST**

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

In the absence of the Learning and Engagement Officer, the Chair, Councillor Mrs Nockolds explained how excellent the report was and expressed how thankful they were for the Learning and Engagement Officer's work. The report was noted.

8 **BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT**

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

In the absence of the Borough Council's Tourism Manager, the Chair, Councillor Mrs Nockolds presented his report which gave an update on tourism marketing and development activities from June 2022 – 1st March 2023 and explained the importance around this report.

9 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting is to be confirmed after the Borough and Parish Elections in May.

The meeting closed at 3.54 pm