

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL  
NOTES OF THE MUSEUM AND HERITAGE  
SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD AT GROVE HOUSE ON 20<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2019**

Meeting Commenced: 10.04 am

Meeting Concluded: 11:55 am

**PRESENT:** Councillors Peter Crew (Vice-Chairman), Robert Cleland, Catherine Gibbons, Jan Holloway, Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk and RFO), Matt Hardy (Visitor Services Manager), Molly Maher (Development Officer), Amal Khreisheh and Josh Tickner (South West Heritage Trust), Heather Morrisey (Friends Group) and Rosemary Dowie (Civic Society).

	<p>Prior to the commencement of the meeting, it was with regret that the Vice-Chairman informed of the late passing of Weston Museum's Café Supervisor, Susan. The meeting joined together for a minutes silence in remembrance of Sue and thoughts for her family.</p>
<b>321</b>	<p><b>Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes</b></p> <p>In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, Councillor Peter Crew took his place as Chairman of the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Councillor John Crockford-Hawley, Cara MacMahon and Tom Mayberry.</p> <p>Apologies from Peter Johnson had been received prior to the meeting.</p>
<b>322</b>	<p><b>Declarations of interest</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest received.</p>
<b>323</b>	<p><b>To approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the last meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Crew <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Jan Holloway</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman</p>
<b>324</b>	<p><b>Members to receive HLF project reports on: - South West Heritage Trust (SWHT) progress</b></p> <p>A report from Amal Khreisheh had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p><b>324.1 Alfred Leete</b></p> <p>It was noted that the Alfred Leete exhibition closed on the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2019. A manual visitor count was carried out which concluded that 2,907 people had visited the exhibition. It was explained that this number was low as a result of the exhibition needing invigilation which often resulted in the doors being closed. In total 72 responses had been collected via visitor surveys. A report of these responses was to be compiled by an evaluation consultant.</p>

### **324.2 Growing up in Somerset Exhibition**

There was a new exhibition in the Temporary Exhibition Gallery entitled 'From Spinning Tops to Space Hoppers: Growing Up in Somerset' which explored childhood in Somerset during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century. A children's party theme opening event took place on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

### **324.3 Future Temporary Exhibitions**

It was noted that the next exhibition to take place in the Temporary Exhibition Gallery was entitled 'Microsculpture: The Insect Portraits of Levon Biss' which would include a collection of images from Oxford University Museum of Natural History which would comprise of large-scale photographic portraits of insects.

An exhibition surrounding the life of Doris Hatt was due to take place in Autumn 2019. This exhibition would include a number of loaned items and as a result would require invigilation much like the Alfred Leete exhibition. Given, however, the negative affect that the need for invigilators had on the visitor numbers to the exhibition, it was suggested that a different exhibition could take its place. The potential replacement exhibition surrounded the life of Matilda Temply in Somerset entitled 'My Somerset'. It was explained that this exhibition would not need invigilation.

It was noted that the sign on the door of the Alfred Leete Exhibition which encouraged members of the public to ask a member of staff to be allowed entry did not work. The Clevedon Torc also required invigilation which could have a more detrimental effect to Museum operations if not invigilated. The Town Clerk had raised the question with the SWHT as to whether the Town Council should normally avoid exhibitions which need invigilating.

Debate ensued. People may be unwilling to come forward as invigilators through fear of not knowing enough about the objects. It was suggested that this could be dealt with by providing invigilators with a brief. There may also be people willing to invigilate who were unsure of when they were needed.

Weston Museum's Visitor Services Manager stated that the number of engagement volunteers had increased and that by changing the Autumn exhibition to one that would not require invigilation would allow the team time to expand further.

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Peter Crew

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Catherine Gibbons

**RESOLVED:** That the Autumn exhibition in the Temporary Exhibition Gallery in Weston Museum be changed from an exhibition on Doris Hatt to and exhibition entitled 'My Somerset'.

### **324.4 Clevedon Torc**

It was noted that a talk concerning the Clevedon Torc was scheduled for the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019, however this event had to be rescheduled. It was envisaged that this would take place instead in late March. A member raised that there was a lack of information available about the Torc.

	<p><b>324.5 Small Grant Big Improvement</b>                  It was noted that grant funding had enabled data collection through visitor surveys. This had allowed feedback on the Alfred Leete exhibition and the Growing up in Somerset exhibition. Paper surveys had also been introduced.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> - That the report be noted.</p>
<p><b>325</b></p>	<p><b>Museum Operations/Business Plan and Activity Plan Reports</b></p> <p><b>325.1 Update from the Learning and Events Coordinator(s)</b>                  The report of the Learning and Events Coordinator(s) had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>A member suggested that there could be more organisation to avoid the lack of availability remaining in the events calendar for school visits as it was a shame to turn people away. Another member stated that it was a good sign as it showed that Weston Museum was popular, and as a result, busy. The Visitor Services Manager informed that the handling boxes were being developed as an alternative offer to school visits.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> - That the report be noted.</p> <p><b>325.2 Museum operations from the Visitor Services Manager</b>                  The report of the Visitor Services Manager had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>It was noted that the number of visitors to the Museum was good, and that closing on Mondays' had assisted this. The question was posed to members as to whether it should reopen on Mondays'. The Visitor Services Manager stated that the Monday closure had helped operationally. The Town Clerk explained that the Museum of Somerset had been used as the model as they shared a strong reliance on volunteers. It was noted that the Museum of Somerset was closed two days a week without consequence.</p> <p>The Town Clerk suggested maintaining the Monday closure, with the exception of school holidays and bank holidays. This would not reduce staffing costs but better manage staff time and resources. There had been an emphasis on Sunday events as a result of the Monday closure. It was noted that most attractions had a seven-day open period from Spring Bank Holiday until the end of August, with a six-day open period for the rest of the year.</p> <p>It was asked if Monday closure affected school visits. The Visitor Services Manager clarified that schools could be facilitated on Mondays even when closed. Some volunteers were less willing to help during winter months due to bad weather.</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer advised that costs had not gone down as a result of the Monday closure. It was suggested that whilst there were issues concerning staffing and invigilation which affected the Museum's ability to function operationally, there was a need to decide on the services that should be offered. This should be considered further and taken to the Policy and Finance Committee.</p> <p>A member asked if more people visited the Museum when the weather was bad. The Visitor Service Manager explained that bad weather did not necessarily affect attendance. A review be carried out to find an appropriate way to proceed concerning closure on Mondays'.</p>

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Peter Crew  
**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Catherine Gibbons

**RESOLVED:** To support Monday closure in principle and officers be asked to produce a detailed proposal for consideration.

### **325.3 Community Engagement report**

The report of the Community Liaison Officer had previously been circulated with the agenda.

The Community Liaison Officer led an outreach talk at Weston Golf Club which was well attended and resulted in a £50 donation to Weston Museum. A member stated that Weston-super-Mare Town Council had 85 tourism partners who could be approached concerning donation boxes and advertising in their premises.

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

### **325.4 Retail, Marketing & External Bookings**

The report of the Visitor Services Supervisor had been previously circulated with the agenda.

It was acknowledged that there had been an increase in sale or return items for the Museum shop. Tickets had been sold for the Mother's Day craft fair. The Museum shop had stocked books by authors who were to be featured in the Literary Festival. It was suggested that the high number of bookings could have a negative effect on day to day operations. The Visitor Services Manager suggested that the booking offer be reviewed. It was stated that community bookings were valuable to the community, however they did not generate as much income as other types of bookings.

The Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer informed that whilst retail in the Museum was going in the right direction with the highest revenue against the budget, the figures were still significantly lower than the budgeted amount.

A member asked if shop items could be sold on the internet. It was advised that the work required to support this would be a full time project and as a result, the cost of administering it may not be worth the money made. Some overseas visitors may be reluctant to buy souvenirs due to carrying them as luggage and that items could be posted if requested. The Museum could stock some items that were more easily packaged such as cushion covers and shopping bags.

### **325.5 Café Report**

It was reported that the Café Assistant was now Acting Café Supervisor and that a new Café Assistant had been appointed.

The Acting Café Supervisor was doing very well. The Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer supported this and informed that she was working with the Acting Café Supervisor for one hour a week for support moving forward.

It was stated that accessibility to the Museum was important for business.

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

	<p><b>325.6 Volunteer Engagement Report</b>          The report of the Volunteer Coordinator had previously been circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>It was stated that the increase in volunteer hours was substantial. As a result of this, volunteer roles were being focused.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> - That the report be noted.</p>
<p>326</p>	<p><b>Museum Grant Development</b></p> <p>A verbal report was given by the Development Officer.</p> <p><b>326.1 Buy a Block Scheme</b>          It was stated that 75 blocks had been engraved, with over one hundred orders placed in total. A display case for the blocks was being built. It was suggested that this would help advertise the blocks and hopefully increase sales.</p> <p><b>326.2 Know Your Place</b>          The joint application with NSC for the funding of the Know Your Place project was successful. This grant would provide £10,000 to allow the training of Museum volunteers and the purchase of equipment to be able to populate the community layer of the Know Your Place North Somerset app.</p> <p><b>326.3 Heritage at Risk</b>          The Development Officer had met with the Heritage Action Zone Officer and the Town Council's appointed Building Surveyor to discuss how a Heritage at Risk grant might assist in the repairing of the Museum roof. The Development Officer asked if members were happy to proceed with an application to Historic England should the grant prove suitable. It was stated that in order to be successful with the grant, Weston-super-Mare Town Council would need to work closely with the Heritage Action Zone Officer as the Museum did not meet the criteria in its own right.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Crew  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Catherine Gibbons</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To proceed with a grant application for Historic England's Heritage at Risk grant scheme if deemed applicable.</p> <p><b>326.3 Grants for the Arts</b>          It was noted that the deadline for the sculpture project had been extended until 31<sup>st</sup> July. The Development Officer informed that they were still looking for a suitable artist.</p> <p><b>326.4 Resilient Heritage</b>          The application for the Resilient Heritage project, which would fund training for Museum staff from an audience development consultant, was submitted in January. The Development Officer should hear by the end of February as to whether or not the application had been successful.</p> <p><b>326.5 Museum Refurbishment phase 1 evaluation</b>          It was noted that the Development Officer and Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer were currently working on the final evaluation for phase one of the Museum refurbishment, to be completed by June 2019.</p>

	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b> - That the verbal report be noted.</p>
<p>327</p>	<p><b>Renewal of Agreement for SWHT Curatorial Services.</b></p> <p>A report from the Town Clerk was tabled at the meeting.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that as a requirement of the HLF funding, Weston Museum must be managed to accreditation standard. The annual fee for the first year of the proposed agreement was £68,092, with inflation to be added in future years. This had been budgeted for in the Town Councils 2019/2020 financial year and approved by full Town Council on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019.</p> <p>The cost covered the following services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The management of processes for providing long and short term loans from the collection.</li> <li>2. Curatorial advice and support</li> <li>3. A nominated specialist advisor for up to 14 hours per week</li> <li>4. Support in selection and interpretation of displays</li> <li>5. Advice and support for other matters</li> </ol> <p>It was recommended initially that SWHT service be renewed for a further 5 years. However, with further thought the Town Clerk suggested that the possibility be discussed with SWHT for making the period the same length as the service level agreement period with North Somerset Council which would be around 7 years.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Crew  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Catherine Gibbons</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the Service Level Agreement for Museum curatorial services with South West Heritage Trust be renewed for a further 5 years from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 at the cost of £68,092 in the first year, to be increased by inflation at CPI in future years, and on the terms laid out in the report of the Town Clerk. Also, that the period of 5 years be discussed with SWHT to see if it would be possible to match the length of the agreement with North Somerset Council and if so to do so.</p>
<p>328</p>	<p><b>To receive a verbal report from the Friends of Weston Museum</b></p> <p>It was stated that Spring talks had been arranged up until June which would be open to the public. Friends of the Museum volunteers had helped to invigilate the Clevedon Torc, and suggested that the role be renamed to ‘steward’ to make it sound more appealing. Books had been donated by the Friends to the Museum concerning Alfred Leete which had been selling well. It was noted that they were still awaiting news of any grants that they could apply for on behalf of Weston Museum.</p> <p>It was queried whether the replica of the Clevedon Torc had been purchased following the Chairman’s donation to the Friends of the Museum for this purpose. The Visitor Services Manager advised that before ordering the replica there must be a consideration of how it would be stored. A member queried whether a display case could be purchased alongside the replica. A member suggested that the replica be purchased whilst it remained at the current price to be put in storage until a time when it could be securely displayed. Confirmation was required from the Chairman to proceed with the purchase.</p>

	<p>The Friends currently had 74 members. A piece from the Friends of the Museum was to be in the next issue of the Museum’s volunteer newsletter.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> - That the verbal report be noted</p>
<p><b>329</b></p>	<p><b>The Blue Plaque Scheme</b></p> <p>The report of the Communications Officer had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The report indicated that 8 plaques had currently been installed around Weston-super-Mare with half of the cost of the plaques covered by the Civic Society for which the committee was grateful. It was noted that the Worle History Society had also contributed to the plaque for Worle Village School.</p> <p>The Town Clerk informed that the Chairman was still attempting to gain approval for a plaque for Emmeline Pethic-Lawrence which so far had been unsuccessful. Placement of the plaques for Deborah Kerr, Bob Hope and John Hugh Smyth-Pigott was yet to be determined.</p> <p>The Communications Officer had spoken with the events team at North Somerset Council to discuss the placement of the Haile Selassie plaque on the Tropicana building in time for a Reggie event, for which she was awaiting approval. A member queried whether the redevelopment of the Tropicana could affect the placement of the plaque. It was suggested that since the redevelopment would not affect the Visitor Information Centre offices that this might be a good placement for the plaque.</p> <p>A member queried whether a booklet would be produced containing information and the location of all of the plaques when they were completed. It was informed that this was the intention.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> - That the report be noted</p>
<p><b>330</b></p>	<p><b>Heritage Action Zone update</b></p> <p>The report of the Heritage Action Zone Officer had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>It was reported that as a result of the newly adopted Great Western Conservation Area, more grant opportunities were available in the area, including the repair of the Victorian Walls in Milton Road Cemetery. The new conservation area allowed more control on planning, and would ensure that buildings were sympathetic within the area.</p> <p>Debate ensued concerning the regeneration of Weston town Centre and the affect that the newly adopted Great Western Conservation Area could have on this.</p> <p>It was suggested that the Heritage Action Zone Officer be contacted to request conservation books to be sold in Weston Museum on a sale or return basis.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Crew  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Catherine Gibbons</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> - To contact the Heritage Action Zone Officer to discuss the possibility of</p>

	<p>receiving literature for Weston Museum concerning the newly adopted conservation area.</p>
<p><b>331</b></p>	<p><b>Potential Acquisition of Weston Model House</b></p> <p>A stone model of a house in Cecil Road made from stone from the Quarry by Hans Price was currently on display at the Quarry. It was stated that the Civic Society currently had custody of this item, however they did not have paperwork available to confirm this. This item was previously displayed by the Civic Society in a shop on Wadham Street. At a previous meeting of the Civic Society it was agreed that they would see if this item could be donated to Weston Museum for display in the Museum.</p> <p>Amal Khreisheh from the South West Heritage Trust who were responsible for the Museum collection asked if this item was definitely owned by the Civic Society. The Civic Society did not have the name of the specific person who had ownership. Amal clarified that they needed to be sure of who owned it to discuss the terms of donation and loan, as loaned items needed to be given for a specific purpose, and donated items must be given without any conditions attached. This item could not be placed in the Museum currently as it did not fit in with the story, but it could go into storage at the South West Heritage Trust.</p> <p>Debate ensued. A member suggested that members of the committee, including the Chairman could go to the Quarry and look at the item in question. It was queried if the item could go in the dead space between the main courtyard and Clara’s Cottage. It was clarified that this space was a fire exit and as such could not contain artifacts which would cause people to linger. Also the new stand containing the Museum blocks would be going into this space.</p> <p>The Visitor Services Manager requested that all communication regarding the item should go through the committee, as members of Museum staff were unable to provide information concerning the placement of the item and could not designate a place in the Museum for it to be displayed.</p> <p>It was queried if there was any other organisation that would be willing to take the item.</p> <p>Members of the committee and the Chairman would set up a meeting with Amal at the Quarry and rely on advice from Amal on how to proceed.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> - That the verbal report be noted</p>
	<p>There being no further business the meeting concluded at 11:55am</p> <p>The next meeting would be 11<sup>th</sup> April at 10am at the Weston Museum.</p>

Signed.....  
Chairman

Dated.....