

# Public Document Pack

## MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

27 JUNE 2016

Present: Councillors Poole (Chair), T Dowling (Vice-Chair), Bacon, Clarke, Howard, Lee (as the duly appointed substitute for Councillor Patmore), Sinden and Street

Museum Association Representatives: Mrs Barrett, Mr Dudman, Mrs Purdey, Mr Peak and Mr Palfrey-Martin

### **42. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Edwards and Patmore.

The Chair welcomed new member Councillor Bacon to the committee.

### **43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors made no declarations of interest at this meeting.

### **44. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2016**

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2016 be approved and signed by the Chair as a true record.

### **45. NOTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS**

None.

### **46. CURATOR'S REPORT**

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report to provide an update on issues arising from previous meetings and confirmation of Curator's actions.

1. Stage 1 of the Arts Council funded Resilience Review has been completed and will be presented to Cabinet in July. Following an expression of interest application, the museum has been invited to apply for a second round of funding in July. An update on whether the museum has been successful or not will be reported to the committee in September.
2. The Museums website has been relaunched and is now live. So far the response to the new website has been very positive. There are a few remaining changes that need to be implemented before the project is fully complete.
3. The loan for the Hawaiian feather cloak which had been requested by the Netherlands will not be going ahead. The museums have withdrawn their request due to funding.
4. The recently donated Grove School registers will stay at the Keep amongst other East Sussex County Council school archives. In response to a query at the last meeting, the curator confirmed the school registers were protected by the Data Protection Act.

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5. An expression of interest has been submitted to be a partner in The Royal Holloway's Citizens Project to explore stories of the history 800 years of liberty, protest, power and rebellion. The museum has identified Robert Tressell as relevant to the theme of democratic heritage. The project will generate training workshops, micro-documentaries and inclusion in a dedicated website.

Steve Peak recommended the museum promote Captain Swing for the South East Media Project. Captain Swing provoked the Poor Law Act and formation of the workhouses in Hastings which had an effect on national politics eg social history. The curator said that the museum had no archives or material that they could give to the South East Media Project.

Councillor Bacon asked whether the museum was still organising pop up events to improve its visibility. The Curator said the most recent pop up event was held at Ore library for the WWI project. Ideally she said they would look to employ a marketing intern to see what could be improved.

**RESOLVED - that the Committee accepts the report and are satisfied with the comments in the report.**

### **47. MUSEUM ASSOCIATION CODE OF ETHICS**

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report to update members on the Code of Ethics for the museum.

The Code of Ethics for the Museum outlines the ethical principles for all museums in the UK and was agreed following an 18 month consultation process during 2014-15.

The Code of Ethics for Museums was appended to the report.

The report sought agreement from the museum governing body to formally adopt it.

**RESOLVED – that the Committee accepts the report and are satisfied with the comments in the report and recommend that the Code of Ethics is adopted.**

### **48. MUSEUM ATTENDANCE FIGURES**

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report to inform members of figures for attendances, educational activities and use of the Museum's website for quarter 4 of 2015-16. Figures for January to March 2015 were submitted for comparison.

It was noted that the attendance figures for Hastings Museum and Art Gallery had reduced by 1,145 to 9250 for Quarter 4 when compared with the previous year. The Curator explained that the reduction in visitor numbers was because there had been no temporary exhibitions or private viewings during this period. However, numbers are expected to improve now that the temporary exhibition space is up and running.

Numbers of pupils in organised groups had increased by 260.

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Participants in non-education provider sessions reached 1,388.

The number of website visits had increased by 308.

An amendment to the report was noted for the total number of visitors which stated '2015-16'. The comparison date should have been '2014-15'.

At the time of the meeting, the number of followers on Facebook had increased to 1,005 and Twitter to 1,068.

The number of weddings and civil ceremonies had increased from 16 to 18 compared to quarter 4 last year. At the time of the meeting, a total of 17 ceremonies had been booked for 2016-17. 2 cancellations had been received. The next wedding fayre will take place on 11 September 2016.

Marion Purdey congratulated the curator on the Story of Hastings in 66 Objects. Exhibition.

Councillor Street queried the talk by Casper Johnson. The curator said she would check and get back to him.

Erica Barrett asked how frequently the social media pages were updated. The curator confirmed that she updated facebook at least once a week and twitter at least once a day.

Councillor Poole enquired about the visitor numbers for the Local History talks by Edward Preston on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> June. The Curator confirmed that interest had been high with 40/50 people in attendance.

**RESOLVED - that the Committee accepts the report and are satisfied with the comments in the report.**

### **49. MUSEUM EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report to inform Members of forthcoming events and educational activities taking place at the Hastings Museum and Art Gallery during July to September 2016, for Quarter 4, 2016-17. These included:-

#### **Exhibitions**

From 25 June: The Story of Hastings in 66 Objects

From 25 June: 'Wish You Were Here...Hastings as a seaside resort 1794-1964'

9 July to 4 September: 'Stage, Screen and Trench'. Popular Entertainment & the First World War

17 September to 8 January: 'A Taste of Honeysett'. The cartoons of Martin Honeysett, part of Hastings Cartoon Festival.

#### **Events**

1 and 8 July: Local History talks with Edward Preston

10 July: Museum Association Event. Local Geology and Fossils with Ken Brooks

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23 July to 4 September: Free Family Fun for school holidays

30 July: 'Stage, Screen, Trench and More'. Free Talk

10 August: 100th Anniversary Screening of 'The Battle of the Somme' (1916)

19 and 26 August: Local History talks with Edward Preston

2 and 16 September: Local History talks with Edward Preston

11 September: Wedding Fair

17 September: Artist's Talk, by Hew Locke, presented by SoCo Artists

Mr Peak said that the Cyril and Lilian Bishop lifeboat that saved 34 lives in Hastings during the 1930's, rescuing British and French soldiers from the beaches during the evacuation of Dunkirk in World War 2, will be returning to Hastings. The lifeboat will on show at Stade at 9am (no date was given). Mr Peak recommended the museum display a contemporary model of the boat. The curator agreed to display the model in the desk case in the Long Gallery.

Mr Dudman informed the committee that more information will be made available within the next 12 months on the Geoffrey Malins, photographer.

The Curator said that BBC South East had enquired about the museums arrangements for the Battle of Somme.

Councillor Bacon enquired about the museum speakers such as Edward Preston. The Curator said that they do have speakers and volunteers which bring people through doors and others such as Mr Peak and Mr Palfrey-Martin. The next talk will take place on 13<sup>th</sup> October regarding Sidney Little.

Councillor Bacon went on to ask if the museum held themed evenings eg beach themes. The Curator said they held a variety of concerts and theatrical events, even a Tango evening to increase the footfall.

**RESOLVED - that the Committee accepts the report and are satisfied with the comments in the report.**

### **50. MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS**

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report informing members of thirteen items acquired by the Museum in the last quarter and the names of donors. The items included: -

1. The Ashburnham Consoles

Donor: Accepted by HM Government in Lieu of Inheritance Tax and allocated to Hastings Borough Council for display at Hastings Museum & Art Gallery

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2. Jantzen Swim Cap 1960s-70s; two jewellery boxes from Rix Jewellers; Hastleon's 'Merrie England' flyers, 1977  
Donor: Mrs E. Barrett

3. Wedding dress worn by donor's mother Margaret Gutsell in 1949.  
Donor: K. Crouch

4. Copy of 'The Voyage in the Sunbeam', presented as school prize by Thomas Brassey in 1898  
Donor: Mrs G. Hobson

5. Hastings Carnival Song 1935 sheet music  
Donor: Anon

6. Collection of local photographs and pamphlets  
Donor: G. King

7. Collection of 4 postcards and 3 photographs.  
Donor: Mrs C. Morrell

8. Old Town Silver Jubilee celebration programme 1935, 2 photographs  
Donor: R. Cruttwell

9. News cuttings, photograph and ticket for Hastings Speedway  
Donor: Mrs Turk

10. Chain of Office and badges from Hastings Grocers' Association, belonged to donor's father Percy Trowell  
Donor: Mrs B. Best

11. 10 copies of 'The Great War... I was there' magazine.  
Donor: Mrs I. White

12. Documents relating to Sussex Police; Sea Angling Festival Rules and commemorative dish  
Donor: J. Reece

13. Documents relating to building of turnpike road at Hollington, 1836  
Donor: R. Calthorpe

**RESOLVED - that the Committee accepts the report and are satisfied with the comments in the report.**

Members discussed the relevance of item 12 to the museum. The curator agreed that it was best placed at the Keep as it was relevant to Gatwick Airport and was outside of Hastings Borough.

### 51. **ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)**

None.

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## 52. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

**RESOLVED** – that the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the items of business listed below because it is likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of ‘exempt’ information as defined in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

<u>Minute No.</u>	<u>Subject Matter</u>	<u>Paragraph No.</u>
53(E)	Offer to purchase	Paragraphs 8 & 9

## 53. OFFER TO PURCHASE

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report for Members to consider two items offered to the Museum for purchase.

**RESOLVED** – that the Committee accepts the report and notes the report and that:

- (by 12 votes against and 1 abstention) The offer to purchase item 2 of the report be declined.
- (unanimously) That the offer to purchase item 5 of the report be accepted.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at 3.34 pm)