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MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

13 MARCH 2017

Present: Councillors Poole (Chair), Bacon, Forward (as the duly appointed substitute for Councillor T Dowling), Howard, Patmore, Sinden and Street.

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

74. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T Dowling and Edwards.
Museum Association Representatives: Mr Peak and Mrs Barrett.

75. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors made no declarations of interest at this meeting.

76. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 NOVEMBER 2016

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2016 be approved and signed by the Chair as a true record.

77. NOTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS

None.

78. 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. The Curator confirmed the Learning Officer, Samantha Smith, has been in post since 1st December 2016 and the Keeper of Local History and Archives, Kathleen Lawther, started on 01.01.2017 for two days a week.
2. Plans are underway to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the museum since its first opening in 1892. The formal opening ceremony will be recreated on Wednesday 16 August at 3.30pm. Final details for the event are to be confirmed, however a full list of events and activities will be available to view online.
3. Consent has been given for images of John Logie Baird and objects from the Museum collection to be used by an Educational-Learning Channel of Israel for one episode of a series of children entitled 'News from the Past'.
4. A defibrillator unit, funded by a grant from the Sussex Heart Charity, has been given to the Museum to place on the outside of the building.

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Councillor Street asked if the defibrillator would require specialised personnel or training to operate it. The Curator confirmed training had been offered, but the unit was self operated and would provide the operator with audio and visual prompts. The unit is sited outside the building so it is accessible 24 hours a day.

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

79. RESILIENCE UPDATE

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report to update members on the Arts Council-funded Museum Resilience Project.

The Curator advised that this will be a standing agenda item for the next 12 months.

The Museum has been successfully awarded £85,000 by the Arts Council England Museum Resilience Fund for a project delivered between 1 October 2016 and 31 March 2018, to study the Museums marketing and collections review etc.

Dr. Laura Williams and Sarah Cope are leading the Business Development Project and the Collections Review work will be managed by Stephen Lowy. Interviews for the graduate intern roles took place on 7th March.

The first project start-up meeting took place on 15 February and also the Sustainability Audit session. The Collections Review site assessment was held on 2 March. It was noted that the interns and staff will undergo training on 21-22 March on MODES for two days. The Business Development Plan workshops/training for staff will take place on 4 July, followed by further training in September/October for stake holders and staff.

The area of the collection chosen as the pilot for the Collections Review process is the First World War material.

The results from the Business Development Consultants are expected to be available in June and ready for discussion at the Museums Committee meeting on 11 September.

Councillor Bacon sought clarification on the salary and duration of the intern's employment contract. The Curator confirmed the interns will be paid the living wage for 18 hours per week until end of March 2018.

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

80. MUSEUM ATTENDANCE FIGURES

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report to inform members of figures for attendances and educational activities and use of the website for the third quarter of 2016-17. Figures for October to December 2015 were submitted for comparison.

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It was noted that the number of visitors for Hastings Museum and Art Gallery had decreased by 236 for Quarter 3 when compared with the previous year.

Numbers of pupils in organised groups had decreased by 259.

Participants in non-education provider sessions have decreased by 746.

The Curator explained that the slight drop in non-formal education numbers was due to the mother and toddler group sessions ending because East Sussex County Council had stopped funding the group sessions. Officers are looking to obtain external funding from another source.

At the time of the meeting, the number of followers on Twitter had increased to 1,297 and Facebook to 1,373. Local history events were attracting 4,000 to 5,000 likes/comments on social media.

The number of weddings and civil ceremonies had reached 2, compared to 0 for the same period last year. The number of ceremonies held in 2016 was 19, compared to 17 in 2015. The Curator said the museum had already received 2 or 3 enquiries this year and it was too early to monitor the effect of other licenced venues which were competing for custom. The Curator went on to say the consultant will assess the museums fund raising activities and marketing to see what improvements can be made to improve bookings for weddings and civil ceremonies.

The Curator referred to the visits made by educational establishments during this quarter.

Councillor Howard asked if the Business consultant will take into account the expansion of the museum to include catering/marquee. The Curator explained that low key catering will be considered, but not the suggested café extension. The new Learning Officer will assess the school project packages to see if any improvements can be made.

Councillor Bacon asked what specifically the schools were looking for when they visited the museum and whether the marketing intern would look at ways to increase the attendance figures. The Curator said schools' interests vary from term to term, eg seaside holidays and Romans. The marketing intern will work with the Learning Officer to promote the Museum to educational groups.

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

81. MUSEUM EVENTS & 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 April to June 2017, for Quarter 1. These included:-

Exhibitions

To 7 May. George Graham: The Creation Paintings.

To 21 May. Spring Selection: Seasonal paintings from the Museum's Collection.

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27 May to 3 September. A Sussex Wave from Japan: the Colour Woodcuts of Eric Slater and Arthur Rigden Read.

27 May to 18 June. People Objects Places: a community project exploring the heritage of migration.

24 June to 10 September. The Story of Hastings Museum: key events, people and objects in the Museum's 125 year history.

Events

1 -16 April. Easter Egg Hunt

11 April. Once Upon a Time...: Story telling with Kevin Graal.

23 April. Wedding Fair.

30 May. Family Fun Day: Inspired by exhibition, explore links with Japan.

2, 9, 16, 23, 30 June. Local History talks with Edward Preston.

Mrs Purdey referred to the forthcoming group visit to the Brighton Museum & Art Gallery to see the exhibition concerning Constable on 6 May 2017. She advised members that the meeting point was no longer at Hastings Station due to uncertainty regarding strike dates. A coach has been booked to take members from the museum. Booking forms will be issued shortly for this event.

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

82. MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS

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

1. Three photographs albums of Hastings, late 19th/early 20th century
Donor: Mr D. Padgham
2. Collection of photographs from the 1960s to 2000s, with associated news cuttings and leaflets
Donor: Miss S. Hayward
3. Programmes and flyers for events at White Rock Baths
Donor: Mr J. Reddis
4. Papers relating to HBC Civil Defence Emergency Feeding Plans, 1967

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Donor: Mr F. Kent

5. Metal Box marked 'Hastings & East Sussex Philatelic Society', containing records, minute books etc

Donor: Mr C. Dadswell

6. Two Hastings Grammar School blazer badges, and Winkle Club Centenary sweatshirt badge

Donor: Mr G. Dudman

7. Postcard dated 1914

Donor: Mrs S. Boulton

8. Collection of postcards of model village, St Clement's Caves and St Leonards Parish Church

Donor: Mrs J. Carey-Stuart

9. White Rock Pavilion Souvenir programme

Donor: Anon.

Comment

It is recommended that item 5, the records of the Hastings & East Sussex Philatelic Society be passed to The Keep. Members agreed that the box was too large to store at the museum and it could not be placed in the public domain due to data protection restrictions.

Andre Palfrey-Martin informed members of an exhibition to be held at the Sussex Room, White Rock Theatre to commemorate the Theatre's 90th anniversary.

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

83. ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

None.

84. 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>
85(E)	Offer to Purchase	Paragraphs 8 & 9

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85(E) OFFER TO PURCHASE

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

Members discussed sourcing the funds from the Went Tree Trust and requested the Curator negotiate the price for purchasing the item.

Councillor Street proposed a motion to agree to purchase the item subject to 100% funding. This was seconded by Mrs Purdey.

RESOLVED (unanimously) – that the Committee accepts the report and notes the report and that:

- **That the offer to purchase be accepted, subject to 100% funding.**

On behalf of the committee, the Chair passed on their thanks to Nick Sangster, Resort Services Manager, who will be leaving Hastings Borough Council, for his contribution and hard work to the Museum. Polly Gifford, Cultural Strategic Development Specialist, will replace Nick Sangster at the next meeting on 19 June 2017. Her work will encompass the museum, heritage and theatre.

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(The Chair declared the meeting closed at. 3.34 pm)