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MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

12 MARCH 2018

Present: Councillors Forward (Chair), Bacon (Vice-Chair), Howard, Patmore, Sinden and Street

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

117. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for lateness were noted for Councillor Bacon and absence from Councillors Cartwright and Edwards.

118. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

119. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 27 NOVEMBER 2017

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2017 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

120. NOTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS

None.

121. CHANGES TO MUSEUMS COMMITTEE OPERATION

The Curator explained that the report for this item would not have been ready in time for members to read it prior to the meeting.

The Chair requested this item was withdrawn from the agenda so it can be discussed at the next meeting.

122. CURATOR'S REPORT

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report to update members on issues arising from previous meetings and confirmation of curator's actions, with visitor figures and information on exhibitions and events. It had been agreed at the last meeting to condense these reports under one item.

The Curator reported that attendance figures for visitors attending between October and December were down by 1,228 compared to the same period last year. The total number of visitors for 2017 had increased by 2044 compared to 2016. Pupil numbers were down slightly by 88 compared to 2016.

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At the time of the meeting, the number of followers on Twitter had increased to 1,609 and Facebook to 1,883. The ratings on Trip Advisor remain the same.

The number of weddings/ceremonies booked till the end of December compared to the same period last year has increased from 10 to 15.

The Hastings Museum & Art gallery events leaflet for April-October 2018 were sent out this week.

The next event in the art gallery will be the 50th anniversary memorial exhibition celebrating the work of Vincent Lines, Head of Hastings School of Art. From 3rd March there is an exhibition by Evacustes Phipson on topographical water colours. This is followed by an exhibition by students from the School of Art and Design at Sussex Coast College relating to the Vincent Lines exhibition.

Three Family Activity days will be held focusing on print; toys and insects to mark the centenary of Votes for Women. With National Insect day on 23 June, visitors to the museum will be able to handle the insects. There will be a talk and book signing by Ann Kramer and two sessions with Women's Voice on 23 June to make banners, sashes etc. Blooming Green will be providing adult workshops to make foliage crowns for Jack in the Green, and Fiona Pienkowska will be holding a workshop on lino printing. The curator said the adult workshops had proved very popular and were booked out. To celebrate his 90th birthday, the Happy Harold trolley bus will be visiting the museum on 1 April. A day of tours and rides have been arranged. A new series of talks by Edward Preston will begin in June. Details are listed in the events leaflet.

Mrs Purdey encouraged members and their relations to participate in Happy Harold's birthday celebrations on 1 April. Tours and rides will be available from the museum along with refreshments and an easter egg hunt for children.

Mr Peak informed the Committee that Happy Harold will be at the bus depot in Silverhill the week prior to Easter. He asked the curator if picture postcards could be made available of the Evacustes Phipson exhibition. The Curator advised him that there was probably not enough time before the exhibition ends on 6 May, but would consult colleagues. The event will be advertised on the Museums Facebook page.

Councillor Street proposed a motion to recommend the resolution as set out below. This was seconded by Mr Palfrey-Martin.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the committee accepts and is satisfied with the report

123. RESILIENCE - CURRENT PROJECTS

The Curator presented a report which updated the committee on the progress of the ACE-funded Resilience Project and HLF-funded First World War Project.

A consultation day entitled 'Inside Out' was held at the museum on 25 November 2017, helped by young curators to raise awareness of the museum's collections and

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how to access them. The project runs till 31 March 2018. The conclusions of the consultation will be fed into the final Collections Review report.

During the consultation, 35/40 people attended the museum. Of the 86 young people who filled in an online survey, 42% had not visited the museum previously. 12% of those that had visited attended with their school.

The young people said they were interested in 1066, world wars, fashions and textiles. They enjoyed the staff talking about their favourite objects and what their job entailed.

The Curator said if in future a similar consultation was needed that it could be an idea to provide a pop-up museum session in Priory Meadow to reach a wider audience.

This is the final and 5th year of the HLF funded First World War Anniversary project. Volunteers have been researching names on War Memorial and linking up Hasting's Twin Towns.

During 2017 three community events were held. As part of 125th birthday celebration day in August a 'recruiting station' session was held to handle objects; a talk on Black Poppies by Stephen Bourne and a family activity day in October on the First World War. Another drop in session will be held on 2nd June to collect local stories.

The final exhibition will run from 13 October 2018 to 29 January 2019. The event will reflect on local lives lost and families affected by the conflict and the importance of remembrance.

Councillor Howard referred to his comment minuted at the previous meeting regarding selling items on-line as part of the Income Generation Strategy. The Curator said she was waiting for the business plan to be produced, before advising whether this was feasible.

Councillor Sinden proposed a motion to recommend the resolution as set out below. This was seconded by Mrs Barrett.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the committee accepts and is satisfied with the report.

124. MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS

The Curator presented a report which provided an overview of the items recently acquired by the museum in the last quarter and the names of donors. The items included: -

1. Oil painting of Thomas Hovenden, Inn-keeper of the Swan Hotel, Hastings, c 1800
Donor: Mr and Mrs B. Purdey
2. Three Hastings Borough Council metal Hackney Carriage Licenses from vehicles.
Donor: Anon
3. Booklets 'Hastings and St Leonards in the Front Line' and 'War in East Sussex'.

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Donor: Mr G. Mounsey

4. Three aerial photographs of Hastings.

Donor: Mr T Scott

5. Collection of photographs, documents and minutes relating to Dordrecht town-twinning.

Donor: Mr C Hyland

6. Postcard of Edwin Bradnam, Mayor of Hastings 1884-1890.

Donor: Mr P Fuller

7. Specifications for tenders for refreshment and indoor bowling pavilion at White Rock, prepared by Sidney Little in 1927.

Donor: Mr J Rawlings

Artist Peter Waldron has donated a painting to the museum.

Members were informed the Tressell archive will be coming to the museum. Mrs Purdey asked for confirmation that the items will not go back to the Keep. The Curator confirmed they would not.

Mr Palfrey-Martin proposed a motion to recommend the resolution as set out below. This was seconded by Councillor Bacon.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the committee accepts and is satisfied with the report.

125. ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

It was noted that it was the last meeting for several of the Council Members. The Committee thanked Councillor Street for his unfailing support to the museum and Councillor Howard for his involvement.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at. 3.02 pm)