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MUSEUM COMMITTEE

9 SEPTEMBER 2019

Present: Councillors Forward (Chair), O'Callaghan (Vice-Chair), Levane, Patmore, Sinden and Museum Association Representatives Ms Barrett, Mr Dudman, Mr Peak and Mrs Purdey

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received for Councillor K Beaney and Ms Farley-Green.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2019 be approved as a true record.

4. MUSEUM UPDATE REPORT

The Museum and Cultural Development Manager presented a report to update the Committee on the museum's work since the last formal meeting.

The museum enjoyed a good first quarter in 2019. The Easter Holiday period was very busy, with the 'Chick Trail' proving especially popular with families. The LEGO® events over the summer have been extremely popular. The bookable events, LEGO® Museum Minis and LEGO® Makers, were all fully booked and additional sessions were added because of the demand. The LEGO® Explorers Trail has been extremely well received by families.

The museum has been shortlisted for two national awards this year. The first shortlisting was by Kids in Museums for their Family Friendly Museum Award 2019 in the small museum category; the second award is from Days Out With The Kids for their 2019 Family Favourites Award for Best Educational Day Out in London & South East.

In addition to the shortlisting, the museum has continued to perform well on review sites. This year the museum received a 'Hall of Fame' certificate from TripAdvisor for being a top attraction for the past five years.

The Museums Association has added an excursion to Hastings to their Annual Conference programme. The visit includes time at the museum to see the work that has been happening at the museum over the past year. This is good recognition from within the museum sector and a sign that the museum's profile is rising.

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The Museum and Cultural Development Manager confirmed that the museum had achieved the annual target for school engagement and reached every school in the borough this year.

In response to a question regarding the recruitment of volunteers the Museum and Cultural Development Manager confirmed that volunteers are recruited in line with the recruitment policy agreed at the last committee meeting.

The Chair asked that a press release be produced celebrating the increase in visitor numbers and school engagement.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

To accept this report and recommend approval by Cabinet.

5. COLLECTIONS REPORT

The Museum and Cultural Development Manager presented a report to update the committee on collections care, access, acquisitions, loans and objects being considered for rationalisation.

Collections care work has been slowed by the staff changeover. However, a number of improvements have been made to the organisation of the Local Studies Room including the addition of more bookcases. 25 taxidermy specimens have been cleaned, photographed and been entered on to the Modes collection database as part of the preparations for *Wunderkammer: Hastings Curiosities*. The World Culture's spears and weapons collections of around 60 items have been repacked, stored and documented – improving their general condition by replacing their packaging with conservation standard inert materials.

A new Integrated Pest Management system has been implemented across the museum. This allows us to track environmental conditions through the presence of pests.

Since March the curators have received 66 enquires related to the collections and the Local Studies Room has continued to welcome a steady stream of researchers.

The Museum and Cultural Development Manager updated the committee on a number of objects identified for rationalisation. The objects were identified in line with the Collections Development Policy, contained within the Collections Management Framework.

The committee discussed the items identified for rationalisation and suggested other museums which may be interested in adding them to their collection. The Museum and Cultural Development Manager thanked the committee for their advice.

In response to a question regarding the 80th anniversary of the beginning of the Second World War the Museum and Cultural Development Manager confirmed that there will be discussions regarding this over the coming weeks.

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RESOLVED (unanimously):

To accept this report and recommend approval by Cabinet.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at. 3.35 pm)

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