

These minutes are subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of the Glamorgan Archives Joint Committee

GLAMORGAN ARCHIVES JOINT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Glamorgan Archives Joint Committee held at Glamorgan Archives - Clos Parc Morgannwg, Leckwith, Cardiff on 18 March 2016 at 2.00 pm.

Present:

Members Representing: Councillor John, Vale of Glamorgan
Councillor Birch, Vale of Glamorgan
Councillor Cowan, Cardiff
Councillor Griffiths, Rhondda Cynon Taff (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Lomax, Cardiff
Councillor Robson, Cardiff
Councillor Clarke, Bridgend County Borough Council
Mansbridge, Merthyr (Chair)
Councillor Rosser, Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council

Officers in Attendance

22 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Higgs, Forehead, Ward and Smith.

Apologies were also received from Mrs Kate Thomas and Mr Murray McLaggan.

23 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

24 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

25 : REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 DECEMBER 2015 - 29 FEBRUARY 2016 - REPORT OF THE GLAMORGAN ARCHIVIST

Members were provided with an update on the work and achievements of the service for the period 1 December 2015 to 29 February 2016.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members asked if the Archives advertises sessions on family history searching. Officers advised they are advertised on the website and promoted regularly via social media; people can pay for one to one sessions at a cost of £5 and

they are 'walked through' how to search and advice is provided; this past quarter there had been seven sessions booked.

- Members noted that this was an excellent report produced during very difficult circumstances. Members asked with regards to volunteers, whether previously they had been used to add value but due to staff reductions, were they now being used to do tasks that staff would ordinarily carry out. Officers explained that they were not; staff were qualified and professional, operational staff are trained in the required duty of care for the documents they look after; only full time members of staff have access to the whole of the building, casual staff and volunteers do not. Using volunteers to carry out staff tasks would not be acceptable to the Trade Unions or to HR.
- Members sought an update on the NNDR position. Officers advised that there was no progress to report on this, although the expert review of local authority museums in Wales includes the strong recommendation that NNDR on heritage sites is subject to the same relief as Charity Museums; if this happens then it would provide a strong position for the Glamorgan Archives. The report is awaiting ministerial approval. The option of moving to Trust would be a complicated one. Currently to off-set the NNDR costs, officers were working to increase incomes streams that do not impact on service delivery.
- With reference to volunteers, Members noted that most were Cardiff and wondered why there weren't many from the other joint authorities. Officers stated that this was mainly due to the location of the building, it was easier for people from Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan to access; also the University being based in Cardiff, there were lots of student volunteers. It was noted that the service could only really cope with 70 volunteers and they get more than this; volunteers come for a half day quite often and they needed to be given a task to do and the work checked, so it takes staff time, although volunteers were a very valuable resource to have.
- Members noted that there were staff on maternity leave and asked when they were due to return. Officers advised that there had been 3 members of staff on maternity leave, one had recently returned, one was due to return in June and one in October; however, there would be another staff member going on maternity leave in June. It was also added that one staff member was on a one-year sabbatical. Officers had attracted access to work funding; DWP youth contract funding and HLF grant to help with covering costs.
- Members congratulated the team on the End of an Era event at Whitchurch Hospital stating that the exhibition was outstanding and members wished to pass on their thanks to the team.

RESOLVED: To note the content of the report.

This report updated Members on the achievement of targets set out in the Annual Plan for 2015-2016.

Progress towards targets in the annual plan are reported to each meeting of the Joint Committee. This end of year report notes success in achieving planned targets.

Progress has been made in all key objectives. Income generation had increased and was planned to complement service delivery. Access targets had been met successfully and new approaches to publicity continued to develop. All staff contributed appropriately to their targets.

The Glamorgan Archivist provided a summary of the report and explained that the plan had been completed on 29 February 2016; some targets had not been reached due to the reduction in staff numbers and some due to external partnerships.

In Summary the Glamorgan Archivist stated that the plan was an essential tool in identifying and redeploying available resources while continuing to prioritise targets under each area of the service. As in previous years, targets had tended to fail through circumstances outside internal control as staff contribute to regular monitoring of the plan and are aware of and have agreed their targets.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members considered it may be helpful to have an additional column explaining whether targets had been achieved, if not when they were likely to be achieved. This was noted.

RESOLVED: to note the progress made towards key objectives in the plan.

27 : ANNUAL PLAN 2016-17

The Glamorgan Archivist explained to Members of the Joint Committee that during the current financial year, progress had been made against all targets in the current annual plan.

The three-year strategy agreed in March 2015 was being continued. Planned evaluations were proposals only; detailed evaluation would be identified for the bullet points to which staff work under each task. The objectives for the agreed period were attached to the report followed by the detailed plan for the current year. The plan had been drawn up with full staff consultation and targets would be monitored through the year.

The impact of staff losses, both professional and senior operational, continued to be felt, along with additional maternity leave absences. Procedures and processes had been developed and staff appropriately trained to maximise efficiency and focus effort but there would still be shortfalls; the annual plan had been drawn up with this in mind.

The Glamorgan Archivist added that they have become more reactive rather than proactive due to present staff capacity; having the detailed plan helps to source external

funding; it meets Welsh Government guidelines in terms of skill sharing, helping vulnerable people, encouraging the preservation of heritage; all in its statement of purpose.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members asked why volunteers hadn't been included in the staffing section. Officers advised that they had been included in the skill sharing section. Members considered this should be detailed and should include the optimum number that can be managed in the Evaluation Planned Column.
- Members made reference to section A2(ii) of the plan and asked whether it included new partnerships. Officers explained that when they are approached they evaluate the proposal however they wouldn't consider it if there was no benefit. Members considered that the word 'existing' be removed.
- With regards to Targets in Section C1 (Tasks iii), Members suggested including a minimum number to give an indication to those reading the plan; officers agreed that the plan had been over simplified and noted to build a target base back into the plan rather than just including in the annual report at the end of the year. Officers agreed to bring a revised Plan to the next meeting.

RESOLVED: To endorse the report.

28 : ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Glamorgan Archivist advised Members of the Joint Committee that Mr Murray McLaggan had advised officers that he was finding it increasingly difficult to travel to Joint Committee meetings and had asked if the Joint Committee would prefer it if he stood down.

Joint Committee Members discussed Mr McLaggan's very valuable contribution to the Joint Committee over the years, in a number of different roles.

It was decided that the Committee Clerk, with the advice of the legal officer, write to Mr McLaggan asking if he would like to stay as an honorary member of the Joint Committee and also to ask if he could recommend a replacement Joint Committee Member.

29 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Glamorgan Archives Joint Committee is scheduled for 24th June 2016 at 2.00pm