

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 Records Office - Clos Parc Morgannwg, Leckwith, Cardiff on 11 September 2015 at 2.00 pm.

Present:

Members Representing: Councillor Cowan, Cardiff
Councillor Griffiths, Rhondda Cynon Taff (Vice-Chair)
Councillor John, Vale of Glamorgan
Councillor Lomax, Cardiff
Councillor Robson, Cardiff
Councillor Rosser, Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council
Councillor Smith, Bridgend County Borough Council
Councillor Thomas, Cardiff
Councillor Ward, Rhondda Cynon Taff
K Thomas CVO, JP, Co-Optee

Officers in Attendance: Susan Edwards Glamorgan Archivist
Joanne Jones, Caerphilly
Thomas Crocker-Wilton, Cardiff
Richard Grigg, Cardiff
Andrea Redmond, Cardiff

8 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Clarke, Higgs and Forehead. Apologies were also received from Mr. M McLaggan.

9 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

10 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2015 were approved.

11 : REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 JUNE-31 AUGUST 2015 - REPORT OF THE GLAMORGAN ARCHIVIST

Members were provided with an update on the work and achievements of the service for the period 1 June 2015 to 31 August 2015.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members congratulated the Archivist on the Investors In People Bronze Award.

- Members asked what the effects of reduced staff numbers had been on morale. Officer advised that she engages regularly with staff via the PPDR process and she also referred Members to the IIP report in which it stated that 'There is acceptance that much is outside the direct control of the leadership of the organisation and also confidence that what is controllable, or at least capable of being influenced is being managed as well as it possibly can be.'
- With regards to Volunteers a Members asked whether time banking was offered. Officers advised that it was not at present but it was something that could be explored in the future.
- In reference to the Welsh Language Standards Members asked who provided the translation service for the Archives. Officers advised that they use the Cardiff Council in house service at a discounted fee; small pieces of translation work were carried out by staff members. Members were pleased that the Cardiff in house service was being used as they have income targets to meet and they were also pleased that the Archives were benefitting from a reduced fee.
- Members asked whether the Archivist considered it a risk waiting for the Welsh Government decision on NNDR reliefs before progressing Trust status. The Archivist advised that MALD were not supporting the speedy move into trusts of local authority services, and that information gathering continued. No single service had gone into Trust before and the move needed to be carefully considered with all options being considered for the time being. In the meantime, income generation capacity was being developed and extended in a bid to meet budget shortfalls.
- A Member offered to provide more information to the Archivist Time Banking.
- Members discussed skill sharing and noted that there was only 1 volunteer from Rhondda Cynon Taff, so asked how it was being advertised across the authorities. Officers explained that there was a cap of 50 volunteers that the service could accommodate with 49 currently engaged. The scheme is advertised on the website and to educational institutions but not actively promoted. Staff reductions have affected capacity. Members were asked instead to help promote educational services to schools in their authorities; the take up for this activity is mostly from Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan schools at present.
- Members queried the reduction in Remote Enquiries and Website hits. Officers explained that website hits were now counted in a different way which could account for a decrease. Some enquiries may be answered from on-line sources, including information now on Find my Past and Ancestry, and social media. Officers will try to assemble more data from these sites.

RESOLVED: To note the content of the report.

12 : TRANSFER OF NON-ARCHIVE HOLDINGS - REPORT OF THE
GLAMORGAN ARCHIVIST

Members were provided with an outline of the report which sought Members' approval to present an album of water colours by Thomas Hornor to an appropriate institution, preferably the National Museum of Wales.

Officers explained that it was not appropriate to accommodate the collection at the Archives building's strong room, however it was fully digitised.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members considered that a clause was needed that stated that the National Museum of Wales would not be able to sell the collection.
- Members asked of the collection would be stored in another strong room at the National Museum of Wales and were advised that it would be but the Museum would have the ability to display it if they so wished; this could not be done at the Archives.
- Members asked whether there had been any caveat when the collection had been given to the Archives. Officers advised that there was not, it been gifted.
- Members asked whether access to the collection could be requested at the Museum and were advised that it could.

Members were then shown the collection by the Archivist.

- It was considered that there could be an additional caveat stating that the collection be publically available; and joint press releases could be issued from the various authorities so that the public were aware of the new location of the collection.
- Members asked whether the Archives had many requests to view the collection. Officers advised that they do but they refer them to the website and CD's in the search room.

RESOLVED: to authorise the Glamorgan Archivist to arrange the presentation of the album of water colours by Thomas Hornor to the National Museum of Wales subject to the agreement of the West Glamorgan Joint Committee.

13 : STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Members were provided with an outline of the 2014-2015 Audited Wales Audit Return. It was noted that the statement needed to be resigned as it had been adjusted following the Wales Audit Office audit.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members sought clarification on balances carried forward and were advised that the figure carried forward was £306,460.
- Members discussed the reference made to the Census in the Audit Office letter. It was noted that the Joint Agreement states that the percentage/proportion of

contributions would remain for 25 years from the occupation of the new building. Although the proportion is based on the census population statistics this is not stated in the agreement and there is no provision to alter the proportions. Furthermore, the changes to date have been so small that very little difference would be made. Officers were asked to apprise WAO of these facts.

- Members asked if the Archives service was getting value for money from the Audit Office. Officers explained that the Audit Office's fees had been reduced recently due to the new report format and no full report being produced.

RESOLVED:

- I. to note the 2014-15 Audited Wales Audit Return;
- II. sign the amended statement;
- III. write to the Wales Audit Office explaining the terms in the joint agreement and percentage and proportion of contributions not being based on Census information.

14 : BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Members noted the Budget Monitoring Report.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members sought clarification on the use of the Reserve Fund. Officers explained that they had come to the building with a £500k reserve, partly to contribute to the building fund, and this was carried forward; at that time they were able to benefit from high interest rates and the Reserve Fund was healthy. When austerity came about a decision was taken that £100k per year would be drawn down from the Reserve rather than asking for increased contributions from the contributing authorities.

It was further explained that currently the Archives is generating around £68k per annum in income which is further reducing the funding demand on authorities. An addition £100k will be impossible to raise in this way. If the issue with the NNDR cannot be resolved then it was noted that at the next Joint Committee meeting contributing authorities may be asked for increased contributions; all options would be considered in the next 18 months and it was considered that taking the Reserve down to £50k would be acceptable.

RESOLVED: to note the Budget Monitoring Report.

15 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Glamorgan Archives Joint Committee was scheduled to take place on 11 December 2015 at 2.00pm.

The meeting terminated at 3.30pm