

## North Hertfordshire District Council

### Minutes of the Heritage & Culture/Museums & Galleries Project Board Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2006 (Fourth meeting)

#### Present:

##### Members

Councillor Gary Grindal (GG)  
Councillor Tricia Gibbs (TG)  
Councillor Ian Knighton (IK)

##### NHDC

John Robinson (JR)  
Patrick Candler (Pca)  
Lynn Saville (LS)  
Ros Allwood (RA)  
Lorrae Hunter (LH) - minutes

#### Apologies:

Councillor Paul Clark (PC)  
Councillor Terry Hone (TH)

	<u>Action</u>
<p><b>1</b> <u>Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2006</u></p> <p>The minutes were agreed.</p>	
<p><b>2</b> <u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p>Noted that Cllrs. Gibbs, Knighton and Ros Allwood attended Prince II since the last meeting.</p> <p>Quorum – minimum of 3 elected members (2 from the administration) be in attendance. If a key decision is required then all members of the Project Board will be contacted.</p> <p>Letchworth Town Council have referred to LGCHF re their request for space in the Town Hall.</p> <p>HF have appointed Leisure Consultants to carry out a survey in Letchworth, Ros is liasing. LGCHF are believed to be about to make an offer for the Town Hall. NHDC to meet with the Heritage Foundation later in the week.</p> <p>Newsletter has been circulated to stakeholders. Some comments have been made by attendees that the newsletter doesn't reflect discussions that took place at the meeting. It was agreed that a newsletter will be issued after each Forum. The next Forum will be held on 11<sup>th</sup> July @ 7.30pm at Hitchin Town Hall. Newsletter to be put onto the website.</p>	<p><u>RA</u></p> <p><u>LH</u></p>
<p><b>3</b> <u>Highlight Report</u></p> <p>4. Tasks completed as detailed in the report</p> <p><u>Para. 5.2 Meeting of the Arts, Heritage and Culture Forum</u> Have now got a newsletter template, a draft glossy brochure explaining outcomes expected to be produced. Communications strategy summary to be produced. Newsletter &amp; next Forum date to be placed in MIS for all members to note date.</p>	<p><u>RA</u></p> <p><u>LS</u></p> <p><u>LH</u></p>

Para. 5.3 Baldock Town Feasibility Study

Baldock Museum have produced a plan for expanding their museum which they intend to send to our Consultants looking at the Town Hall Feasibility, they have asked for details of this Project Board group in order to circulate it at the end of April. Ros has seen a draft. Need to take corporate view on response, and that it is important it is seen as independent from NHDC plans.

**RA  
JR**

**RA/PC**

Para. 5.4 Secondary Heads Meeting

IK/RA attended, very productive meeting, they were critical of the current museums service. A lot of positive support from a number of Headteachers in terms of what museums could do for secondary school-age children in their present state. Outcome from this meeting is to write to all North Herts Secondary School Headteachers to get their view of how both teachers and children would like to be more involved, giving a range of options and asking for any other suggestions.

**LS**

Primary Heads should also be contacted in a similar way.

**RA**

Tasks

- Member Scrutiny required for the whole project, this will be by Project Assurance report and PID document to PARC.
- Work to begin on storage project, these projects will need manpower resource.
- Schedule of works to Cabinet, including project plans including details of management resources. Staff resources/capacity need to be identified.
- Project Manager to extract the key stages.

**PC/JR  
RA**

**4 Communication Plan**

Para. 2. Interested Parties

Ensure good communication with media and parish councils - to be added.

**LS**

Need to add anyone who we communicate regularly with.

**RA**

Para. 4. Information Provider

Head of Service (RA) to respond to press and other enquires - agreed by the Board.

**PCa**

A clear vision for the project is vital to give a positive effect, the glossy "Outcomes and Plans " leaflet is key for this.

**RA**

Should invite press reporters in and give press briefings at key stages. Need to update Communications Plan

**LS/RA**

5. Project Scheduling and Plans

Agreed that we need to break down projects and agree their ordering. We cannot look at what our museums need to do until the LGCHF museum has been planned.

Project plan required for the development of a Strategy.

**RA**

Digitisation we still need to decide the best timing of this project Will require a planned/phased approach as this is time consuming and costly, possibility of working groups, external funding highly possible. This would be ideally taken alongside

the new Storage Research centre.

The Schools Loan Service was discussed, it was agreed a more suitable name for this is required, it is expected that significant external funds could be secured. Cultural development work/outreach is a key part of this project and will be required to allow us to restructure the service away from just the buildings. Looking at developing partnership and an educational service. Once again this will benefit from being undertaken early on the schedule to allow partnership benefits to be developed.

Highest priority agreed for joint store for HF & NHDC and the other, smaller museums. This could be done quickly with asset capital, in conjunction with the timing of the HF implementation. Could then have capacity to move items to the new storage area to facilitate freeing up current NHDC Letchworth Museums. The new modern store, could be used by researchers by-appointment and open to the public on specific open days.

Digitisation should take place straight away if moving to new storage. This would then enable NHDC to rationalise the disposal policy.

The Project Board agreed the following order:-

1. New Storage
2. Digitisation
3. Museums Outreach including loan service
4. Museum Facilities at Hitchin and Letchworth
5. Options appraisal for new site at the end of Year 2.

Also agreed need for over-arching Cultural and Heritage Strategies

The development of project plans to take into account scheduling and resources, can now go ahead.

RA

## 5 **PARC Report**

LS requested any comments or observations.

JR stated that he is happy with the approach, and requested that it is made clear earlier in the report that this is a Prince II High Level Project using project assurance

LS

PARC will carry out the project assurance role on behalf of the Council and provide political endorsement.

Will hold member briefings post-elections.

PC

## 6 **Date of future meetings**

6<sup>th</sup> September, 6<sup>th</sup> December – 5pm start, to be held in John Robinson's office.