



Minutes of a meeting of the Museum Committee held on Tuesday 13 March 2024 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, East Street, Wareham at 7.00pm.

Committee Members present: Councillors B Dean (Chairman), Cllr D Cleaton (Vice Chairman) Cllr C Turner, B Buxton, N Dominy, G Hennell, V De Wit (Curatorial Advisor), H Scharnhorst (Curator)

Also present: J Hale, Webmaster

Officers present: N Gray, Town Clerk and RFO, G Pettifer, Deputy Clerk

M 042/24 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from D Kingman

M 043/24 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

M 044/24 Public participation time

There were no members of the public present.

M 045/24 Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Museum Committee, held on 22 November 2023, were **APPROVED** and would be signed by the Chairman following the meeting.

M 046/24 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

M036/23 Insurance – the Deputy Clerk confirmed that Zurich Municipal Insurance cover the museum as part of the Town Hall premises.

M037/23 Fire Alarm – it was noted that in a recent visit by the Fire Alarm Engineer, the alarms were in good working order but additional alarms, including visual, flashing lights, could be added to the system if required.

M038/23 CCTV – the request to move CCTV cameras was being considered as part of the larger building works being planned for the museum.

M 047/24 Reports by Committee Members

Report of the Curator

The Curator reported that the Museum was almost ready for the new opening season, with a new display on Percy Westerman, an updated display on the Sandford pottery history, and a reorganisation of the photographs displayed as you enter the museum. The children's area had also seen a revamp and a new interactive tablet was in place.

The winter sessions had seen progress made on accessioning items that have recently been donated to the museum and some new volunteers had been welcomed to the collections team.

The Grotto for Father Christmas was a success and saw a large number of families coming through the Museum. The Museum was asked to host again

for Christmas 2024, and a donation is expected from the Father Christmas committee for the use of the space.

Although closed, the Museum still welcomed several groups for prearranged visits, talks and history walks around the town. Two local school visits were booked for the week before Easter opening.

The 50th anniversary celebrations plans were underway, with the team investigating several possibilities. Provisional dates were 27, 28 and 29 September 2024.

The Curator also noted her thanks to outgoing Manager, Jacquie Hall, for her support during her time as Manager, which was echoed by the Committee, and it was hoped that Jacquie would continue to support the Museum as a volunteer.

Report of the Manager

The Clerk noted there was no manager in place, but an advert to recruit was currently being run with a closing date of Monday 1 April.

There was a general discussion about museum volunteer involvement the selection and interview process, but the Clerk confirmed that, as it was for a Council appointed post, recruitment decisions must be made by the Personnel Committee. It was hoped that volunteers could meet the candidates and provide feedback to the recruitment panel.

The Clerk confirmed that the Deputy Clerk and the Admin Officer would assist the Curator with administration duties, until a Museum Manager was in post. Dorset Council had provided a small grant to cover the cost of the Curator carrying out some managerial duties which would be paid as an honorarium to the Curator.

The Clerk also confirmed that a proposal to Council would be made for the Museum Committee to be disbanded, with the newly appointed Museum Manager would report to full Council under a standing item. It would be the responsibility of the Chief Operating Group (COG) to support the museum operationally, led by the Museum Manager. It was hoped that Councillors who were interested in the Museum would attend the COG meetings if they wished.

The Clerk thanked Vicki De Witt for her help and support in driving forward the positive changes which would benefit the museum in the future, bring the management of the Museum in line with other Council owned Museums, and for securing £500 funding to support the management honorarium for the Curator.

Report of the Webmaster

The report from the Webmaster was noted.

The Clerk asked the Webmaster to check the SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) settings on the museum website, as Google was showing the museum as being open.

M 048/24 2024/25 Budget

The Museum budget set by Council for the 2024/25 financial year was **NOTED.**

M 049/24 Health & Safety Matters

There were no health and safety matters reported.

Training sessions for new and returning volunteers had been scheduled for 19, 20 and 23 March.

Training on the use of the cash register would be arranged separately.

M 050/24 Easter Opening

The Curator announced that the Easter opening date was Saturday 30 March and that it would be a soft opening with no major publicity, as the focus would be on the 50th Celebrations later in the year.

M 051/24 Any other items the Chairman deems urgent

There were no items deemed urgent.

M 052/24 Date of next meeting

The proposal to Full Council would result in no future meeting of this committee, but should that proposal not be agreed, the next meeting date would be confirmed.

Chairman..... Date.....

