

Nelson Museum Management Board

Minutes

Monday, 27 January 2014 at 14:00

PRESENT:

Councillor Robinson-Payne, Councillor Jeal, Ben Turner (Ben Burgess), Bertie Patterson (Volunteer Representative) and Karline Smith (Senior Member Services Officer).

An apology for absence was received from Lizzie Champion.

1 MINUTES

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2013 were confirmed.

2 CURATORS REPORT

Project Update

The Curator reported that the museum had a fantastic winter, making progress with the re-organisation of the Museum and opening a Cafe/Shop to help increase the spend per head of visitors. Some of the volunteers had been in three times a week.

There had been a real 'blitz' spirit among the team and many volunteers had been getting to know others that they wouldn't normally work with, which is helping to create a 2one team2 feeling at the museum and something they would like to expand on to include everyone who volunteers, works, visits or contributes to the museum.

Green Room

Finishing touches to the new Green Room to deliver a truly competitive and professional looking conference suite are underway. The Curator asked for the board's permission to offer a competitive rate or donation only rate this year to conference groups in order to attract as many people as possible to come and use the room, see the museum and spread the word. At such a vulnerable important time for the museum, positive Pr would be of great help and may lead to potential benefactors for the museum. Subsequent years could then be charged at a competitive rate.

Cafe and Shop

Thanks were expressed to First Move Furnish Aid for furnishing the new cafe. coffee machines were starting to be delivered and the Curator would bring them in as soon as she is well. Coffee pods and tea bags will be purchased from the reception and this gives the volunteers a chance to offer help with using the simple self service machine if needed. Advice was sought on pricing of the drinks and the Board agreed that the pricing should be left to Lizzy. Great Yarmouth Borough Council had offered Food and Hygiene and Health and Safety Courses.

New Merton Room

The display from the downstairs Merton Room has translated well and the space allows for greater absorption and focus on "Nelson the Man" and the part of the story that many visitors may be just as interested in as his Naval Career. Some hand held interpretation from Bertie's great research into the love letters of Nelson to Emma and Fanny. It was hoped that some Georgian curtains and muslin could be had at the windows to allow natural light to flood in and to show the beautiful sash windows off to full affect.

Small Blue Room or Temporary Exhibition Space

This space will now be dedicated solely to temporary/visiting exhibitions. It was hoped that the Civic collections would be held in this space at the museum. If needed Hannah's recently curated "Nelson's Women" is all ready and available to go up in this space until the civic collection is curated and displayed. It was suggested that this space could be an opportunity to do "Conservation in Action" where visitors can watch and even contribute in some way to the creation of a new exhibition.

Group Bookings

THE IOD had chosen to start their year of visits at the Nelson Museum for 2014 and have already given us nationwide publicity in their magazine. They will be attending on the evening of 26th February for a unique experience and then the plaza cafe will be providing them with a three course meal.

With currently 15+ company directors visiting it was hoped that along with the presentation about the museum and being in such an inspiring place, this event may lead to some benefactions in the future. Members of teh board and Trustees were invited to attend to talk to members of IOD during their time or maybe even a short presentation to them.

It was hoped to welcome "Nelson Spirit" to the museum. who are an organisation that offers bespoke high end training for managers around the country inspired by Nelson's Leadership Skills. This is why the Leadership Exhibition "Nelson's Touch" is in the Green Room. The curator will be meeting with Nigel Cushion, the Chair of the IOD and Director of Nelson's Spirit very soon.

10 weeks of paid course bookings has been booked by Gilly Plumb the Community Development Officer for Norfolk who is hoping to keep booking the conference room throughout the year for various training and community workshops. A contributory price for this of £8.50 per hour has been agreed with tea, coffee and biscuits an additional charge per head on top of this. This is an introductory offer for the delegate to experience the Museum.

Alternative coach parking would not be pursued.

Schools Bookings

There were several potential bookings already as between 5 and 6 schools were studying Nelson this year in the immediate locality alone.

A grant application had been submitted to the East of England Cooperative Society for funding of a new Schools and Community Project. This would allow the museum to create materials and workshops tailored specifically for Schools and Community groups needs, increase and enrich their outreach programme and attractiveness to local schools but to also open up access to the Green Room through the purchase of a Stair Lift. The curator asked the board how compliant the access to this space needed to be to meet the conditions of the museums charter. The outcome of the grant application would be known after 19 February 2014.

Marketing

The website is currently under construction and it is hoped that this will be launched in the near future.

The Museum leaflet is in the final stages of design and is waiting final amendments. It was agreed that the board would approve this prior to going to print.

Events

It was agreed that a £1 entry fee would be charged for the Maritime weekend. Cream Teas would only be served at this if more volunteers agreed to help.

The Trafalgar Ball last year had been a success and it was agreed to hold this again this year and that it should be marketed 4 months in advance. It was suggested that a banner could be put up along the Quay railings

Curator Requests

The Curator asked for a working projector for the conference room along with fabric seated professional conference chairs and a new printer for the Curator.

Ben Turner agreed to investigate the printer for the Curator.

3 VOLUNTEERS REPORT

It was reported that a Georgian Christmas had been held at the Museum in December and that this hadn't been very well attended and it was suggested that a Georgian Day be held in the Summer.

Monthly meetings are now held between the volunteers and the Curator and it was stated that the volunteers have a wide range of suggestions for the future of the museum, Councillor Jeal reminded the volunteer representative that any decisions needed to be brought to the management board for consideration.

The volunteers asked that the museum open later in order to finish some of the displays. The Management Board stated that they would not like the museum to be

closed any longer than necessary.

It was reported that one of the longest serving volunteers had left and that another volunteer had lost their husband over the Christmas holidays and that a condolences card had been sent.

4 CURATORS MATERNITY COVER

The Management Board reported that they would need Maternity cover for the Curators role. It was suggested that the board could employ a freelance curator as some of the Norfolk Museums staff had, had their hours cut. It was also suggested that Hannah could be asked to come back for one day a month to oversee Roseanne, but it was stated that Hannah did not want to come back. It was also suggested that Lizzy could come back in for a number of keep in touch days during her maternity leave. It was agreed that a letter would be sent to Lizzy from the Management Board to ask her when she would be going on maternity leave and when this would finish.

It was reported that James Steward (NMS) would act as a Mentor to the Curator and would be called on "as and when" necessary. In the same way Marie Hartley (GYBC) would no longer attend board meetings but offer advice to the museum when necessary.

5 SPENDING COMMITMENTS OF THE MUSEUM

This was covered in the Curators report.

6 PRESERVATION TRUST INSPECTION OF PROPERTY

It was reported that previous request for help had been ignored and that a letter should now be sent from the Chairman as the guttering was blocked.

7 UPDATE OF POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

It was reported that there was a need to update the Museum's policies and documents.

8 HOSTE

It was reported that the Museum wanted their branding including in this exhibition.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Letter received from Volunteer

It was reported that a letter had been received from a volunteer detailing a grievance. A discussion then ensued around how to deal with this as the volunteer did not have a direct line manager to pass this onto as detailed in the Museums Grievance procedure. It was suggested that the Chairman speak to Voluntary Norfolk or the Council HR department for advice on how to deal with this issue including mediation and for advice on Maternity Cover.

(ii) Year End Accounts

It was reported that the Year end accounts were now completed and it was hoped that next years accounts showed a dramatic drop in losses.

(iii) Norwich Library

It was reported that some of the volunteers would be involved in an event being held at Norwich Library.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Monday 10th March 2014 at 10.30 am.

The meeting ended at: 15:50