



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **West Glamorgan Archives Committee**

**Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS**

**Teams**

**Friday, 16 June 2023 at 10.00 am**

**Present:** Louise Fleet (Chair) Presided

### **Councillor(s) - Swansea**

J E Pritchard

### **Councillor(s) – Neath Port Talbot**

W Carpenter

S Renkes

C Phillips

### **Associated Organisations**

Andrew Dulley

Diocese of Swansea & Brecon

Janet Watkins

Neath Antiquarian Society

### **Officer(s)**

Gareth Borsden

Democratic Services Officer

Kim Collis

County Archivist

Craig Griffiths

Head of Legal - NPT

Chris Saunders

Head of Culture, Leisure, Heritage and Tourism - NPT

### **Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s) - P M Black, L R Jones, E J King, R Mizen & R V Smith and Dr L Miskell & T McNulty

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## **1 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by both Authorities, the following interest was declared:

Andrew Dulley – Item 5 – personal.

## **2 Welcome/Thanks.**

The Chair indicated that following a revision to portfolio responsibility in NPT Council, Craig Griffiths had indicated he would be attending his final meeting today.

She thanked him for his contributions and advice to the committee over the years.

She also welcomed Chris Saunders, Head of Culture, Leisure, Heritage and Tourism to his first meeting.

**3 Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the West Glamorgan Archives Committee meeting held on 24 March 2023 be approved as a correct record.

**4 Election of Vice Chairs for the Municipal Year 2023-2024.**

**Resolved** that the election of the Vice Chairs be deferred to the next meeting.

**5 Report of the County Archivist.**

The County Archivist presented a report which outlined the work of the Joint Archive Service during the period March – May 2023.

Use of the Service

He reported on the figures relating the use of the service via its various platforms both in person and online.

He outlined that the use of the service is steadily rising following the pandemic and the various lockdowns.

He outlined that the Wales Broadcast Archive is due to be launched on July 11<sup>th</sup>, and he would look to arrange a visit for committee members to view the facility at the civic centre in due course.

He outlined a breakdown of the statistics of where people are from that use the service, which is obtained via the Archives Card reader tickets.

He referred to IT issues that have been experienced at the Mechanics Institute due to the age of the computers there, which had to be replaced due to potential security issues. This should be rectified very soon, and new machines installed.

Following a question from Janet Watkins regarding the usage statistics, he indicated he would happy to include the visitor numbers at the mechanics institute for when the facility is open and staffed by the Antiquarian Society's volunteers. These would though have to be recorded separately from when archives staff are present due to reporting regulations.

The issue of the decline in family history enthusiasts attending both the Civic Centre and Mechanics Institute was discussed along with the factors affecting the issue.

Outreach and Educational Activity

He referred to the publication of the service's annual report which went online at the end of May.

It can be found at <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/countyarchivistannualreport>

The number of schools to whom staff have delivered educational sessions was outlined.

Several sessions were also held for Swansea University students, and staff also delivered talks to various different groups during the quarter.

#### Relocation of the Archives to the City Centre Hub

He detailed that work remains ongoing and continues to evolve the design of the new facility in Swansea city centre to ensure it complies with British Standard 4971.

He detailed the input of both Welsh Government and the specialist external advisor Chris Woods which have led to the installation of 2 additional pieces of equipment, namely one to remove excess humidity and another around an automatic cooling system.

He referred and detailed the Accreditation process the service will have to go through at the new facility.

#### Staff

He outlined that the service had lost 2 members of staff in recent months, which has affected the ability to deliver a full service in both Swansea and Neath.

He outlined that the process of recruiting replacement staff is ongoing.

#### Professional Meetings and Training

He outlined the various professional groups and meetings that he had attended during the quarter.

#### Accessions of Archive Collections

He detailed on the various archives received by the Service during the quarter.

The meeting ended at 10.47 am

**Chair**