

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE WEST GLAMORGAN ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

**HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 6, GUILDHALL, SWANSEA ON FRIDAY,
19 JUNE 2015 AT 11.00 AM**

PRESENT:

Representatives of the City and County of Swansea:

Councillor(s):	Councillor(s):	Councillor(s):
E King K E Marsh	R V Smith	C Thomas

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Representatives:

Councillor(s):	Councillor(s):
D W Davies	P A Rees

Representatives of the Associated Organisations:

Mr A Dulley	-	Diocese of Swansea and Brecon
Dr L Miskell	-	Swansea University
Mrs J L Watkins	-	Neath Antiquarian Society

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor P M Meara	-	City and County of Swansea
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Officers:

T McNulty	-	Head of Cultural Services
K Collis	-	County Archivist
W John	-	County Librarian (Neath Port Talbot CBC)
J Parkhouse	-	Democratic Services Officer

1 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRS FOR THE 2015-2016 MUNICIPAL YEAR.

RESOLVED that Councillors D W Davies and R V Smith be elected Vice Chairs of the Committee for the 2015-2016 Municipal Year.

(Councillor R V Smith, Vice-Chair presided)

2 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr D B Lewis (HM Lord Lieutenant), and Mrs C Hodgson.

3 **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

4 **MINUTES.**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the West Glamorgan Archives Committee Meeting held on 13 March 2015 be approved as a correct record.

5 **TO CONSIDER THE REPORT OF THE COUNTY ARCHIVIST.**

The County Archivist presented a report which outlined the work of the Archive Service during the period March to May 2015.

Planning for the Future

It was outlined that the Archive Service was in the initial stages of preparation for a period of profound transformation which would see the most significant alteration for more than two decades to the way in which the service was delivered. The current challenge was to understand and integrate each factor forcing change on the Archive Service and to produce a mutually agreed vision and forward plan which maintained service quality and was financially sustainable in the long-term. It was added that the factors necessitating change were threefold: impending Welsh Local Government reorganisation; the generic remodelling of the way Local Authority Cultural Services were delivered; proposed sale of Swansea Civic Centre. It was added that the anticipated deadline for Council services to vacate Swansea Civic Centre was approximately 5 years which provided a timeframe for the Archive Service to plan for its relocation of over 600 sq. metres. of historic records from the Swansea Civic Centre basement.

Reference was made to discussions between Swansea University, the City and County of Swansea, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and Carmarthenshire Council to explore whether it was possible to develop together a shared vision for archive provision in South West Wales. These talks had been attended by Welsh Government and facilitated by an external consultant. It was added that a fact finding tour of the Keep, a shared archive facility in Brighton, took place in early May 2015.

RESOLVED that a more detailed report regarding the fact finding tour of the Keep in Brighton be provided to the next scheduled meeting.

Statistics for March 2015 to May 2015

Statistics for March 2015 to May 2015 were detailed in the report, which showed further reductions across a number of performance indicators. The County Archivist informed the Committee that the service was planning to publish collections for family historians on-line which would be available on a pay-per-view basis. This could further reduce visits to the Archive Service but was a necessary source of income. It was also noted that the central library had also had a reduction in visits due to a variety of reasons which were outlined to the Committee.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

Education Service

The County Archivist provided details of sessions provided by the Service to schools during the last quarter. It was added that the Service had rationalised the offer to schools to make some of the less popular sessions available as teachers' resource packs only, and concentrate on providing the most popularly requested subjects for Key Stages 2 and 3. In addition the range of Key Stage 3 sessions had been extended to include a session dealing with the Holocaust and Jewish Refugees in South Wales.

Fees and Charges

RESOLVED that the fees and charges for 2015/16 provided at Appendix 1 of the report be approved.

Service Outreach

The County Archivist referred to an event which took place on 14 March 2015 at Sandfields Community Centre Port Talbot showcasing an exhibition by pupils of Sandfields Comprehensive School facilitated by the Service and Swansea University about the history of the estate. He added that the exhibition had been displayed in Port Talbot and Sandfields Libraries and had been well received. It was due to return to Sandfields Comprehensive School for a special event prior to being forwarded to the Tata Steel Visitor Centre in July 2015. A related exhibition was currently on display at the National Waterfront Museum.

He indicated that a new exhibition on the history of the Townhill Estate in Swansea was in preparation. He also referred to the project 'Cynefin: Mapping Wales Sense of Place' which is a three year project to digitise the tithe maps of Wales which was now at its halfway point. The Cynefin local project 'Exploring Gower's Ancient Woodland' had seen significant volunteer activity during the last quarter from a range of individuals and environmentalist groups.

In addition, the County Archivist referred to the recent publication of the Archive Service 2014/15 Annual Report which was published in May..

Professional Meetings and Partnership Working

The County Archivist referred to the professional meetings and training attended by staff during the last quarter.

Accession of Archives

The County Archivist detailed the various accessions received by the Service.

6 **DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2015-2016.**

NOTED the dates of meetings for 2015-2016 at 11.00 a.m. on the following dates:

- 18 September 2015 (Committee Rooms 1 and 2, Port Talbot);
- 18 December 2015 (Committee Room 5, Guildhall, Swansea);
- 18 March 2016 (Rooms A and B, Civic Centre, Neath).

The meeting ended at 12.02 pm

CHAIR