

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE WEST GLAMORGAN ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

**HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 6, GUILDHALL, SWANSEA ON FRIDAY,
16 JUNE 2017 AT 11.00 AM**

PRESENT: Mr B Lewis (Chair) Presided

Representatives of the City & County of Swansea

Councillor(s)

P M Black
E J King

Councillor(s)

L S Gibbard
R V Smith

Councillor(s)

L R Jones

Representatives of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Councillor(s)

H James

Councillor(s)

R L Taylor

Officer(s)

Tracey McNulty – Head of Cultural Services
Kim Collis – County Archivist
Gareth Borsden – Democratic Services

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s) P A Rees & A Woolcock
Mr A Dulley, Mrs S Perons, Mr D Michael & Mr W John

1 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRS FOR 2017-2018 MUNICIPAL YEAR.

RESOLVED that Councillor R V Smith be elected Vice Chair of the Committee for the 2017-2018 Municipal Year. The election of the Neath Port Talbot Vice Chair was deferred to the following meeting.

2 DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by both Authorities, no interests were declared.

3 MINUTES.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the West Glamorgan Archives Committee Meeting held on 17 March 2017 be approved as a correct record, subject to Tracey McNulty being added to the list of apologies.

4 REPORT OF THE COUNTY ARCHIVIST.

Kim Collis, County Archivist presented a report which outlined the work of the Joint Archive Service during the period March to May 2017.

Use of the Service

He reported on the use of the Service for the quarter and detailed the background behind the quarterly statistics.

He reported that certain Archive Service collections had gone live on the Ancestry website during March and detailed the number of views/hits received in the first weeks and the anticipated income likely from the partnership agreement.

With regard to the ongoing decline in the number of physical visits to the search rooms, he explained the causes such as reduction in opening hours and much greater availability of family history information online. The various efforts made to engage a wider audience through schools and outreach work was discussed. The fact that the Service continues to be the busiest in Wales was highlighted.

Service Outreach

He reported on the success of the "Our Abertawe: Celebrating Swansea Together" exhibition that had been displayed at the city centre event in March. The exhibition had been subsequently loaned to the Josef Herman Foundation for display in Ystradgynlais. He outlined that the exhibition is shortly to be displayed in the Civic Centre and National Waterfront Museum in Swansea and is available for loan to organisations/community groups across West Glamorgan.

He referred to the "Visions of Steel" exhibition developed in conjunction with Swansea University and created by pupils of Sandfields Comprehensive School Port Talbot. The exhibition had been on display in Port Talbot Library, and had been moved to the TATA Steel Academy. A free book had also been produced by Swansea University and published by the Archive Service as part of the project, a copy will be distributed to all Members of the Committee at the following meeting.

He also referred to the "Exploring Gower's Ancient Woodland" project that had finished in March. An event had taken place in Bishopston involving project volunteers and pupils from Bishopston Primary School, to launch a walker's leaflet and teacher's pack..

Talks/Education Service

He outlined the talks given to groups and schools sessions undertaken.

West Wales Partnership

He reported that Carmarthenshire County Council have decided to progress with the development of their own new archives facility as an extension to Carmarthen Library, and had effectively left the Partnership.

He also outlined that Swansea University had set up a Regional History Centre Project Board to advance the project, which held its first meeting in March.

Minutes of the West Glamorgan Archives Committee (16.06.2017)
Cont'd

The Chair indicated that although the timescales relating to the sale of the Civic Centre have slipped, a decision needs to be reached sooner rather than later on whether a joint facility between the two authorities and the University is an achievable goal, or whether the Authorities need to progress the project alone. Tracey McNulty reported that although there are no firm proposals for the joint facility at the moment, Officer discussions continue behind the scenes in order to plan and ensure that the Archive Service would be properly housed and provided for should the need arise for a move.

Committee discussed the options going forward regarding the future provision, location and funding of a new facility.

A further update on the matter would be provided to a future meeting.

Professional Meetings & Partnership Workings

He outlined the meetings attended by staff during the quarter.

Archive Collections

He reported on the list of archives received during the quarter.

The meeting ended at 12.05 pm

CHAIR