



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **West Glamorgan Archives Committee**

Committee Room 6, Guildhall, Swansea

Friday, 20 December 2019 at 11.00 am

Present: D B Lewis (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s) - Swansea

P M Black

L S Gibbard

L R Jones

R V Smith

M Durke

Councillor(s) – Neath Port Talbot

R Mizen

P A Rees

Associated Organisations

A Dulley

Diocese of Swansea & Brecon

J Watkins

Neath Antiquarian Society

S Perons

Diocese of Llandaff

Officer(s)

G Borsden

Democratic Services Officer

K Collis

County Archivist

C Griffiths

Head of Legal – NPT

Apologies for Absence

Councillors A R Aubrey, W F Griffiths & H N James and Dr L Miskell & W John

8 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

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

9 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the West Glamorgan Archives Committee meeting held on 13 September 2019 be approved as a correct record.

10 Matters Arising

The County Archivist reported that no decision had been made yet on the future of the Archives reserves and further discussions will continue between the two authorities.

The publication reserve had now been exhausted following the reprinting of the 'Three Night Blitz' book.

11 Outgoing Chair.

Mr Byron Lewis indicated that this would be his last meeting of the Committee before he retires from his position as Lord Lieutenant of West Glamorgan in March 2020.

He outlined that he had enjoyed his twelve years as Chair of the Committee and thanked Members both past and present for their input over the years.

Kim Collis, County Archivist presented Mr Lewis with a copy of the service's latest publication 'A new, even better Abertawe: the rebuilding of Swansea, 1941-1961' as a gesture of thanks for his contribution over the years.

12 Report of the County Archivist.

The County Archivist presented a report which outlined the work of the Joint Archive Service during the period September - November 2019.

Use of the Service

The County Archivist reported on the use of the Service for the quarter and also referred to the comparison of statistics for 2018/19 and detailed the background and rationale behind the statistics.

The vast amount of material that is available online now also impacts on actual visitor numbers.

Archives Accreditation

The County Archivist outlined the background to the Service's accreditation in 2016 under the UK Archives Accreditation Scheme. The award lasts for a six year period and was subject to a mid-term review in November.

He reported that the Service had not passed the mid-term review and that Accreditation had been extended on a provisional basis for a twelve month period dependent on a three-point action plan being completed by November 2020.

He outlined the three main requirements that the review had identified which would need to be addressed for the service to continue to meet the Standard.

Plans for the relocation of the archive collections to allow for the closure of Swansea Civic Centre were currently at a very early stage. These needed to be clarified and presented to the Accreditation Panel. The Service's policies needed to be reviewed and interlinked to make a more coherent whole. There also needed to be more clarity on the implications for the Service of proposed budget cuts.

He referred to a recent report he had produced for a Scrutiny panel in Swansea which he would circulate to all Committee members following the meeting. The report outlined in more detail the issues and factors surrounding the possible future relocation and potential interim storage solutions.

He referred to the six-year timeframe that Carmarthenshire and Powys Councils both needed from first concept to opening of their new archive facilities. In both cases, the Councils had not been seeking external funding for their projects.

The Chair and Members of the Committee discussed at length the issues raised in the review and outlined that the Service needs greater certainty over its future in order to protect the collections and keep the collections available locally to the public.

A meeting between the Chair, Vice Chairs and relevant Cabinet Member in Swansea was proposed as a starting point for discussions around all the issues facing the Service going forward.

Service Outreach

The County Archivist reported on the various locations where the exhibition commemorating the 50th anniversary of city status for Swansea had been displayed during the quarter.

The event to launch the Archive Service publication 'A new, even better Abertawe: the rebuilding of Swansea, 1941-1961' held in Swansea Museum in September had proved successful and sales of the book have been strong since the book launch.

The work of the Education Service during the quarter was outlined, with nine schools involved, some booking several sessions.

Talks to Groups

The County Archivist reported on the various talks given to societies and groups over the quarter and the external events that staff had been involved in.

Staff

The County Archivist reported that Emma Laycock had started with the service in November in a job-share role.

Professional Meetings & Partnership Working

The County Archivist reported on the various professional meetings attended by staff during the quarter.

He indicated that the new UK wide 'Archives Reader Card' would be launched in January. The new card would give access to over 50 Archive Service collections across Wales and England.

He reminded Committee Members that the various exhibitions held by the service remain available for display across both authorities and are outlined and listed on the service's webpages.

Archive Collections

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

The meeting ended at 11.55 am

Chair