



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **West Glamorgan Archives Committee**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Friday, 10 December 2021 at 11.00 am

Present: Louise Fleet (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s) - Swansea

P M Black	L R Jones	J A Raynor
R V Smith		

Councillor(s) – Neath Port Talbot

A R Aubrey	W F Griffiths	R Mizen
P A Rees		

Associated Organisations

Andrew Dulley	Diocese of Swansea & Brecon
Louise Miskell	Swansea University

Officer(s)

Gareth Borsden	Democratic Services Officer
Kim Collis	County Archivist
Craig Griffiths	Head of Legal - NPT
Wayne John	County Librarian - NPT

Apologies for Absence

Councillors L S Gibbard and H N James and T McNulty, S Perons and J Watkins

10 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

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

11 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the West Glamorgan Archives Committee meeting held on 10 September 2021 be approved as a correct record.

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 2021 – November 2021.

Covid-19

He indicated that the Swansea searchroom remains open to the public, and is used regularly but on a much reduced basis due to the number restrictions on visitors due to the pandemic.

He reported that discussions had been undertaken with Neath Port Talbot Council and the Neath Antiquarian Society and a health and safety assessment undertaken with a view to reopening the facility at the Mechanics Institute in Neath, but indicated that at present the Antiquarian Society were unfortunately unable to commit to assisting at this time. The situation would be reviewed again in the New Year.

Archive Service Accreditation

He reported that following the annual review of its accreditation the service had been awarded provisional status until November 2022.

Outreach and Educational Work

He indicated that the school service had restarted during the quarter via Microsoft Teams, which could be a basis for delivery going forward.

The project on the history of Wales' connection with the slave trade remains ongoing, with the pandemic impacting on the progress and review of the programme in schools.

Use of the Service

He indicated that the figures relating the use of the service reflect the effect of the pandemic.

Talks and Professional Meetings

He reported on the various meetings attended by staff during the quarter.

Archive Collections

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

Potential Relocation of the Archives Service to the Proposed City Centre Hub

He then gave a detailed and lengthy verbal presentation and outlined the contents of a 'technical note' he had prepared relating to the proposals for the proposed relocation of the Archives service to the new city centre hub. The details of the proposals are contained in a confidential report which would be considered by Cabinet in Swansea on 16th December 2021.

He also displayed several plans to the committee which outlined the proposed layout of the new building and size of the new Archives facilities relating to both the public facing side of the building and the storage facilities which would be situated on the second floor of the new building, and their comparisons with the existing provision in the Civic Centre.

Minutes of the West Glamorgan Archives Committee (10.12.2021)
Cont'd

The presentation followed on from an informal presentation on the proposals from the multi-disciplinary team (MDT) in Swansea Council to Archives Committee members in November.

Covered during the presentation in detail were external advice and information relating to various issues including BSI standards, fire safety, security and thermal modelling. It was outlined that the proposed public searchroom would be considerably smaller than the current one, with no separate family history provision for the public, however this was still subject to change. There would however be a separate "education room" for the building which could be utilised.

He outlined that he would circulate the technical note, plans and advice on fire, security and thermal modelling etc following the meeting.

Members discussed the proposals and issues raised at length and asked numerous questions of the County Archivist who responded accordingly. They also queried and raised concerns on whether the plans were the most up to date and latest ones, as the cabinet report seemed to indicate that they weren't. Queries were also raised on the size of the strongroom, particularly if as indicated in the cabinet report the service takes on additional collections. They also queried whether Neath Port Talbot Council would be able to comment on the proposals as partners to the joint service.

It was outlined that the Scrutiny Programme Committee in Swansea would be examining and discussing the report at their meeting on Tuesday 14th December, with the Chair of that Committee giving feedback to the meeting of Cabinet on the 16th December.

(Note: Cllr Robert Smith remained to hear the debate and asked questions but did not declare an opinion relating to this item)

The meeting ended at 12.30 pm

Chair