

QUEEN'S OWN ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT MUSEUM TRUST COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 10 October 2017
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Cox, Cuming (Vice-Chairman), Newton (Chairman), Round and
Mrs Wilson

AGENDA

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1. Apologies for Absence
2. Notification of Substitute Members
3. Notification of Visiting Members
4. Disclosures by Members and Officers
5. Disclosures of Lobbying
6. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information
7. Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 July 2017 1 - 3
8. Report into the charged-for enquiry service at Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment Museum 4 - 8

ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact Democratic Services on committeeservices@maidstone.gov.uk or 01622 602272**. To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk

PUBLIC SPEAKING

In order to book a slot to speak at this meeting of the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment Museum Trust Committee, please contact 01622 602272 or by email on ezzietunnicliff@maidstone.gov.uk by 5 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting. If asking a question, you will need to provide the full text in writing. If making a statement, you will need to tell us which agenda item you wish to speak on. Please note that slots will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Issued on Monday 2 October 2017

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment Museum Trust Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11 JULY 2017

Present: Councillor Newton (Chairman), and
Councillors Cox, Cuming, Round and Mrs Wilson

6. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies.

7. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

There were no substitutes.

8. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

There were no Visiting Members.

9. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

10. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

11. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

RESOLVED: That all items be taken in public as proposed.

12. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 JANUARY 2017**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed.

13. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 MAY 2017**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed.

14. **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE - ACCOUNTS 2016/17**

The Senior Finance Manager presented a report detailing the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment Museum Trust's accounts for the year ending 31 March 2017 for approval by the Committee before submission to the Charity Commission.

The Senior Finance Manager informed the Committee that the income from voluntary sources was lower than the previous year. This was because previously enquiry fees were being paid incorrectly into the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment Museum Trust's code. As a result of this, the Trust did not have enough income to pay the Maidstone Borough Council Service Charge for the year.

At the meeting held on 17 January 2017 the Committee requested further information on the £15 flat fee for research undertaken by officers on behalf of members of the public, along with detail on the amount of time and resources allocated to each request, and comparisons with other local authorities that provide a similar service.

The Committee expressed its disquiet that the report that had been requested was not presented at this meeting. The Committee asked for the report to come to the next meeting and for it to contain:

- The number of requests that the Museum received for research enquiries;
- What the Maidstone Borough Council Service Charge covers;
- A full account of income and expenditure; and
- An examination of scales and charges.

The intended aim of this report was so the Committee could understand the operation of the Trust as a business.

The Committee discussed the type, size and prominence of the Trust's donation box at the Museum. The Committee agreed to visit the donation box and think of possible alternatives that would encourage more donations and make members of the public more aware about the Trust.

In order that a new donation box be placed at the Museum before the winter, the Committee requested that another meeting of this Committee be held in early October.

RESOLVED: That the Accounts be approved for the year ending 31st March 2017.

Voting: Unanimous

15. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE - REVIEW OF INVESTMENTS

The Senior Finance Manager gave a presentation to the Committee regarding Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment Museum Trust's investments.

The Committee considered raising the risk level on their investments, but the Senior Finance Manager advised that there would not be much gain in doing so and, because it was a charity, risk levels should be kept low. The Senior Finance Manager agreed to look at a range of risk levels and report these back to the Committee.

RESOLVED: That,

1. The current investment be retained;
2. Investment performance be monitored and reported to the Committee as part of future financial reports; and
3. A further report be brought back to the Committee should further alternative investments be identified.

Voting: Unanimous

16. DURATION OF MEETING

10.05 a.m. to 10.47 a.m.

Agenda Item 8

Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment Museum Trust	10 October 2017
Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?	Yes

Report into the charged-for enquiry service at Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment Museum

Final Decision-Maker	QORWKR Museum Trust Committee
Lead Head of Service	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Victoria Barlow – Museums Director
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the level of charging for 2018-19 be agreed.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all – respecting the character and heritage of our borough.

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
QORWKR Trust	10/10/17

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report is intended to give Trustees information on the amount of time and resources allocated to each research request received by the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Trust (QORWKRT) by Maidstone Museum staff.
 - 1.2 Further it makes comparisons with fees charged by museums carrying out a similar service.
 - 1.3 Finally, it makes recommendations on charging options for the service.
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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A report into the charging structure for enquiries was requested by Trustees at a meeting in January 2017 during which they discussed the current level of fees. The current charge, agreed by Maidstone Borough Council, is £15 for every enquiry taking longer than 30 minutes.
- 2.2 QORWKRT Museum is an independent museum co-located with and entirely managed and run by Maidstone Museum.

2.3 Administration of enquiries

- 2.3.1 The enquiry procedure:
Enquiries are received by email, post, phone and contact form via the museum website. Where possible, enquiries are encouraged by email so that they can be tracked.
- 2.3.2 Recording and tracking an enquiry:
Details of the enquiry are added to the QORWKRT enquiry spreadsheet, by a member of the collections team, so that progress can be tracked. Payment is sought at this stage and no enquiry will be further processed until the fee is paid. If no payment is made after six months, an enquiry is considered cancelled.
- 2.3.3 Processing enquiries:
A database search taking less than 30 minutes is free of charge. All other enquiries such as family history research incur a £15 fee, receivable before an enquiry is processed. If the enquiry is related to artefacts in the museum collection, this is unlikely to take more than 30 minutes to process and so not likely to incur a fee.
The enquiry research itself is carried out by a volunteer at no charge to the museum.

2.4 Current use of the service

2.4.1 So far in the financial year 2017/18, 117 enquiries have been received. These were all logged and payment requested. Of this 117, only 26 were taken forward and charged for and a total of £390 has been secured. On average, the Collections Manager spends a day a month simply on the administration of requests.

2.5 Cost of the service

2.5.1 Staff administration of the scheme includes recording the enquiries, requesting and processing payment, passing to volunteer, ensuring completion etc.

1.5.2 The cost of this for the past six months is £1,410.78. This is calculated based on 6 working days for the Collection Manager at an hourly rate of £33.59. This results in a net cost to the museum of £1,020.78

2.5.3 Currently an annual charge of £2,000 is levied against the Trust as a contribution to the care and management of Trust collections.

2.6 Charges levied by other Local Authorities

2.6.1 See Appendix A

2.6.2 Firstly it should be noted that not all services charge for answering enquiries. For example, Canterbury City Museums currently makes no charge. Other services, such as Horsham Museum, do not carry out research on behalf of individuals at all. Of those who do charge, the majority charge between £15 and £25, often with no charge for the first 30 minutes' search.

2.6.3 QORWKRTM's fee of £15, therefore, sits at the lower end of this range.

3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1.1 It is recommended that Trustees raise the enquiry fee from £15 to £20

3.1.2 It is felt by the Museum Director that this is an appropriate amount to charge so as to make the charge more reflective of costs without causing too great a fall in enquiries.

4 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	This report relates to the Corporate Priority "Ensuring there are good Leisure and Cultural Facilities"	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development.
Risk Management	Low risk	Head of Regeneration

		and Economic Development.
Financial	'Income for the enquiry service is £390 for the year to date. In the Museum Director's judgement, the effect of increasing fees would be to reduce income'.	Senior Finance Manager (Client Accountancy)
Staffing	There are no staffing implications	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development.
Legal	There are no legal implications	[Legal Team]
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	N/A	
Environmental/Sustainable Development	N/A	
Community Safety	N/A	
Human Rights Act	N/A	
Procurement	N/A	
Asset Management	N/A	

5 REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Charges made by other museums

Appendix A: Enquiry service charges in other museum services.

The following information is valid as of 25/9/17. Not all of the museums here are Local Authority funded but were used as exemplars previously when setting fee levels:

1. **STEAM (Museum of the Great Western Railway)**, <http://www.steam-museum.org.uk/steam/steam2007-archive-charges-2.htm>, Enquiries that take longer than 30 minutes to research will incur a fee. Charges apply even if no information is subsequently found. 30 minutes to one hour - £15.00, Thereafter £17.50 per hour (or part thereof).
2. **Moray Council (Museum)**
www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file84792.pdf
£25 per hour (pro rata). The first twenty minutes will be included in this charge.
3. **National Museum of the Royal Navy**
www.nmrn.org.uk/research/make-enquiry
Complex, in depth enquiries or those requesting large amounts of information will incur a charge of £20 for up to 1 hour + VAT
4. **Salisbury Museum**, <http://www.salisburymuseum.org.uk/museum-enquiry-service>,
£20 plus VAT per hour in half hourly blocks
5. **Glasgow Museums**
Free for 1st half hour of staff time and £30 per hour thereafter
6. **Whitby Historical Society**
£10 for first hour then £5 per half hour
7. **Tiverton Museum**
£8 per hour
8. **Alderney Museum**
£20 per hour