

## Report by the Executive Director of Education

Corporate Cultural Sub-Committee: 13<sup>th</sup> September 2011

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**Subject: Refurbishment of Clydebank Museum**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To advise the Corporate Cultural Sub Committee of progress on the refurbishment of Clydebank Museum and recent partnerships established with The National Galleries of Scotland to bring high quality visual art exhibitions into West Dunbartonshire.
- 1.2** To advise committee of refurbishment plans, and ask that committee considers authorising monies ring-fenced within the Corporate Cultural Committee budget 2011/12 for the relocation of Clydebank Museum, be used towards refurbishment costs.
- 1.3** To ask that committee considers allocating 10k towards ensuring that the museum meets the environmental monitoring and security requirements of hosting prestigious exhibitions from the National Gallery of Scotland.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1** Clydebank Museum has been used as an example of Best Practice throughout the museum sector in Scotland and throughout the UK on many occasions. It is well known for the quality of its work in collections care, learning, and innovative training programmes for those with disabilities and on low incomes.
- 2.2** Due to the redevelopment of the Town Hall and excessive rates and service costs at Clydebank Shopping Centre, the museum has been closed since January of this year, however, museum staff have used this time productively:
  - i. Developing significant outreach programmes including the development of heritage centres at Dumbarton & Clydebank Library's and expansion of Local History services to the public.
  - ii. In securing partnerships with institutions such as the National Galleries of Scotland, which are of international renown.
- 2.3** With the refurbishment of Clydebank Town Hall and the redesign of Clydebank Museum, partnerships have been formed with organisations such as the National Galleries of Scotland to bring high quality visual art exhibitions into West Dunbartonshire.
- 2.4** The museum has also been selected as one of only three partners in Scotland, and the only one on the west coast to work in partnership with the Scottish National Portrait Gallery and host annual exhibitions curated in partnership with them.

**2.5** In order to become a venue worthy of such internationally prestigious exhibitions, significant investment in the museum space within Clydebank Town Hall needs to take place. This was not included as part of the redevelopment of the Town Hall and, while Libraries and Museums are applying to funders, match funding in order to attract external funding requires to be identified within Council budgets.

### **3. Main Issues**

**3.1** In order to achieve this ambitious programme, Libraries and Museums have invested £30Kk from the Capital Programme 2011/12 and core budgets, and are currently exploring external funding opportunities with the Heritage Lottery Fund, Awards for All, Museums Galleries Scotland and Creative Scotland.

**3.1** In order to become a suitable venue for exhibitions from internationally famed institutions such as the National Galleries, which will appeal to local, national and international audiences, increase tourism and improve the museum's performance in Statutory Performance Indicator reporting; significant capital investment in the museum space is necessary. Investment includes the requirement for new environmental monitoring and control systems and lighting.

**3.2** Investment in these areas is essential as part of the criteria of hosting international quality exhibitions. Environmental monitoring at Clydebank Museum has shown swift fluctuations in Relative Humidity and temperatures which are unacceptable in staging exhibitions of international stature. Investment in environmental control will reduce fluctuations dramatically and produce environments acceptable to international institutions.

**3.3** As part of a security review undertaken by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's Security Adviser, it was recommended that the museum doors, which are designated fire exits, be fitted with magnetic locks which open when the fire alarm sounds. This improvement will ensure the safety of exhibitions and visitors whilst satisfying the criteria of high profile gallery loans and the Government Indemnity Scheme, which will cover the cost of insurance for loans.

### **4. People Implications**

**4.1** There are no personnel issues.

### **5. Financial Implications**

**5.1** Libraries & Museums have an excellent track record of attracting external funding to West Dunbartonshire. However in the current economic climate it has become increasingly difficult to gain external funding without a significant

amount of internal funding to match-fund. Failure to achieve sufficient internal funding will mean that external applications will be declined.

## **6. Risk Analysis**

- 6.1** Failure to achieve funding will mean that WDC Libraries and Museums will have to decline partnerships with internationally renowned galleries such as The National Galleries of Scotland, and in particular the National Portrait Gallery and our favoured position as one of three hosts of their prestigious exhibitions nationally.
- 6.2** Outcomes for this project include increased tourism to West Dunbartonshire, in particular Clydebank, and increased visits to museums as measured through Statutory Performance Indicators. Without investment, this project could not produce these outcomes.
- 6.3** Failure to achieve external funding will also lead to the scaling back of exhibitions and artefacts throughout the Town Hall redevelopment, including display of important aspects of Clydebank heritage, including models of HMS Vanguard and RMS Rangitane and extremely rare models of sewing machines, for example the first type of sewing machine made by Singer.

## **7. Equalities, Health & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 7.1** No significant issues were identified for potential equality impact in this report.

## **8. Conclusions and Recommendations**

- 8.1** Match funding is required in order to gain significant external investment in Clydebank Museum and its innovative and prestigious projects.
- 8.2** Libraries and Museums have ring-fenced £30k from this year's Capital Programme and core budgets as a solid foundation for match funding. However due to pressure on external funders, this will not be seen as a significant enough investment by the Council to attract the level of external funding required in this redevelopment project.
- 8.3** The committee is asked to consider authorising 21k allocated by the Corporate Culture Committee for the relocation of Clydebank Museum in 2011, to be reallocated to the refurbishment of the existing museum space specifically for the purchase of environmental controls in order to attract exhibitions of international quality, to improve tourism and increase Statutory Performance Indicator results.
- 8.4** The committee is asked to consider allocating an additional £10k from the Corporate Culture Committee budget 2011/12 to fund the costs of new lighting and door security to ensure that the venue complies with MLA security

advice so that high value exhibitions can be covered by the government indemnity scheme.

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**Appendices:**

1. Letter of support from James Holloway, Director of the National Portrait Gallery of Scotland.
2. MLA Security Report and recommendations

**Background Papers:** This section should provide details of all documents referred to within the report but not if the document is included as an appendix to the report.

**Wards Affected:** All Wards