

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Director of Education and Cultural Services

Children's Services Committee: 18 April 2007

Subject: National Accreditation Scheme for Museums – Award of Full Accreditation

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To inform the Committee that West Dunbartonshire Council has been awarded Full Accreditation by The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council as part of the National Accreditation Scheme for Museums.

2. Background

- 2.1** Clydebank Museum was invited by the Scottish Museums to submit an application for the National Museums Accreditation Scheme, for which the final deadline was 8 January 2007.
- 2.2** Museum Accreditation is a voluntary, quality assurance scheme for museums across the United Kingdom. The scheme launched in 2004 is operated by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), and the Scottish Museums Council (SMC) is responsible for the administration of it in Scotland.
- 2.3** To qualify, museums must meet clear basic requirements on how they care for and document their collections, how they are governed and managed, and on the information and services they offer to their users.
- 2.4** Museum Accreditation aims to encourage all museums and galleries to achieve agreed minimum standards in museum management, user services, visitor facilities and collection management. To foster confidence in museums as bodies which (a) hold collections in trust for society and (b) manage public resources appropriately.
- 2.5** As part of West Dunbartonshire Council's application for Accreditation, a revised Museum Collections Management and Development Plan was agreed at the meeting of the Children's Services Committee on 13 December 2006.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** Successful Accreditation demonstrates a commitment by West Dunbartonshire Council to good practice, and is recognised nationally as an indicator of responsible management by many funding bodies.
- 3.2** Accreditation enables museums and governing bodies to assess their current performance, and it supports them in planning and developing their services.

- 3.3** As part of a recognised national scheme which defines standards of working and associated policies, achieving accreditation provides West Dunbartonshire Council with a platform to contribute to national consultations on policies and quality assurance frameworks.
- 3.4** Accreditation provides a benchmark for grant-making bodies, sponsors and donors. Full Accreditation status significantly enhances West Dunbartonshire Council's opportunities to draw down funding from external agencies, to enable increased investment in and enhancement of the museum and heritage service for the authority.
- 3.5** Full Accreditation status contributes towards the assessment criteria of a Visit Scotland Award, for which Clydebank Museum currently holds 4 Star status.
- 3.6** Achieving Full Accreditation will support any future application by West Dunbartonshire Council to the Scottish Executive Significance Scheme. This scheme managed by the SMC will, for the first time, recognise collections of national significance held by Scotland's non-national museums and galleries.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** There are no personnel issues.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** Without Full Accreditation under the new scheme, museum services will have restricted funding opportunities available to them, which would have significant impact on service provision.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1** Achieving Full Accreditation as part of the National Accreditation Scheme for Museums, provides a number of potential benefits to the authority as outlined in this report.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** A risk assessment has not been carried out in relation to this report.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1** The Committee is invited:
- (i) to note the contents of this report and the achievement of the Culture Section in meeting the requirements of the National Accreditation Scheme standards and being awarded Full Accreditation; and

- (ii) to note the potential benefits to the authority's museum and heritage service as a result of this award.

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Background Papers: WDC Museum Collections Management and
Development Plan 2006

Wards Affected: All Council Wards are affected