

REPORT TO: ARTS AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE - 18 SEPTEMBER 2000

REPORT ON: MCMANUS GALLERIES

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ARTS AND HERITAGE

REPORT NO: 561-2000

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To outline the current position regarding McManus Galleries and the potential for development.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 2.1 Notes the current position outlined in this report.
- 2.2 Remits the Director of Arts and Heritage to develop a Heritage Lottery Fund application as outlined in this report, and to report this back to Committee prior to submission.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The approval of this report does not commit the Council to any additional expenditure. However, a successful Heritage Lottery Fund Bid will depend on the ability to access match funding from the City Council's own capital resources, European funds and other private sector/trust funding. Section 6.2 of this report outlines the requirement for urgent maintenance work to McManus Galleries which, if other funding could not be attracted, would require £1.67 million of expenditure over the next 5 years. The inclusion of this maintenance work within broader proposals to enhance the visitor attraction will maximise the level of external resources attracted to the project by utilising the Council's Capital Plan allocation. The current Arts and Heritage Department's Capital Plan includes £40,000 in the current financial year and £150,000 in both 2001/02 and 2002/03. A detailed report on this bid will be reported to Committee prior to its submission. Preparation of the bid for Heritage Lottery monies will require £10,000 of expenditure on architectural/quantity surveying fees. This can be met from within Arts and Heritage Capital Budget for 2000/2001.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The proposals in this report would make a substantial contribution to ensuring that opportunities for culture, leisure and recreation are readily available to all.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A major element of development proposals would be to address equal opportunities implications. The development would be accessible for all sections of the community including visitors with disabilities, the elderly and those with young children.

6.0 MCMANUS GALLERIES CURRENT POSITION

6.1 Visitor Experience

While McManus Galleries remains one of Dundee's most popular visitor attractions, there has been a gradual decline in visitors, with 92,000 in 1999/2000. This decline has been influenced by national trends, increasing local competition and the ageing nature of some displays. The most recent investment was in the regional archaeology display in 1987. At its opening it was award winning but given new technology certain elements are now looking dated. The local and social history displays date from 1985. The visitor experience is at times exacerbated by temporary gallery closures due to water penetration or staff shortages.

6.2 Building Condition Maintenance Requirements

Technical officers have recently produced a consolidated maintenance plan, which outlines the requirement for urgent maintenance works to McManus Galleries. These works are essential if the attraction is to continue to provide the level of visitor experience, facilities and services required by an increasingly discerning public. Key maintenance requirements include;

- Extensive roof repair and replacement
- Underpinning of western section and upgrading of water proofing
- Replacement of CCTV
- Replacement of plasterwork and flooring

The Maintenance Plan Report estimates that the cost of this work is £536,000 over the next two financial years and £1.134 million over the following 3 financial years. In summary if the City Council does nothing else but maintain the building this would require an investment of £1.67 million over the next 5 financial years.

6.3 Conclusion

While McManus Galleries continues to be one of the city's most popular visitor attractions, the general visitor experience would benefit from refreshment. This is reflected in the reduction of visitors over the last few years. In addition, the building requires essential maintenance at a cost of £1.67 million, which in itself would have only limited impact on the visitor experience.

7.0 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

- 7.1 The Heritage Lottery Fund has recently reviewed its strategic priorities and there is a desire to invest in regional museum facilities. The timing of this review at McManus is opportunistic in that HLF have indicated they would welcome an application from McManus given the importance of the building and the city's collections (which remain amongst the best in Scotland). While they would not support an application purely for maintenance of a Council building they have indicated that development proposals including maintenance would be acceptable. HLF can support up to 75% of Capital Application costs.
- 7.2 The opportunity is, therefore, to utilise the City Council's Capital Plan allocation to McManus Maintenance to lever in a package of external funding which will address both the essential maintenance work but also the need to improve the visitor experience.
- 7.3 It is therefore recommended that a maintenance and development plan for McManus Galleries be brought forward with a view to securing Heritage Lottery and other external funding. Initial indications suggest that both Historic Scotland and the European Regional Development Fund may also provide assistance.
- 7.4 The purpose of the development proposals will be to provide a popular city centre family visitor attraction through phased redevelopment of displays, improvement to visitor facilities, a year round programme of educational events and activities, and a strong emphasis on interactive exhibitions.
- 7.5 A project team (consisting of Arts and Heritage, Finance, Architects and Quantity Surveying staff) will be established to bring forward a detailed application for external funding which will be reported back to Committee before progression.

8.0 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Support Services, Director of Finance and Director of Corporate Planning have been consulted on this report.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 None.

Director of Arts and Heritage _____ Date _____