

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leisure, Arts and Communities Committee - 22 March 2010

REPORT ON: Sensation (Dundee Science Centre) - Revenue Support 2010-2011

REPORT BY: Director of Leisure and Communities

REPORT NO: 99-2010

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Committee approval for a Service Level Agreement to be extended between Dundee City Council and Sensation (Dundee Science Centre) for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 2.1 remits the Director of Leisure & Communities, on behalf of Dundee City Council, to enter into a one year Service Level Agreement with Sensation, subject to on-going monitoring and evaluation as to this efficiency, economy and effectiveness.
- 2.2 remits the Director of Leisure and Communities to keep these arrangements under review and amend as appropriate.
- 2.3 approves the Grant funding amounting to £46,092 per the period 1 April 2010 - 31 March 2011.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The funding recommended is £31,092 which sum is provided for in the Leisure and Communities Department's Revenue Budget for 2010-2011. See Appendix 1.
- 3.2 A separate annual Grant of £15,000 was approved at the Policy and Resources Committee on 14 December 1998 to replace a proposed endowment fund, which will be met from the Leisure and Communities Department's Revenue budget 2010-2011.
- 3.3 The terms and conditions of the grant will be contained within a Service Level Agreement 2010-2011, between Dundee City Council and Sensation (Dundee Science Centre).

4.0 MAIN TEXT

- 4.1 Dundee Science Centre's mission is to be a community resource, which:
- 1 provides a high quality, inspiring social venue for learning for the whole community
 - 2 contributes to the development of a culture of engagement with science, and promotes science as an aspect of local culture
 - 3 engages the wider community with Dundee's science research community, raising local pride in local discovery
 - 4 raises the profile of Dundee as a city of science and scientific discovery
 - 5 supports the formal 3-18 curriculum for excellence

6 is an efficient, responsible and trusted organisation

Dundee Science Centre aims to embed its values in everything it does and strives to be a community resource recognised for excellence in science learning and provision of public engagement opportunities, rather than simply a tourist attraction appealing to families with young children.

4.2 **Review of 2009-2010**

2009 was a positive year for Dundee Science Centre. The highest visitor numbers since opening nine years ago were achieved (75,000 against a budget of 68,000).

Dundee Science Centre scheduled a major headlining exhibition, *Animated Adventures*, to attract the highest number of visitors possible by using the popular and well loved brand of Wallace and Gromit. This turned out to be a positive move, and in addition to increasing visitor numbers, saw an increase in age range not previously experienced by the science centre.

Additionally they hosted their first exhibition aimed at older teenagers and adults and in doing so increased the age range of their audience. They launched many new initiatives and took important steps in becoming a more credible science centre with science learning and public engagement at the heart of our vision.

Acknowledging that neither science nor Dundee Science Centre features as a major part of the local government cultural strategy they launched the Dundee Science Festival Partnership, with Sir Philip Cohen as Patron, bringing together organisations representing industry education, and academia. The role of this organisation is to increase awareness of Dundee as a 'science city', and celebrate the scientific research and discoveries that are integral to the success of the city.

Government and other sponsorship and funding now exceed revenue secured through tickets and other secondary income including retail, catering and events. This shift is significant, demonstrating the need to align their science learning and public engagement aims with those of government, research councils and sponsorship organisations. The Scottish Government's Chief Scientific Adviser has set out a new strategy for public engagement across Scotland, showing a shift away from recognition of the Scottish science centres as a network.

Regional excellence is where Dundee Science Centre must concentrate its efforts and the 2010 business plan is geared towards achieving this. In becoming Dundee's permanent and visible organisation central to science learning and public engagement, they propose to build a strong national and international profile. This process began in earnest in 2009 and will continue into 2010 and beyond. To this end, significant steps were taken in 2009 which see Dundee Science Centre firmly establish itself as a community resource for all major audiences within Tayside, as well as increasing the ways in which they support the formal 3 to 18 curriculum and lifelong learning in Dundee.

The Scottish Government's Homecoming 2009 fund allowed Dundee Science Centre to collaborate with the other three Scottish science centres and create a travelling exhibition and public celebration events, as well as a significant national awareness campaign. In celebration of Homecoming 2009, Dundee Science Centre ran a marketing campaign to raise awareness of Dundee as a City of Science, as well as many events including outreach activities throughout our region.

Other significant highlights from 2009 include:

- the launch of Create and Inspire, the training programme for research scientists, with three universities enrolled in the course
- the launch of Reclaim, the adults-only evening
- the launch of Night at the Science Centre, the first sleepover programme
- the launch of the secondary schools programme, including 'Debate it Out!'

debates

- the launch of the interactive web pages with community and teacher / pupil resources
- the launch of Dundee Science Festival Partnership with Sir Philip Cohen as patron
- continuation and roll out of the 'Crazy Creatures' project, which was also case-studied by HMIE and shortlisted for ASVA's 'Big Idea' award
- continuation of the successful 'Revealing Research' events including Café Science Extra and meet-the-scientist days
- delivery of the first residential CPD programme in conjunction with the University of Aberdeen for 40 teachers attend from Tayside and the North East
- creation of their own classroom poster and resource series
- creation of a new communications campaign to celebrate Dundee as a City of Science
- ASVA nominations for two members of staff
- creation of bespoke marketing literature for the secondary and primary school programmes, distributed across Scotland

4.3 **Major Plans for 2010-2011**

Existing areas of the Science Centre business, such as memberships (both leisure and corporate) which have not yet achieved their full potential will receive a renewed focus in 2010. This will be part of a consolidation strategy to strengthen existing areas of the business. Enhanced segmentation will permeate all aspects of communication in 2010 in the Science Centre. There will be the formulation of bespoke marketing plans for each of the main user groups, with clearly defined sub-segments within these groups and a new approach to budgeting, which will allow much greater control of resources across the whole range of customer groups.

The new post of Visitor Experience Officer will focus on visitor satisfaction and customer care policies and procedures, and bring a renewed focus to quality assurance and evaluation. Dundee Science Centre will evidence its best practice and learn from others. They will work with other science centres around the UK to adopt a quality assurance scheme that can be applied to all aspects of their business, ensuring they exceed the expectations of their visitors.

2010 will also see a new focus on staffing – recruitment, induction, training and evaluation – to ensure their team can provide their visitors with an excellent experience.

Exhibitions

A headlining Space exhibition is planned for summer 2010, called 'One Small Step'. It charts man's race to land on the moon and future developments of space travel. Dundee Science Centre will work with the University of Dundee and Abertay University, Dundee to ensure it adopts a local angle as well as an international one. They will purchase an inflatable planetarium to accompany the exhibition, programme and activities.

Communications

2010 will see the science centre continue to use creative and new methods of communication including digital and social media such as Face Book and Twitter. With a growing number of people communicating with them via these means, it will be important to stay ahead of new developments in technologies. These new forms will compliment the increasing number of bespoke leaflets they are now producing for individual events. A big change in communication will be the integration of Dundee Science Centre with the existing Sensation Brand. This comes as they clarify what a science centre is and its role in the community.

New Business development

Driving new sources of revenue and growing existing ones will be an important feature of 2010 and beyond for the Science Centre. Expecting tough economic conditions, it is important that they maximise all income from both sponsorship as well as

commercial streams. Amongst several new business developments are:
A new take away early breakfast service will launch from their Coffee Shop in March 2010.
A new 'early explorer' day for pre-school children and parents launches in April 2010.

- 4.4 Sensation sustained 31 full time equivalent jobs in Dundee in 2009-2010 and they are projected to achieve 95% of their income from non city council sources in 2010-2011.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management.
There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Assistant Chief Executive and Director of Finance have been consulted on this report and are in agreement with its contents.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

STEWART MURDOCH
DIRECTOR OF LEISURE AND COMMUNITIES
1 MARCH 2010

SENSATION (DUNDEE SCIENCE CENTRE)**Appendix 1**

	Projected Out-turn 2009-2010	Projected Budget 2010-2011
Expenditure		
Staff cost	557,239	641,405
Operations	216,816	238,357
Rent, rates, fees	47,160	50,961
Exhibit Renewal	30,000	30,000
Reserve Refund	10,000	10,000
Total expenditure	861,215	970,723
Income		
Tickets	240,793	220,503
Gift Shop	42,691	41,475
Coffee Shop	116,786	99,560
Car parks	70,000	70,000
plus income		48,938
Other Commercial	37,933	42,050
Mgt contract	70,000	70,000
Sub-total income	578,203	592,526
Grants and Sponsorship Income		
DCC Annual Revenue Support Grant	31,092	31,092
DCC Endowment	15,000	15,000
Scottish Government	253,000	285,000
Other sponsorship	7,500	52,850
Subtotal grant income	306,592	383,942
Total Income	884,795	976,468
Surplus / Deficit	23,580	5,745