

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leader and Cabinet 13th January 2005
10th March 2005

AUTHOR: Development Services Director

MUSEUM GRANT SUPPORT FOR LOCAL MUSEUMS IN 2005/06

(This item was deferred by Cabinet on 13th January 2005 until the 2005/06 budgets had been agreed)

Purpose

- To summarise applications for continued funding support for local museums and to present these as the basis for Museum Grants for 2005/06.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2. Quality, Accessible Services	By enhancing both physical and intellectual access to the supported museums, the Museums Grant budget contributes to meeting targets set out in the performance plan 2004/05, specifically: BV170a – museum visits per 1000 pop; BV170b – museum visits in person per 1000 pop; and BV170c – pupils visiting museums/galleries in school groups.
Village Life	The supported museums celebrate and interpret the heritage and village life of South Cambridgeshire, and thereby contribute to meeting the objectives of the Community Strategy and its actions No. 9 (engagement in social, cultural development) and No. 11 (life long learning).
Sustainability	The museums make viable and sustainable use of historic buildings, which are consequently managed and maintained for the benefit of the community.
Partnership	The funding support enables significant partnership funding to be levered by the museums from national heritage bodies.

Background

- The Council support the work of those local museums which are demonstrably used by and reflect the heritage, lives and interests of residents of South Cambridgeshire. The continuity of support for these important institutions has enabled the museums to improve facilities and enhance the visitor attractions, as well as to develop special resources and outreach projects to directly involve South Cambridgeshire's communities.
- The following table shows the grant sums offered in recent years:

Museum.	£. 99/00	£. 00/01	£. 01/02	£. 02/03	£ 03/04	£04/05
Farmland Museum & Denny Abbey	20,000	20,000	25,000	25,000	26,000 (5,000)**	26,800 (10,000)**
Cambridge & County Folk Museum	22,600	17,877	25,000	30,500*	31,000*	31,500*
Museum of Technology	6,314	9,000	Nil	5,000	Nil	Nil
Fitzwilliam Museum	13,520	13,520	12,000	Nil	5,000	5,200
Total	62,434	60,400	62,000	60,500	62,000	63,500
Conservation budget contribution					(5,000)	(10,000)

* Inc.s £10k development capital toward the lottery funded building project, now completing.

** Additional grant sum from Conservation Portfolio Holder's budget to initiate development scheme.

5. The principle of support for the museums has not changed significantly over the last year and the below report, therefore, outlines progress of their on-going development programmes.

Considerations

Museum of Technology

6. No grant support offered in 2004/05 as no development schemes are currently in progress.

Farmland Museum & Denny Abbey

7. The Museum grant contributes to the revenue of the museum and funds a full-time Curator and a part-time museums assistant. Without the revenue grant the museum would not be able to employ professional staff and the museum could not function.
8. The Farmland Museum Trust now looks after the adjacent Denny Abbey for English Heritage under a local management agreement on (although building maintenance costs remain with English Heritage). This has created significant opportunities for the development of the visitor attraction and the agricultural story of South Cambridgeshire which it seeks to tell.
9. A development project was initiated in 2003/04 with support from English Heritage and SCDC's Conservation budget. This has been continued into 2004/05 with an additional £10,000 grant from the Conservation Portfolio Holder's budget (*Heritage Initiative Fund*). This has enabled the museum to concentrate on enhancing this joint curatorial role with English Heritage.
10. The 2004/05 season has been particularly successful, enhancing the museum's role as a significant tourist attraction. Well over 10,000 people visited the site in the last season (April to October 2004), while over 500 people enjoyed its benefits through the outreach programme. The number of visitors continues to grow every year, as demonstrated through the statutory performance indicators, as more and more people come to learn about the district's heritage and take part in South Cambridgeshire life.
11. The success of the museum during 2004/05 was achieved despite significant pressures on staff including the resignation of the curator and the (temporary) loss of the education officer's post. (The funding for the post was on a fixed 3 year timetable which completed in September 2004. It was re-established during the same month but too late to ensure the retention of the former post-holder. The museum staff, volunteers and trustees have coped well with the challenges and a new curator is now in post, which will also enable staff to concentrate on completing the latest phase of the development project (see below).
12. The museum growth experienced in the 2004 season (April to October), particularly focused on the school and lifelong learning events, and was particularly impressive in terms of the children's activity days. This shows a steady climb in numbers, attributed to: the improvements in marketing and publicity which have resulted from the development programme; the work of the education outreach worker; and the encouraging results of special events which have been particularly effective in drawing repeat visits.

13. Further work is needed to realise the full visitor potential of the museum site and in particular its relationship with the former abbey. Consequently, the museum is continuing to implement the development scheme, initiated with the support of the Community Development and Conservation portfolio holders in 2003/04, which is outlined below. The proposed grant sum allocation from the Museum Grant budget, for 2005/06 would retain the level of funding of 2004/05 (while accommodating a 4% budget reduction) , with some additional funding for development works allocated from within the overall Museums Grant budget.
14. The development scheme was initiated in recognition of the need to improve the interpretation of the former abbey and unify the two sides of the site in partnership with: English Heritage; CCC; the Heritage Lottery Fund; and SCDC during 2003/04.
15. The following tables outline the Farmland Museum & Denny Abbey's development project's priorities, its key components and estimated project costs:

Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Priority 5
Research, development of interpretation material, panels and dressed sets.	Erection of dressed sets and launch enhanced site story.	Parking and site signage improvements.	Development of new visitor entrance and access.	Development of living exhibitions of medieval life and farming.

Priority component 1, 2	Proposed contributors.	£Cost	Funding year
(i) New guidebook for the entire site.	English Heritage	£4, 000	2003/04
(ii) Coordinated orientation boards across the site.	English Heritage	£8, 000	2003/04
(iii) New interior/exterior Interpretation panels	SCDC (Conservation - HIF)	£5, 000	
(iv) Time line feature detailing the evolution of the site	Cambs County Council	£2, 000	
(v) Set dressing & lighting, focusing on three contrasting periods.	English Heritage (L.M.A)	£8, 000	2004/05 (on-going work)
(vi) Interactive displays	SCDC (Conservation – HIF)	£10,000	
	Lottery (Awards for All)	£ 5,000	
	EEMLAC	2,000	
Total Cost		£44,000	
	SCDC Contribution	£15,000 (34%)	

16. The projected allocation for the Farmland Museum from SCDC for 2005/06 in the table below, will be dependant upon successful completion of the above phases and could be funded from the Museums Grant budget (as adjusted for 4% savings).

Priority component 3,4,5	Proposed contributors.	£Cost	Funding year
(vii) Parking & site signage improvements.	Lottery	£35,000 target	2005/06
(viii) Development of new visitor entrance and access.	SCDC (Museums Grant budget)	£ 8,000 target	
(ix) Development of living exhibitions of medieval life and farming	English Heritage	£10,000 estimate	2005/06
	Lottery	£20,000 estimate	
	Other ??	£10,000 estimate	
Total Cost		£83,000	
Total SCDC contribution		£ 8,000 (9.6%)	

Cambridge & County Folk Museum

17. The folk museum continues to provide special collections and outreach to the district which will be substantially enhanced by completion of the on-going, development programme during 2004/05. The Council's revenue grant supports staff provision and valuable activities which could not be funded from other sources. In addition SCDC's Museum grant budget has contributed £30k over 3 years to the building development programme, which is now completing and is largely funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.
18. A substantial focus of the curators' work over the last 12 months has been finalising the funding package and initiating the redevelopment programme. The main contract to extend the museum was commenced in February 2004 and will run through until early 2005. The museum will re-open in spring 2005. Completion of the development programme will enable the development of new educational and visitor facilities as well as significant access enhancements (which will include a lift to all floors). The museum will be closed during the construction phase but will continue to develop its outreach work during this period.
19. The Council's commitment to the development programme will complete this financial year thereby releasing funding to support the on-going redevelopment programme at the Farmland Museum & Denny Abbey.

Fitzwilliam Museum

20. During 2003/04 and 2004/05 the Museums Grant programme supported the Fitzwilliam's educational development programme, with a specific focus on developing outreach and learning projects. The grant sum allocated has enabled the development of free, re-useable 'family fun kits' containing a wide variety of activities, designed to help families interact with the exhibitions. The kits are available at the entrance to the museum on its re-opening in early summer, identified as provided by the SCDC.
21. The refurbished museum opened in July 2004 and includes a new education centre. The education team are currently working on a new computer interactive, outreach project which will enable the facilities to be available to the wider county. It is expected that within 2005/06 the Museum Grant contribution will continue to focus support on the outreach projects, which will enable the facilities to be accessible in a variety of mediums to residents of South Cambs. The funding proposals set out below, therefore, identify a potential contribution within 2005/06 towards the development of educational outreach initiatives with a specific South Cambridgeshire focus.

Options

22. Grants to museums are made at the Council's discretion. Consequently, the following options are presented for consideration by the Cabinet:
 - (a) To approve the proposed Museum Grant funding arrangements for 2005/06, as set out in paragraph 23 below.
 - (b) To approve, *in part* the proposed Museum Grant funding arrangements for 2005/06, as set out in paragraph 22 below, setting out the reasons for this option.
 - (c) To decline to support the proposed funding package for 2005/06, setting out the reasons for this option.

Financial Implications

23. The grant funding proposals and financial implications for 2005/06 are summarised below, they are based on the expectation of the need to accommodate a 4% saving on the budget for 2004/05.

<i>Museum</i>	2005/06	Notes
Farmland Museum & Denny Abbey	36, 000	Incs. £8k towards the on-going capital development scheme.
Cambridge & County Folk Museum	22, 000	2004/05 revenue allowance only (capital development scheme complete).
Fitzwilliam Museum	3, 000	Funding to be prioritised for agreed educational outreach projects.
<i>Total Museum Grants 2005/06</i>	61, 000	Comprises 2004/05 minus 4%

Legal Implications

24. None specific. It is within the Cabinet's discretion to make funding available under agreed budgets to finance grants to museums.

Staffing Implications

25. The Museum Grants budget funds staff posts at the Farmland Museum & Denny Abbey as well as the Folk Museum. The budget is administered on behalf of the Portfolio Holder for Community Development by the Conservation Manager.

Consultations

26. Discussions with the curators and administrators of the museums outlined above. The proposed allocations were considered at the Community Development Portfolio Holder's meeting on 8th October 2004.

Conclusions

27. The proposed package of funding above is considered to be an affordable, fair and flexible distribution of available resources. These funds will support the continued existence and enhancement of the Folk and Farmland/Denny Abbey museums, while retaining the flexibility to contribute to the South Cambridgeshire targeted educational programmes being developed at the Fitzwilliam Museum

Recommendations

28. It is recommended that Cabinet approves Option 22(a) and the proposed funding allocations set out in Paragraph 23 as the Museum Grant budget for 2005/06.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Revenue Estimates for the year ending 31st March 2005.
- Museum Grant support for Local Museums in 2004/05 – Report to Cabinet. 4th March 2004.

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