

ANGUS COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL AND LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE – 27 NOVEMBER 2003

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE FUND FOR MUSEUMS

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF LEISURE SERVICES

ABSTRACT

The Regional Museum Development Challenge Fund for Museums is one of the Scottish Executive's main proposals to emerge from the consultation on an Action Framework for Museums. The report advises members on these proposals and recommends the participation of Angus Council.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) welcomes the introduction of the Regional Development Fund
- b) instructs the Cultural Services Manager to consult with colleagues in Dundee City and Perth and Kinross Councils to investigate a joint board and the Cultural Services Manager brings back proposals to this committee in due course

2. BACKGROUND

In July 2002, the Scottish Museum Council published the National Audit of Scotland's Museums and Galleries, which concluded that there was a need to increase capacity within the museum sector in order to develop and deliver services for the future

As a result of the Audit, the Scottish Executive launched a National Consultation to develop an Action Framework for the Museum Sector. Angus Council was one of the 92 bodies, which responded to this consultation (Report no 1380/02), which closed at the end of December 2002.

The Executive plans to address many of the substantive issues raised in relation to funding roles and structures as part of their commitment to a wider review of cultural sector governance, as set out in the May 2003 Partnership for a Better Scotland Agreement.

One important theme was the need for development of museum capacity at a regional level, to facilitate the formation by museums of critical social and economic partnerships. This framework will take the form of a new Regional Development Challenge Fund.

Regional strategic priorities will vary, but applications to the fund must have intended outcomes which will relate to one or more of the following themes identified by the Scottish Executive:-

- Learning – development of partnerships between museums and the formal and informal learning sector, resulting in improved resources and services for learning through museums
- Access – development of partnerships between museums and other agencies or community planning partnerships, which increase access to museums for excluded groups
- Tourism – development of partnerships between museums and other agencies to promote regional tourism initiatives
- Workforce Development – regional initiatives, aimed at developing the museums' workforce, paid and volunteer, for example through training and skills development

A minimum of two Local Authorities should be involved in each proposed partnership and precise geographic areas of interest must be covered by each proposal.

Each partnership will be staffed with a Regional Development officer, funded by the Challenge Fund who will:

- Develop and promote museums' role and presence in relation to identified regional cultural, educational and economic agendas;
- Work across Local Authority boundaries to develop regional public, voluntary and private sector partnerships between museums and other agencies;
- Develop museums' capacity at regional level through the establishment of appropriate partnerships, support networks, trainings and skills development.
- Enable local museums to participate more fully in the community planning process.
- Identify and develop joint funding proposals on behalf of museums and other partners at regional level;
- Promote national benchmarks for quality in museums' management and services, and ensure access to national expertise and initiatives;
- Facilitate the development of 'regional clusters' and infrastructure, which will improve the interface and potential for collaboration between local museums and the National Museums of Scotland, the National Galleries of Scotland, and the Treasure Trove Advisory Panel.

The Challenge Fund will support the costs of the Regional Development Officer, and the strategic initiative for three years with a minimum of 25% contribution from the partner museums.

These proposals are to be welcomed, bringing a much-needed opportunity to Angus to develop museum partnerships with a wide variety of partners in both the museums sector and outwith.

It is recommend that the Cultural Service Manager conveys the Committee's support for the scheme to the Scottish Museums Council, and consults with colleagues in Dundee City and Perth and Kinross Councils to investigate a joint board, and brings back proposals to this committee.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report. A fully costed Partnership proposal will be brought to a future meeting.

4. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no Human Rights implications associated with this report

5. CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, the Director of Law and Administration and the Director of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

JOHN R ZIMNY
DIRECTOR OF LEISURE SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing this report.