

ANGUS COUNCIL

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE – 28 MAY 2009

THE YEAR OF THE LIGHT

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

Abstract: It is proposed to refresh the displays in the Signal Tower Museum to concentrate upon Arbroath's maritime heritage in general, and particularly to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Bellrock Lighthouse on the 11th February 2011.

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is recommended that the committee agrees to:

- (i) note the intention to develop a project at Signal Tower Museum, concentrating upon Arbroath's maritime heritage, and especially the building of the Bellrock Lighthouse to tie in with the 200th anniversary of the date upon which the Bellrock Lighthouse first shone;
- (ii) authorise the Director of Neighbourhood Services to progress the preparation of the required Capital Project Appraisal for this project to ensure that it can be considered by the Capital Budget Sub-Group and relevant Committees at the earliest opportunities.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On the evening of 1st February 1811 the Light on the Bellrock first shone. It had been a project which had begun with the landing of a work party from Arbroath on the dangerous reef some 12 miles offshore. The work had been the achievement of Robert Stevenson, and it at last gave security to shipping in the Tay estuary which had been threatened for centuries by this rock which had claimed many ships and lives.
- 2.2 The light, although now automated, still shines today as we near its bicentenary.
- 2.3 We have been working with the committee set up for the purpose of celebrating this event of national importance, which comprises of the Northern Lighthouse Board and representatives of all the National Collections – the National Archives of Scotland, the National Galleries of Scotland, the National Library of Scotland, the National Museums of Scotland and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.
- 2.4 Although there will be an exhibition in the Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, it is proposed that we in Angus consider how to mark this important milestone in our history. While there will be a series of events, many of which will be community driven, it is proposed to develop a project to redisplay Signal Tower Museum and to refocus on the maritime history of Arbroath in general, and the legacy of the Bellrock Light in particular.
- 2.5 The Inchcape Rock was a huge danger to shipping, especially during an East coast haar, and when Abbot John Gedy of Arbroath built a harbour to encourage trade, a bell was placed on the rock to warn mariners. This was not welcomed by everyone, since there were those who benefited from such shipwrecks, and by tradition one pirate in particular – Ralph the Rover.
- 2.6 The tale was told by the Poet Laureate, Robert Southey. Ralph cut the bell from the rock which was threatening his livelihood, but met his end on the reef in true poetic justice! Using the Ralph the Rover character, it is intended that the story of the Bellrock will be told, especially for children, with the aid of exciting interactive displays and audio-visual presentations.
- 2.7 It is also intended that the significance of the Lighthouse, Stevensons, and their immense contribution to the design and building of the Light will be told, possibly with sets of plans and a diorama of the Bellrock construction Yards in Arbroath. This would include the Clydesdale horse, Bassey, who moved most of the stone for the lighthouse. The recently acquired family model of the lighthouse, now restored, will also be exhibited to the public for the first time.

- 2.8 Consideration will be given to refreshing the light mechanism displays and, with the help of the Northern Lighthouse Board, a reconstruction of the Principal Lightkeeper's accommodation could become a new feature of the displays.
- 2.9 The trade, which benefited from the light, transformed Arbroath. The town became a major importer of flax from the Baltic countries, and water-powered mills sprung up along the Brothock, with firms such as Corsars and Websters becoming major employers. While Jute followed, the town developed an engineering industry, producing much of the textile machinery required for the textile industry, not only in Arbroath but also in Dundee and elsewhere in Angus.
- 2.10 This also attracted fisherfolk from the Abbey's former fishing village of Auchmithie, who migrated to the Fit o the toon enticed by the harbour which could cope with larger fishing boats. The famous Arbroath Smokie was born from these Auchmithie roots. It is hoped therefore that the tale of the fisherfolk and their unique way of life, now sadly gone, can also be told.
- 2.11 A gallery with changing exhibitions, a shop and a browsing area for visitors where our extensive local information files and historic photograph collections can be accessed will also be considered, as well as an activity room which will enable us to provide events for children and adults.
- 2.12 While access to the tower has to be managed, we hope to produce a CCTV link, and we hope to restore the ball mechanism on the tower to enable signalling to be re-introduced for special occasions. The courtyard and the restored lean-tos could also be brought into the display scheme.
- 2.13 With the co-operation of the Northern Lighthouse Board, a live television link could be developed so that visitors will be able to view the rock, weather permitting!
- 2.14 All display work would be produced by our in-house Galleries Unit, possibly taking on an additional temporary designer for the period depending on the final detail of the project to be delivered. While some extra Curatorial time would be required, this will be kept within budget using staff slippage.
- 2.15 We are working closely with the Arbroath and Area partnership, and a "Year of the Light" group has been established which will plan a number of other features and events.
- 2.16 The project will require 12-15 months to complete. If we are to undertake this work, a timeline can be produced which will need a start in November 2009 - January 2010 at the latest.

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 As this project is not currently contained with the Financial Plan as approved at the Special Budget meetings on 19 February 2009, and as it is anticipated that it could cost more than £200,000 (depending on the project scale), this project now requires a Capital Project Appraisal (CPA) to be prepared.
- 3.2 The CPA will need to set out options for project delivery and funding and should at a minimum consider 3 levels of project: a bare minimum project; a full and extensive project; and a middle ground project which delivers the most important aspects detailed above.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications for the Council arising from the recommendations in this report. Given that different options are available in terms of the project scope and that no detailed costing work has been undertaken at this stage, it is not possible to be precise about the potential project costs and indeed this is why a CPA now requires to be prepared. On an indicative basis it is thought that the cost of the full project could be of the order of £300,000 although members will appreciate that the final costs could be higher or lower than this depending on the project scope and affordability considerations.
- 4.2 As noted at 3.1 above, there is currently no provision for this project in the Neighbourhood Services Financial Plan and consequently no funding is available for the project at this time. Accordingly as also noted above, this project will now require a Capital Project Appraisal (CPA) - including funding proposals - to be prepared and thereafter submitted to the Capital Budget Sub-Group (CBSG) for initial consideration. The CBSG will consider the CPA and will provide recommendations to be considered by relevant budget groups and committees as part of the 2010/11 budget process. Detailed financial implications will therefore be presented to appropriate Committees at those times.

5. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no human rights implications arising from this report

6. CONSULTATION

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

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1. The issues dealt within this report have been the subject of consideration from the equalities perspective (as required by the legislation). An equalities impact assessment has been undertaken.

**RON ASHTON
DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

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.

CS/JRZ/NKA

EQUALITY SCREENING

Policy Control Document

Name of Policy, Procedure or Report The Year of the Light

Lead Department/Service Cultural Services

What is the aim of the policy, procedure or report?

The report (Attached) sets out new proposals for the upgrading of displays and visitor facilities at Signal Tower Museum, Arbroath as part of the bicentenary celebrations for the Bellrock Lighthouse.

The plan is intended to upgrade displays and visitor facilities in the Museum and environs and will take into consideration access and accessibility issues. The displays were last upgraded in the early 1990s.

The plan will focus the interpretation on the Bellrock Lighthouse and the maritime and industrial history of Arbroath and its people

At present there is no access to the upper floor of the Museum for visitors with mobility difficulties. Given the planning constraints on a historic listed building, providing physical access would be costly and difficult to execute. It is therefore intended to provide intellectual, virtual access where physical access is not possible, by means of virtual tours and via the collections database.

Interpretation will include foreign language information where possible and appropriate.

It is intended to provide an improved, high standard of visitor service and experience for all visitors.

Is this a new or a review of an existing policy, procedure or report?

This is a new report

Screening Process

Has the policy, procedure or report already been assessed for its impact on people from different racial backgrounds, people of different genders and people with disabilities.

Yes No

If Yes, unless there have been significant changes, no further action is required. Please sign and date immediately below and retain for reference.

If No, does the policy, procedure or report involve or have consequences for the people the council serves or employs?

Yes No

If yes, proceed to Step 1 of the Full Impact Assessment on page 2.

If no, please state why not

If no, The policy, procedure or report is not relevant and no further action is required.

Please sign and date immediately and keep for reference

Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

FULL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Step 1

Are there any statutory legal requirements affecting this policy, procedure or report? If so please describe.

No

Step 2

What data/research is available to assess the likely impact of the policy, procedure or report.

Market research carried out by IPF consultants in 2007 tabulated by Gender age and ethnicity

Step 3

Is there any reason to believe the policy, procedure or report could affect people differently due to their race or disability or gender? If so how?

Race: there is no reason to believe that any users or non-users of the museum will be adversely affected due to the proposed developments.

Disability: Where it is not possible to provide physical access every effort will be made to provide virtual and/or intellectual access.

Gender: there is no reason to believe that any users or non-users of the museum will be adversely affected due to the proposed developments.

Step 4

Is there evidence to suggest that any part of the policy, procedure or report could unlawfully discriminate against people? If so, how?

No

Step 5

Can the policy, procedure or report be seen to favour one section of the community

Yes No

or deny opportunities to another?

Yes No

If yes, please give details.

Step 6

Does the policy, procedure or report advance equality?

Yes No

Or restrict equality?

Yes No

If yes, give details

Access will be improved to parts of the displays not currently accessible to those with mobility difficulties by means of virtual tours and access to the collections database.

Step 7

Are there any other actions which could have been taken to enhance equality of opportunity?
If so please state

No

Step 8

Based on the work you have done, rate the level of relevance being allocated to this policy, procedure or report.

High Medium Low Unknown

Step 9

If during **Steps 3 - 6** there has been an adverse impact identified, consider if any adverse impact can be justified.

Yes No

If yes please give details.

If no, consider alternative ways of delivering the policy, procedure or report to minimise negative impact or eliminate unlawful discrimination. Give details of the changes to be made to the policy, procedure or report.

Access will be improved to parts of the displays not currently accessible to those with mobility difficulties by means of virtual tours and access to the collections database.

Step 10

Do you need to carry out a further impact assessment?

Yes No

If yes, what actions do you need to take

Step 11

Make arrangements to monitor and review the impact assessment.

- i) Who will be responsible for monitoring?
Cultural Services and Museums Staff

ii) How will it be monitored and analysed?
Questionnaires, interviews and collection of statistics

iii) How often will the policy, procedure or report be reviewed and by whom?
On completion and regularly thereafter

Step 12

Publish results of the Impact Assessment.

How will the results be recorded and reported?

The paper will be submitted to Neighbourhood Services Committee and thereafter will be published on the Council's web and intranet sites and Angus Council's normal public reporting mechanisms

Completion of impact assessment:

Please sign and date immediately and forward to your designated Policy Impact Assessment Co-ordinator.

Name: Norman K Atkinson

Signature: _____

Date: 21st April 2009

For additional information and advice please contact:
the Equalities Officer - Tel: 01307 476058 or E-mail: Equalities@angus.gov.uk