



Report to

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Report of

Councillor McNicholas – Lead Member, Transportation

Title

Report Back on the Work Of Outside Bodies – Museum of British Road Transport Trust (Coventry) Limited

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report sets out details of the work of the Coventry Transport Museum (CTM) over the preceding twelve months and details of attendance by the City Council's representatives on the Museum of British Road Transport Trust (Coventry) Limited .

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members note the report and the work undertaken by the Transport Museum.
2.2 That Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee continue to appoint Members to the Museum of British Road Transport Trust (Coventry) Limited on an annual basis.

3 Information on Work of Outside Body

3.1 Museum Collections

In January 2012 the Transport Museum's reserve collection was relocated into larger, more watertight premises. This location is shared with the Jaguar Heritage Collection and the Belgrade Theatre. In addition to this, the collections are now better assessed via a new software system. This allows a better assessment of whether collections should be retained, relocated to another museum or sold.

3.2 PR and Marketing

Much of the groundwork put into place during 2011/12 paid dividends during 2012 as visitor numbers again reached a new record high (421,468 visits in 2011/12). A great deal of work has been done by the team to improve the recognition and reputation of the Museum, both locally and nationally, to increase visitors and secondary, retail sales.

A brand new museum guide was launched in April 2012 and this has generated £42,000 of income. This has covered the cost of the reception staff who were employed to sell the guide and, through improved customer engagement at the point of entry, has given the museum valuable visitor data which has helped guide the Museum's marketing strategy. This strategy has focused more on the use of social networking and a much enhanced range of printed material, alongside radio and television features and Museum staff attendances at some of the largest exhibitions in the country.

The above, enhanced marketing work has resulted in significant growth in the Museum's profile across many fronts which, in turn, has increased the amount of positive feedback received. As an example, the travel information website TripAdvisor awarded the Museum a Certificate of Excellence and users of the website rate the Museum as the best visitor attraction in Coventry.

3.3 Exhibitions and Events

The temporary exhibitions programme continues to grow with exhibition plans now in place up until the end of 2014. These exhibitions are designed specifically to attract new audiences that might not otherwise visit the Museum, with subject matter that is not necessarily connected to the core theme of Coventry transport heritage or transport heritage at all. These exhibitions are becoming increasingly popular and have increased visitor numbers and popularity.

The museum has been invited to attend a number of prestigious events and exhibitions including the Silverstone Classic and the NEC Classic Car Show which are attended by many thousands of people from all over the world.

Both of the Museum's own festivals, The Coventry Festival of Motoring and Coventry Festival of Cycling have also grown in size and popularity, helping to improve the Museum's profile and presence in the sector.

The Museum was also used as a venue for the BBC Flog It team. Five programmes that were recorded at the Museum were broadcast during the summer of 2012 and will be repeated for at least the next three years.

3.4 Staffing

A re-organisation of the Museum during the early part of 2012 saw the Museum's two Facilitators take over responsibility for education at the museum. This has led to a much improved offer for schools and a range of new sessions which has resulted in increased usage by schools, with many now opting to pay for the school activities on offer rather than conducting their own visit. The new STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) related sessions have now been introduced – these are specifically aimed at teenagers which is a market that the Museum had previously struggled to engage with.

A Funding Manager was appointed in October 2011. This has enabled a funding strategy to be developed and this guides how the Museum works to increase both capital and revenue funding. For example, the Museum has received support from the Heritage Lottery Fund to support a £4.9m development plan for the Museum and the renovation of the former Grammar School adjacent to the Museum.

The Museum has actively encouraged applications from volunteers to help in both front and back of house areas. This has been very successful with over 26 people now assisting in the day to day operation of the museum.

3.5 Attendances

In terms of overall performance visitor numbers have been very strong, rising as follows in recent years:

2009/10 – 371,190

2010/11 – 375,602

2011/12 – 421,468

3.6 Cultural Trust Review 2012

Following conclusion of the Coventry Cultural Trusts Review 2012, Council approved the Review's recommendation that CTM and Coventry Heritage and Arts Trust (CHAT) merge into one new, cultural organisation in order to deliver efficiencies in the sector, safeguard the City's cultural offer and better join up and focus the offer. The review will be implemented across 2013, resulting in a managed transfer of CTM operations and staff into the new cultural organisation.

4 Benefits to the City Council of the Appointment

The City Council benefits from having representatives on the Museum of British Road Transport Trust (Coventry) Limited who act as independent directors and who ensure that the requirements of local people are properly represented.

5 Attendance Record and Remuneration for the Appointment

5.1 The City Council representatives on the Museum of British Road Transport Trust (Coventry) Limited are Councillor McNicholas, Councillor Williams and Councillor Sawdon. In the period from January 2012 to December 2012, five Board meetings were held. Councillor McNicholas attended three of the meetings he was entitled to attend, Councillor Williams and Councillor Sawdon attended one of the three meetings they were entitled to attend.

5.2 There is no remuneration associated with the appointment.

List of background papers

Proper officer:

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Nil

Papers open to Public Inspection

Description of paper

Schedule of City Council Appointments to outside Bodies

Location

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