



Report of the Chief Heritage Officer

Scrutiny Board (Leisure) – Museums Working Group

Date: 17th July 2006

Subject: Update on the New City Museum Project

Electoral wards affected:

Specific implications for:

Ethnic minorities

Women

Disabled people

Narrowing the gap

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This is an update on progress on the Leeds City Museum Project.

2.0 Museum Resource Centre

2.1 Now renamed the Leeds Museum Discovery Centre this is the creation of an accessible collections store with associated educational facilities and technical workshops located at Clarence Dock. This will provide access to and improved care and better storage for the City's museum collections which are recognised by the government to be of national importance. It is envisaged that it will primarily be visited by booked specialist and community groups and school parties.

2.2 Construction commenced onsite in September 2005. Projected completion of building works is September 2006, followed by the fit out of the building and the installation of the collections from various locations around the city. The Centre will open to the public after Easter 2007.

2.3 The construction is c.80% complete and 1.5 weeks behind programme. The external fabric and structure is virtually complete.

- 2.4 The tendered cost was £6.285m. The cost consultants advise that the projected final cost is now £80k above the tendered cost. There are still a large amount of provisional sums still to be accounted for and this remains the main focus for identifying potential cost savings. A weekly core group has also been set up by the Project Manager to ensure timely decisions relating to design and cost.

3.0 City Museum

- 3.1 The provision of a City Museum in the listed Leeds Institute in Millennium Square will provide the city with a major visitor attraction and restore public access to the city's collections that have largely been in store for many years. The museum will combine innovative and thought provoking galleries with café, shop, educational and conference facilities.

The contractor commenced on site in September 2005. Projected completion of building works is now June 2007 when Exhibition fit out will commence.

- 3.2 Construction is c. 35% complete and 10 weeks behind programme. Around 70% of the extensive internal structural works are complete with ongoing remedial works to the roof and external wall repairs. Work is progressing slower than anticipated. Delays are due primarily to discoveries made as demolition has progressed as the building is in a worse condition than anticipated e.g. revealed walls have been found to be structurally unsound and had to be replaced.
- 3.3 It is estimated that the last of the major structural operations will be complete by the end of August. Consequently, there should be a reduced risk of further delays and additional costs after this date
- 3.4 Tendered cost is £11,280m. The cost consultants advise that the projected final cost is £270k over budget. Strategy to bring project back to budget includes:
- A) Further Value engineering
 - B) Minimise cost of outstanding work packages still to be procured
 - C) Speed up necessary change decisions onsite

4.0 City Museum Exhibition works

- 4.1 Following the consultation campaign reported to Scrutiny last year all galleries now have their detailed design completed. The initial Exhibition Cost Report received in June projected an overspend of £1m on a budget of £5.75mm. Value Engineering is on going but has so far been successful in reducing this to £181,000 without any loss of functionality or impact on the visitor experience. Once confirmation has been received that costs are within budget LCC will sign off and production drawings will commence
- 4.2 We are now working on procurement for letting the works. The Project has been advertised and initial expressions of interest evaluated.
- 4.3 The projected completion of the works is April 2008.

4.4 Public Opening of the Museum is planned for late Summer 2008 following installation of the collections.

5.0 **CONSULTATION**

5.1 The consultation meetings with many local groups have generally gone well and have impacted on the design of the galleries and on their content. However, the feedback from the Four Societies regarding the Leeds Galleries has meant a significant amount of re-design causing some extension to the original programme. Though this has not yet impacted on the critical path it has delayed the final gallery costing exercise. All the galleries have been agreed with and supported by the 4 Societies.

5.2 The consultation process is ongoing with further consultation with the Four Societies, Community Groups and teachers arranged. On top of this there have been individual contacts between members of the Four Societies and the relevant curators to access potential objects for display or to seek specialist knowledge. In addition similar contacts have been made with other specialist institutions and groups.

6.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

6.1 The working group is asked to note the contents of this report and make any comments as appropriate.