

# Culture and Communities Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 29 January 2019

## Museums and Galleries – Six Month Review of Extended Opening Hours

Item number	8.5
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All
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### Executive Summary

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In October 2016 the Museums and Galleries Service implemented a change to opening hours to six of its museums and galleries in response to the Council's Transformation programme, moving from a six and seven day a week operation to five days a week throughout the year.

Following a review of opening hours the Culture and Communities Committee agreed on [20 March 2018](#) to extend opening hours to seven days a week, 10.00am – 5.00pm from 1 June 2018 for a one year pilot.

It was also agreed that a progress report would be brought to this Committee for review after six months of operation. This report details the impact of the extended hours to date.

## Museums and Galleries – Six Month Review of Extended Opening Hours

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 That Committee notes the increase in visitor numbers and income following the introduction of extended opening hours.
- 1.2 That Committee agrees to the continuation of extended opening hours.

### 2. Background

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- 2.1 On 1 October 2016 the Museums and Galleries Service implemented a change to opening hours to six of its museums and galleries in response to the Council's Transformation programme, moving from a six and seven day a week operation to five days a week throughout the year.
- 2.2 The report submitted to the Culture and Communities Committee on [30 January 2018](#) outlined the impact of the changes. Moving to a five day a week service saved a total of £166,000 in staffing costs over two financial years. However, there was a significant decline in visitor numbers and a decline in income amounting to £76,598. There were also issues concerning visitor perception and reputational damage.
- 2.3 The Committee agreed to convene two review meetings with Councillor and officer representation to consider options for the future opening hours across the museums and galleries service.
- 2.4 A range of options were explored and it was agreed that the best solution for the service was to move to a seven day a week operation, 10.00am to 5.00pm across the year. This would bring the service in line with all major museums and attractions in the city and meet the needs of local residents and visitors to the city.
- 2.5 Extending opening hours would allow the service to maximise income opportunities from its major city centre venues.
- 2.6 It was estimated that to extend opening hours from five days a week to seven days required an additional 11 FTE front line staff, costing an additional £253,000.
- 2.7 A business case detailed the income opportunities and the forecast income based on existing spend and visitor footfall. However, the business case identified a potential shortfall of £95,000.

- 2.8 The council approved an additional £95,000 as part of the budget process to contribute to the funding of additional staff to enable the extended hours of operation to be introduced.

### 3. Main report

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#### Visitor Experience

- 3.1 Between 1 June to 1 November 2018 visitor numbers across the six museum venues have increased by 31%, from 219,542 in 2017 to 286,693 in 2018.

Visitor numbers	June to November 2017	June to November 2018	% increase
City Art Centre	23,337	31,161	34%
Museum of Edinburgh	48,393	65,322	35%
People's Story	30,109	25,056	-13%
Museum of Childhood	79,708	112,340	41%
Writers Museum	35,288	47,933	35%
Queensferry Museum	2,707	3,881	42%
<b>ALL</b>	<b>219,542</b>	<b>286,693</b>	<b>31%</b>

- 3.2 The change to seven days a week has impacted positively on the visitor experience. Previously venues were closed on different days from others, and visitors found it difficult to understand when a venue was open. Complaints from visitors were frequent, particularly during peak times. Now that all venues are open at the same time seven days a week, this is no longer the case.
- 3.3 Access is now available throughout the week for school and community groups and the venues are available when these groups want to use the service.
- 3.4 Front of House staff have welcomed the change which has had a positive impact on morale.
- 3.5 The changes bring the service in line with all major museums and visitor attractions and meets the expectations of both residents and visitors to the city.

## Income

- 3.6 Between 1 June to 1 November 2018 income across the six museum venues has increased by 38% from £120,783 to £166,722.

Income	June - November 2017	June - November 2018	% increase
City Art Centre	£32,764	£44,710	36%
Museum of Edinburgh	£11,548	£17,484	51%
People's Story	n/a	n/a	n/a
Museum of Childhood	£41,408	£60,025	45%
Writers Museum	£23,237	£25,598	10%
Queensferry Museum	n/a	n/a	n/a
Venue hire and donations across six venues	£11,826	£18,905	37%
<b>ALL</b>	<b>£120,783</b>	<b>£166,722</b>	<b>38%</b>

- 3.7 Based on current projections, the income generated from retail sales, venue hire and donations at the six venues is projected to increase by £92,000. In meeting targets, this income will be supplemented through a combination of other revenue sources, including ticket sales at the Scott and Nelson monuments, venue hire and donations across the Museums and Galleries other venues.
- 3.8 Additionally, a new Commercial Manager will be in post in February this year with the primary focus of generating new income streams, and increasing the yield from those already in place. It is forecast that income will continue to increase to meet the funds required to cover staffing costs, but the additional £95,000, as provided through the budget process, will be required for the pilot to be sustainable on an ongoing basis.

## 4. Measures of success

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- 4.1 The service meets the needs and expectations of residents and visitors to the city by providing access seven days a week while achieving the income target to continue operating seven days a week, 10.00am – 5.00pm throughout the year beyond the year one pilot.

## **5. Financial impact**

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- 5.1 The additional staffing costs are met through income and additional £95,000 through the budget process.
- 5.2 The additional £95,000, as provided through the budget process, will be required for the pilot to be sustainable on an ongoing basis.

## **6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact**

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- 6.1 Plans are in place to raise the additional income from commercial activity and donations.
- 6.2 There are no policy, compliance or governance impacts.

## **7. Equalities impact**

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- 7.1 The report's contents are not relevant to the general equality duties of the Equality Act 2010.

## **8. Sustainability impact**

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- 8.1 The impacts of this report in relation to the three elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties have been considered. The extension of opening hours to Edinburgh Museums and Galleries will continue to help achieve a sustainable Edinburgh by contributing to the city's reputation as a cultural destination. This will benefit residents by contributing to Edinburgh's high quality of life, promote wellbeing, and will also support the city's economy.

## **9. Consultation and engagement**

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- 9.1 Consultation was carried out with stakeholders, competitor attractions and staff for the initial review.
- 9.2 Two review group meetings with cross party representatives and officers from the Culture service.

## 10. Background reading/external references

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None.

### **Paul Lawrence**

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## 11. Appendices

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None.