

Special Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

10 December 2015



Future arrangements for the Durham Light Infantry (DLI) collection

**Joint report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive and
Terry Collins, Corporate Director of Neighbourhood Services**

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of the report is to provide members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board with information on the implementation of future arrangements for the Durham Light Infantry (DLI) collection.

Background

- 2 The Cabinet at its meeting held on 21 October 2015 considered a report and agreed a proposal for a new approach to the storage, display and access to the DLI museum collections.
- 3 The Cabinet report set out the background to the development of these new proposals and also the material considerations considered by the Cabinet in arriving at their decision in respect of:-
 - Improved collection storage;
 - Increased access to the collection;
 - Outreach education;
 - Financial, HR, Legal and Accommodation implications;
 - Other risks, and
 - An indicative timetable for implementation of the proposals.
- 4 A copy of the Cabinet report, written representations from the Trustees of the Charities for the former DLI and an Equality Impact Assessment are appended to this report for members information (Appendices 2,3 and 4).

Request for Call-in of the Cabinet decision

- 5 On 29 October 2015, a request was received by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services for call-in of Cabinet decision agenda item number 7 of the Cabinet meeting of the 21 October 2015 relating to future arrangements for the DLI Museum.

6 On 2 November 2015, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services consulted the Chairman, who decided not to call the decision in. In doing so, he took into account the advice of the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer, that delaying the implementation of the decision would not be likely to cause significant damage to the Council's interests.

7 Having considered this, he then considered whether a case had been made out for calling in the decision, and concluded that it had not.

8 His reasons were as follows:-

- The Members signing the request for call-in had time to present questions to Cabinet and local Members were advised before the Cabinet Agenda was dispatched, of the plans for the Museum.
- The lead group were not told of the decision in advance, and contrary to the statement made in the request for call-in, Councillors from other groups were briefed.
- Consultation with the Trustees has taken place, and the Trustees submitted correspondence supporting the proposal.
- The proposal before Cabinet did not involve ending the arrangements with the Trustees or ceasing the Council's services to the DLI collection. The report refers to the constraints and difficulties in sustaining a static museum based collection, and of the proposal to improve the collection storage and increase access to the collection using loans to Durham University, and other activities referred to within the report. The Service is not therefore ceasing, but is being enhanced.
- The Chairman noted proposals for advertising the facility to be transferred to a volunteer/community organisation, is not appropriate in the context of an arrangement made with the Trustees.

9 Whilst of the view that this was not an appropriate case for call-in, the Chairman was of the view that there should be added to the work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, a meeting to enable Members to explore with chief officers and Trustees, how the Council can continue to meet the desire of the public to have access to this valuable collection in a meaningful way.

10 In accordance with the provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure rules detailed within the Council's Constitution regarding requests for Call- in, a report by the Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services in respect of the DLI Call-in will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 17 December 2015.

Future arrangements for the DLI collection

- 11 This Special Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meeting has been arranged to discuss the process for the implementation of the future DLI Museum arrangements.
- 12 Councillor Neil Foster, Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration, Terry Collins, Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Steve Howell, Head of service – Culture and Sport, Neighbourhood Services will be in attendance to provide members with a presentation setting out how the future DLI Museum arrangements are to be implemented.
- 13 The presentation will cover:-
 - a. Current Context and decision:
 - b. An overview of the DLI Collection:
 - c. Nature and Scope of the Future Offer:
 - d. Developing the Content and Programme:
 - e. Decant and Residual Issues:
 - f. Anticipated Outcomes of future Offer:
 - g. Partner Observations Trustees and AMOT
 - h. Decant and Residual Issues:
 - i. Next Steps:
 - j. Conclusion:
- 14 Representatives of the Trustees of the Charities for the former Durham Light Infantry will be in attendance to address the Board, setting out their observations upon the proposals.
- 15 The Army Museums Ogilby Trust (AMOT) is the only national organisation that represents the regimental and corps museums of the British Army and is a charitable trust established in 1954 by the late Colonel Robert Ogilby DSO,DL. Representatives of the Trust have been in discussion with the Council around the changes and hope to be in attendance to address the Board but have not, as yet, been able to confirm their attendance.

E-Petition – Save the DLI

- 16 Durham County Council welcomes petitions and recognises that they are one way for people to let the Council know of concerns. Part 40 of the Council's Constitution sets out how petitions will be managed, including e-petitions.

- 17 In November 2015, an e-petition was submitted via the Council's website which stated that "We the undersigned petition the Council to reconsider their proposals to close the DLI Museum until a more viable solution can be found, hold off for at least 2 years and allow time to explore all avenues."
- 18 The justification made for the petition stated that "we are a group of 25K strong at this time and growing. We believe it is in the best interests of the people and friends of the DLI museum to keep the entire collection together telling all of its proud history, not part of a collection in Palace Green and the rest in storage."
- 19 The petition went live on the County Council's website on 25 November 2015 and is available for the collection of signatures until 30 December 2015. Thereafter, in accordance with the Petition Scheme the Council will respond to the petition, setting out what actions, if any, the Council propose in respect of the issue.

Recommendations

- 20 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board is asked to:-
- (i) Note the content of this report;
 - (ii) Consider and comment upon the information provided by Councillor Neil Foster, Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration, Terry Collins, Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Steve Howell, Head of service – Culture and Sport, Neighbourhood Services in respect of the proposed implementation of the future arrangements for the DLI Museum;
 - (iii) Consider and comment upon the information provided by Representatives of the Trustees of the Charities for the former Durham Light Infantry and the Army Museums Ogilby Trust in respect of the proposals;
 - (iv) Agree to further detailed update reports being provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on the progress made against the implementation timetable, the first of these to be considered after a period of six months from the date of this meeting.

Background papers

Cabinet Report – 21 October 2015 – Future DLI Museum arrangements
Durham County Council Constitution – Petition Scheme

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The following implications are replicated from the Cabinet Report dated 21 October 2015 and entitled Future DLI Museum Arrangements

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – These proposals would save £221,984 from the revenue budget but would incur a one-off capital expenditure of £251,000. When implemented the DLI budget would be reduced to £70,000.

	Revenue per annum for collections	Capital
Installation of roller racking and appropriate flooring		70,000
Additional security to entrances and ICT points		£2,000
Humidifier		£2,000
Contingency		£2,000
Education Staff – ongoing development of offer	£20,000	
Revenue to support the temporary loan of objects and exhibition spaces	£50,000	
One off capital grant to support the Palace Green installation		£175,000
Total	£70,000	£251,000

Staffing – As per the main body of the report

Risk – As per the main body of the report

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty - An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this proposal.

Accommodation – As per the main body of the report

Crime and Disorder – The empty DLI building could be a focus for vandalism and crime. The DLI building is alarmed and has CCTV but could be a focus for vandalism and crime once empty.

Human Rights – None from this report

Consultation – As per the main body of the report

Procurement – Normal procurement protocols would be followed

Disability Issues - The new collection storage and temporary display and access arrangements will be fully DDA compliant and accessible by public transport will be an improvement in terms of accessibility to that of the present location.

Legal Implications – As per the main body of the report