

Meeting Date: 14th July 2020

Public/Private\*: Public

Title: **Culture, Heritage & Leisure Portfolio Holder's Report –  
Councillor Stephen Higgs**

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### **TOURISM / DISCOVER CARLISLE**

The work of the Discover Carlisle team has continued throughout lockdown. The team has been instrumental in making sure that our partners in the visitor economy have access to all the information they require to protect their business and protect jobs.

During lockdown Discover Carlisle has finalised new printed publications and promotional videos to form the basis of a recovery marketing campaign. The team is supporting the reopening of the High Street by providing a liaison service between the Council and retailers and are supporting the provision of facilities for shoppers to return safely. The team are also supporting the re-opening of the hospitality industry by providing help and advice. Promotional videos have been produced to increase consumer confidence in both the retail and hospitality sectors.

The Discover Carlisle team has worked closely with the other Cumbrian District Councils and Cumbria Tourism on understanding the impact of Coronavirus on the visitor economy. The team have assisted in lobbying Government and Visit Britain on providing support and guidance to businesses. Discover Carlisle is contributing to a county wide campaign to promote shopping locally, and to encourage visitors to visit our High Streets safely. Discover Carlisle has also contributed to the work of 'England's Historic Cities' by providing intelligence and using this as an opportunity to learn from colleagues across the country.

The Discover Carlisle events programme is under review. The Farmers' Market was planned to return on 4<sup>th</sup> July, and we hope to be able to hold our Summer International Market on August Bank Holiday Weekend. Plans are also being made for City of Lights 2021.

A new Carlisle Holiday Guide has been produced which features new photography. 10,000 copies will be distributed to Tourist Information Centres nationally and will be available to those enquiring through Carlisle Tourist Information Centre. The guides will also be used to promote Carlisle at any forthcoming shows or events.

## **CULTURE AND EVENTS**

Lockdown forced closure of the Old Fire Station, but we have been busy supporting local cultural activity by contributing to the Cumbria Arts and Culture Network and setting up virtual performances/acts streaming on-line through a newly established 'Show and Tell' section within the Discover Carlisle website. Any events and community activities, held in parks or open spaces, that could not take place due to the pandemic are being rearranged for next year.

We're now active members of a county wide group called **Cumbria Arts & Culture Network** which looks at the many issues surrounding the arts, including support for artists, venues and how the county's artistic community can bounce back from Covid-19 restrictions, as soon as it is safe to do so.

### **Social Media – Old Fire Station**

We have been active in the promotion of various projects, groups and artists through all our social media outlets. This has not only helped us signpost relevant and useful links, it is keeping us visible within the creative community and to our own 'Old Fire Station' audience.

### **Poetry in the Park**

As part of looking forward to how we can engage physically with the public, we've started working with a local artist who is interested in joint delivery of outdoor projects which will be largely focussed on wellbeing, mental health and the arts. 'Poetry in the Park' is an initial project which would combine a mix of recitals and writing workshops for all ages, based within a local green space.

## **LEISURE CONTRACTS**

**A big thanks to all the staff who have been working hard over the lockdown period keeping services going.**

Also a big thank you to Greenwich Leisure Ltd who have been supporting our response to the Covid 19 Pandemic at the Sands Centre.

Stony Holme Golf Course has been up and running since the middle of May and has been busier than ever. Credit goes to Jim Douglas and his team for being able to get the course up and running for people to enjoy.

## **TULLIE HOUSE JUNE 2020**

### **2019/20 Statistics**

Tullie House welcomed its highest number of visitors in five years during FY 2019/20. 53,885 people visited the Museum galleries, up 23% on 2018/19, with a total footfall to the site of just over 200,000 (despite the closure of the Museum in mid-March - see below). This was partly due to an outstanding exhibition programme last year, including the family blockbuster 'Fantastic Fairground Factory', the internationally significant double bill of Turner and Rembrandt, and finally the very well-received 'Treasures of China' exhibition. Learning and community engagement numbers were also very strong last year with over 30,000 participants.

### **Covid-19 Response**

The Museum closed its doors to the public on Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> March in line with Government guidance. The majority of the staff team were furloughed as part of the Government's Corona Virus Job Retention scheme. A small number of Senior Staff and Managers have been working remotely throughout lockdown to steer the Museum through the crisis, deliver digital engagement and externally funded projects, and plan for reopening. Staff have also been conducting regular checks on the building and collections throughout lockdown. A team of staff are currently working on re-opening plans for the Museum. We are looking to implement a phased re-opening during July, in line with Government guidance.

### **CUMBRIA'S MUSEUM OF MILITARY LIFE**

Cumbria's Museum of Military Life closed temporarily on 18<sup>th</sup> March. Three members of staff have been furloughed and the remaining member of staff has continued to engage people through social media and on-line activity. The Museum secured a £31,000 Arts Council England Emergency Response grant to help with re-opening and on-line activity. We are currently working closely with English Heritage to reopen the Castle site and Museum on 4<sup>th</sup> July. The Museum will only open the main gallery and will currently not be running any additional activity. We will review the situation at the end of July