



Mansion House & Mayoralty Advisory Group 24 February 2010

Report of the Head of Civic, Democratic & Legal Services

Development of the Mansion house – Progress Update

Summary

1. This report sets out the development work to date that is being carried out at the Mansion House.

Background

2. This report is to update Members on the developments at the Mansion House over recent months. The developmental work that is being carried out is broad and involves working with a number of key partners in the city. The developmental work is based on the following key principles:

- improved marketing
- generate and develop income streams
- education
- conservation
- security for the collection, staff and public
- improved community access

Consultation

3. Due to the breadth of the works being carried out, consultation, out of necessity, has been varied. Advice has been sought from the following parties:
 - the Lord Mayor
 - York Archaeological Trust
 - York Civic Trust
 - Zurich insurance
 - CYC departments
 - Designers;
 - York England. Com
 - Local York businesses

Options

4. Members can endorse and support the developmental work and can suggest other approaches.

Analysis

5. Much of the work identified in this report is ongoing and will be used to form the basis of the Mansion House Business & Development Plan for future report to this Advisory Group. It had been planned to incorporate the Guildhall in this plan (the future operation of which falls within the remit of this Group) but future plans for the Guildhall at this stage are less clear and so, for the time being, both this update report and the Business/Development Plan referred to will concentrate on the Mansion House.
6. In summary, work in relation to developing and promoting use of the Mansion House is proceeding in the following areas:

Marketing

Website and Brochures

7. A brief for a website has now been completed and sent to three designers for quotes. A website is a key marketing tool which we can use to develop and promote both the Mansion House and Mayoralty.
8. A new corporate brochure is currently being redesigned, presenting a strong new identity for the Mansion House, which will be carried through to the website.
9. A new leaflet to better advertise and promote Mansion House tours is also being designed.

York Archaeological Trust (YAT)

10. The Mansion House has developed close links with YAT who are committed to assist in the development of the Mansion House. This will be on a trial basis for one year, initially. The initiatives in which YAT are involved are as follows:
 - Educational Tours aimed at schools which include meet the Mayor for Citizenship and historical dance lessons in the Stateroom;
 - Educational visits based on dining and feasting in the Mansion House.

All the above educational provision is specifically tailored to fit in with the national curriculum.

- Events. To use the Mansion House as a venue for special events. Lectures/talks during the Viking festival, Halloween events and Lord Mayors Easter Egg Hunt

It is envisaged that other initiatives and joint working will develop. In the meantime, YAT are providing all promotion and marketing for the above initiatives free of charge on the basis that all proceeds will be profit-shared.

York Civic Trust

11. The Mansion House has continued to develop links with the York Civic Trust, particularly seeking their advice on insurance and security matters. Items continue to be loaned between the Mansion House and Fairfax House collections, as appropriate.

The possibility of joint ticketing for Fairfax House and the Mansion House for the tours is currently being explored.

Other joint avenues that are being explored with the Trust are educational and events. One successful activity last year were walking tours around the city (eg. Across all Georgian houses), which started at the Mansion House.

Tours

12. After discussions with YAT, they advised that the house be opened more frequently for tours.

From March to Christmas the Mansion House will be open Thursday, Friday, Saturday for tours at 11.00, 12.30 and 2Pm. This will allow greater public access to the Mansion House than has hither to been possible. It will also generate some more income. Again these increased tours will be marketed through the new website and specially designed leaflet and through links with YAT, the Civic Trust and other organisations. They will be supported by an increase in the number of Mansion House volunteers.

Security

13. Plans are in place to make the Guildhall yard more secure with CCTV being installed. Subject to a bid to the Council's Risk Management Fund for funding, the first stage will be installed whilst the scaffolding is currently in place to effect the external stone repairs.

Zurich have carried out a security report on the Mansion House. The alarm system is due to be upgraded as highlighted in the report. This will ensure the Mansion House regains automatic police response upon an alarm activation.

14. The above security improvements are not only essential to the wellbeing of current users, visitors, staff to the Mansion House and in the Guildhall yard area but vital in any efforts to maintain proper security systems in the event of being able to display key artefacts from the civic collection in the future.

York 800

15. In 2012 York local democracy will be 800 years old! A number of city wide events are in the early stages of planning to mark this special occasion. The lead on this is Gill Cooper Head of Arts and Culture and an initial report will be submitted shortly to the Executive on progress. The Mansion House & Guildhall Manager is also a member of this group.

As a long term legacy of the celebrations the Mansion House and the City Archives are exploring the possibility of putting forward a joint Heritage Lottery bid. The two key priority areas for the Mansion House, as part of this bid, are the restoration of the kitchens and display of the Civic Silver collection.

Income generation

16. Some of the above developments, such as the events with YAT and increased tours, will contribute towards income generation targets for the Mansion House. However, the most significant contribution to increasing income from the Mansion House will be achieved by a range of the following:

Corporate Business Hire – the latter part of the current financial year has seen an increase in the income being generated from some corporate hire, largely as a result of the revamped Lord Mayor Business Breakfasts. However, connections have been made which have already increased the number of pre-booked hires for diarised corporate events. These include:

- Chamber of Commerce Annual Business luncheon
- Lord Mayor's End of Year Annual Business Dinner
- Quarterly Yorkshire Business Dinners

Other business ventures too are in development too from regular business lunches and corporate hires to wine tastings and special events evenings.

Weddings and other ceremonies – arrangements are underway to obtain the necessary licences for weddings (and potentially other naming ceremonies etc) to be held in the Mansion House. More details on how arrangements for these will be managed in the Mansion House will emerge as the potential demand for the venue becomes clearer.

Corporate Strategy

17. The development work set out in this report accords with many ambitions set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy.

The plans to open up the House more frequently contribute to becoming a **Learning City**, giving people the knowledge they need to play a part in the life of the city. It is hoped that any future plans for the display of the civic collection or refurbishment of the kitchens will inspire residents and visitors to the Mansion House, contributing to a coordinated approach to becoming a **Cultural City**. Opening the House to educational tours for historical dance lessons enables children to exercise and thereby contribute to the **health city** ambitions as well.

The improved security measures will play a part in one of key venues in the centre of York being a **safer** and increasing opinion of the city's safety record .

If the measures planned to improve income generation are successful, the Mansion House will play its parts in York's becoming a **Thriving City**

Implications

18. There are no known human resource, financial, legal or other implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report. As work progresses and a draft Business & Development Plan is produced, all relevant financial or resource implications will be highlighted and addressed as part of that Plan.

Risk Management

19. There are no known risk management implications arising from the recommendations in this report. Indeed, the report sets out plans for addressing the current risks associated with security. Those risks were identified in a report in September last year to Audit & Governance Committee, which was fully supportive of the practical measures outlined to address the risks. Those practical steps are now being incrementally addressed as part of this Mansion House development work, subject to available funding.
20. However, there is a wider risk to address throughout the course of this work. Setting a framework in place and introducing a Business & Development Plan to address objectively the business and

developmental aims for the Mansion House is essential to its long term development and a continuing commitment to the Mansion House itself being central to the continuing history of Lord Mayoralty in York.

Recommendations

20. The Advisory Group is asked to support the continuing progress being made in business and development terms and endorse the approach set out to date in this report.

Reason: To ensure progress continues to be made in the right direction

Contact Details

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		As above			
		Report Approved	<i>tick</i>	Date	<i>Insert Date</i>
			✓		
Specialist Implications Officer(s) None					
Wards Affected: <i>List wards or tick box to indicate all</i>					All <i>tick</i>
					Guildhall
For further information please contact the author of the report					

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

None