

SUBJECT: MUSEUMS REVIEW

MEETING: Individual Cabinet Member Decision – Cllr Paul Jordan

DATE: 27 November 2019

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To seek agreement to implement a staffing restructure following a review of the Museums Service.
- 1.2 To seek agreement to implement new public opening hours following a review of the Museums Service.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To agree to the changes recommended by the Museums Service Review.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Cabinet approved the 2017-2022 Museums Forward Plan in December 2016. The findings and recommendations of the Amion Cultural Services Review, completed in June 2015, informed the Forward Plan. Two of the overarching recommendations that Amion made were to:
 - Create a centralised museum team with an effective leadership function.
 - Continue to provide local access to the county's heritage
- 3.2 The approved Forward Plan included these recommendations under Strategic Aim 2 – *To ensure we have a resilient and sustainable service.*
- 3.3 The 2017 museum restructure addressed this core action, including a revised centralised team structure, establishing consistent opening hours across sites and implementation of lone working. Changes to the role, responsibilities and reporting structures were made to the posts of Abergavenny Museum Curator and the Deputy Museums Officer/Chepstow Museum Curator. These posts were revised to become Museums Manager and Museums Curator. The part time posts of Objects Conservator and Senior Custodian remained unchanged regarding the role specification although the hours that the Senior Custodian had to focus on duties away from the desk were significantly reduced. At the same time, single manning was introduced for the custodians across all sites.

- 3.4 These changes have been in place for over 2 years but the service remains stretched and roles and responsibilities in some places overlap and in others are unclear. The reporting structure is such that the Museums Manager has 16 direct reports, which is too many to effectively manage. Administrative duties are spread across many members of staff, which is confusing and duplicates effort. The Senior Custodian no longer has the office time to devote to focussing on the retail operation and this and further opportunities to increase income have been curtailed.
- 3.5 The creation of MonLife also provides an opportunity to consider the synergies across MonLife's operations. With this in mind, a full review has been undertaken including staffing roles in the light of operating experience over the last 2 years and staff feedback. The aim is to consolidate the central team and administrative functions, build operating resilience across MonLife's museums and attractions and support delivery of the Museums Forward Plan, including collection review and rationalisation.
- 3.6 To inform the review two meetings with staff held earlier this year (15th February and 9th April) completed a SWOT analysis and then worked through the issues; which have been considered during the review. Other issues raised outside the scope of the review will be addressed internally.

Weaknesses

- Lone working
- Lack of training time and opportunity to pass information between each other

Opportunities

- Opportunities to improve the service during closed periods
- Doubling up of staff to improve the visitor experience
- Revisions to the retail offer
- Including custodians in the planning stage of exhibitions and events

Threats

- Threat to team work
- Overstretched staff

- 3.7 The recommendations for change are:
- 3.7.1 Redesignate the Museums Manager post as Museums and Arts Manager to reflect the museum service's role as the arts lead within MonLife (Band J as currently).
- 3.7.2 Revise the roles of the Museums Curator and Object Conservator (the Object Conservator currently reports to the Museums Curator) to create two revised posts of Community Museums Curator and Collections Management Officer (both Band I).
- 3.7.3 The full time post of Collections Management Officer (the Objects Conservator is currently 0.6FTE) will allow more time to focus on the collections. Between spring 2020 and summer 2021, the additional 2 days will be specifically to lead the Collections Review and Rationalisation programme funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, including two

3.7.4 Change the reporting structures so :

- Custodians at Abergavenny report to the Community Museums Curator (due to the focus at that site on events which the Community Museums Curator is responsible for)
- Custodians at Monmouth report to the Collections Management Officer (due to the need for a strong focus on collections at that site)
- Custodians at Chepstow report to the Museums and Arts Manager (this ensures a balance of staff management responsibilities).
- Collections volunteers at Abergavenny and Chepstow report to the Collections Management Officer.
- Collections volunteers at Monmouth and all events/exhibition based volunteers report to the Community Museums Curator.
(The reporting structure for volunteers ensures both responsibilities are reflected but also means the two curatorial role have responsibility across all three sites)

3.7.5 Introduce a new post of Business Support Assistant (0.5 FTE, Band D) to take on administrative duties alongside involvement in retail and volunteer administration. This role to be offered in the first instance to any member of the museum team who has the required skills. This post will sit alongside the equivalent business support role in attractions adding operating resilience across both teams.

3.7.6 Delete the post of Senior Custodian. Due to the reduction in hours of this role over time, the proposed consolidation of business support, the reporting structure for front of house staff and the mixed nature of the current role covering administrative duties and front of house duties this role is no longer required.

3.7.7 Maintain the role of Custodians to welcome and assist all visitors; maintain security, general care of collections and building and control stock and cash (Band D as currently).

3.7.8 A revised working pattern for the Custodians to allow for a more standardised approach across all sites with a longer weekday post and an alternating weekend / weekday shift. This will provide an opportunity for crossover between staff to improve communication and time for site based administrative tasks. Currently roles range from 5.5 hrs to 15.75 hrs resulting in uneven experience and responsibility for tasks and so the revised working pattern will allow more consistency in roles and responsibilities and strengthen team working.

3.7.9 Retaining the closure to the public of all sites on a weekday, subject to further consultation most likely Wednesday as currently, all year round. Introducing a period of closure to the public over the winter (9 - 12 weeks). Visitor figures are significantly lower during this period and closure to the public but retaining staff during this time will provide an opportunity for staff training and for staff to work collaboratively on projects, including collection review, delivering project outcomes, improving teamwork and ultimately the visitor experience. Closure to the public does not impact on other activity such as pre booked visits or activities, study courses and learning activity which can continue to be accommodated, indeed it provides an opportunity for greater such usage.

- 3.8 The resulting changes in staff structure and lines of reporting are set out in Appendix 1:
- 3.9 All staff affected by the proposals have been consulted. Comments made during consultation have been considered and changes have been made to the initial draft report arising from the consultation. The changes will ensure the museum team is fit for purpose and allow appropriate staff to focus implementing the Museums Forward Plan including on improving the visitor experience, community engagement and collections review and rationalisation.

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

- 4.1 The work of the Museums Service holds the wellbeing of our Future Generations at its very heart. It is well documented that participation in cultural life improves people's wellbeing. Staff having clarity in terms of their roles and their place within the team is essential to their effectiveness and contributes to their engagement to ensure a resilient and sustainable service into the future contributing to the economy, to health, cohesive communities and to a vibrant culture by supporting artistic, cultural, heritage and tourism activity (Appendix 3).

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Option	Benefit	Risks	Comments
Not to agree proposed new posts structure	None	Lack of clarity of roles and resources to deliver the changes set out in the Museums Forward Plan and MonLife Business Plan	
To agree proposed new posts structure	Will position the museum and arts service to deliver the Museums Forward Plan and MonLife Business Plan. Will clarify staff responsibilities and provide a framework to accommodate delivery of the Collections Review and Rationalisation Project and position the service to attract further external funding.	None	

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 6.1 Progress will be monitored against the Museum Service Delivery Plan and MonLife's Business Plan utilising MonLife's approved performance and evaluation framework. In addition MonLife's CPD approach where employees are given control over their performance environment and are able to have mutually beneficial performance conversations with their managers will provide a measurement of success through staff engagement surveys and other data collection.

7. REASONS:

- 7.1 The provision of a vibrant museum service make a positive contribution to the lives of the people of Monmouthshire and to those visiting the county, both physically and virtually. It ensures current and future generations can enjoy and access heritage, collections, arts and culture by protecting and conserving artefacts and built heritage and promoting and nurturing the arts.
- 7.2 The corporate plan identifies the need to implement the museums' review and enable community-led arts and heritage presence in each of our towns.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 Appendix 2 demonstrates that the costs for the proposed changes to role designations and the structure are some £17,111 more than the previous budget at £261,526. The extension of the Collections Management Officer to a full time post is supported by grant aid in 20/21 and part supported in 21/22 as the additional days will be devoted to leading the Collections Review and Rationalisation programme funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Consequently, the full impact will not be until 22/23. Based on past performance, supported by the new staffing arrangements and close working with MonLife's attractions it is realistic to assume that growth in retail income (£8,000) can contribute and so the additional cost can be met within MonLife's approved services budget. The net additional cost of £9,000 has been built into the MonLife Business Plan from 22/23 onwards.

9. CONSULTEES:

Chief Operating Officer MonLife
Museum Staff
HR Business Partner
Union & Staff consultation

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

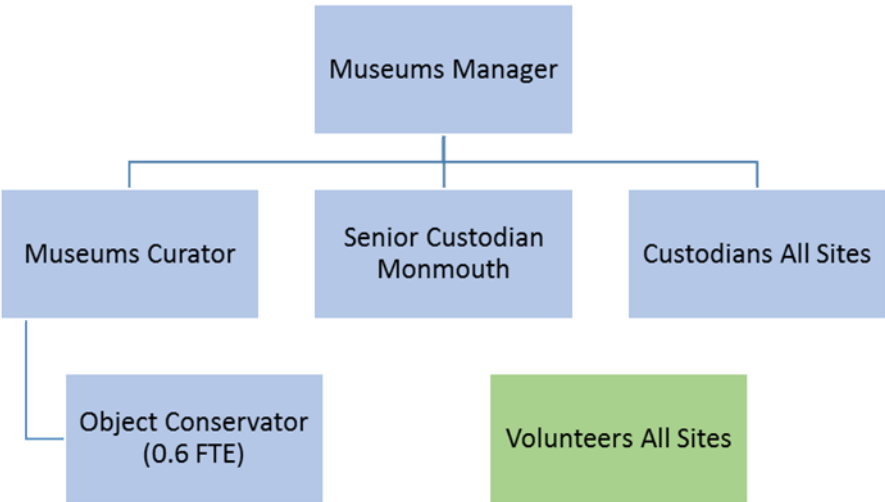
Appendix 1: Existing and Proposed Structure
Appendix 2: Full Year Costings of Proposals
Appendix 3: Equality and Future Generations Evaluation

AUTHOR & CONTACT DETAILS:

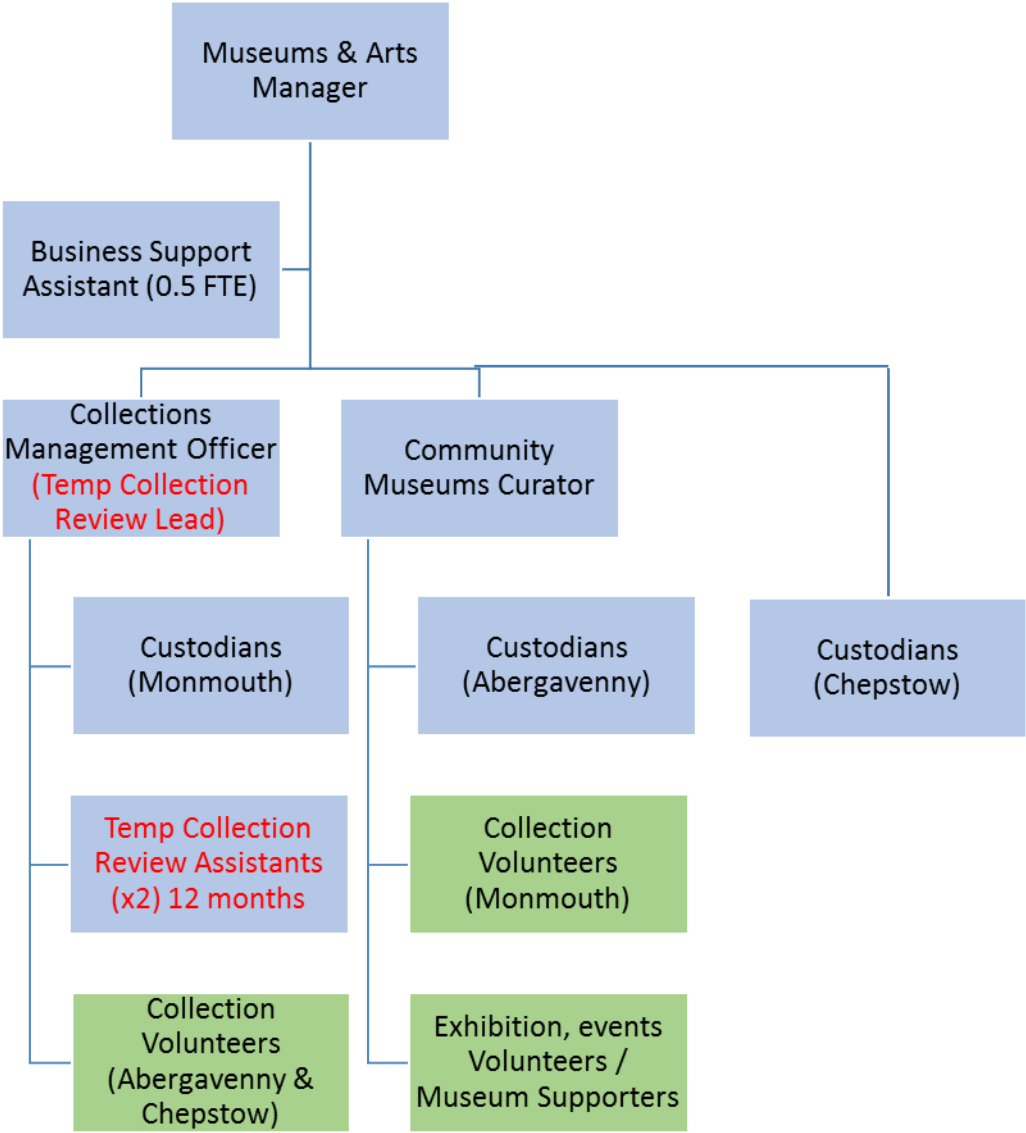
Matthew Lewis, Environment and Culture Manager, MonLife
E-mail: matthewlewis@monmouthshire.gov.uk Tel: 01633 644855

Appendix 1: Existing and Proposed Structure:

Existing:



Proposed:



Appendix 2: Full Year Costings of Proposals

	Current Structure Band	Budget 19- 20 £	Proposed Structure Band	Budget 19-20 £
New Posts				
Business Support Assistant (0.6FTE)		0	D	14,836
Post Deletions				
Senior Custodian	F	17,360		0
Redesignated / changed posts				
Redesignate Museums Manager post to Museums and Arts Manager	J	55,928	J	55,928
Redesignate Museums Curator post to Community Museums Curator	I	50,566	I	50,566
Redesignate Object Conservator post to Collections Management Officer (and extend from 0.6FTE to full time post*)	H	26,406	I	50,566
Custodians posts (overall reduction in hours as a result of creation of Business Support Assistant)	D	111,266	D	106,741
TOTAL		261,526		278,637

*additional hours supported by grant aid until 21/22