

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S**  
**REPORT TO CABINET**

**23 June 2026**

**Report Title:** Brampton Museum Application to the National Lottery for museum improvements

**Submitted by:** Service Director – Commercial Services

**Portfolios:** Leader & Cabinet Member for Planning & Town Centres

**Ward(s) affected:** All

<b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b>	<b><u>Key Decision</u></b>	<b>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></b>	<b>No <input type="checkbox"/></b>
To update Cabinet on the museum's proposed 2027-29 National Lottery funding bid and request approval to apply for up to £150,000 of funding.			
<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>			
<b>That Cabinet:</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. Approve an application to the National Lottery of up to £150,000 to deliver a project between April 2027-March 2029.</b></li><li><b>2. Approve the museum to use its previous public fundraising and forthcoming public fundraising to provide the 10% match funding.</b></li><li><b>3. To meet the additional grant match funding, approve the use of £500 from the museum's existing annual conservation budget and £1,000 from the annual exhibition budget to carry out preventative conservation and create a high-quality exhibition celebrating the history of Newcastle high street.</b></li><li><b>4. Authorise the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader &amp; Cabinet Member for Planning &amp; Town Centres to accept and utilise any funding allocated in line with the bid, including any necessary contracts.</b></li></ol>			
<b><u>Reasons</u></b>			
External funding will allow the museum to continue to deliver award-winning work and maintain its reputation as one of the crown jewels of the borough. The Council has in the past few years been very successful with grant funding and therefore without further lottery funding the museum will only be able to deliver a limited offer in comparison to recent years. This would risk seeing a significant loss in footfall, income and reputation. This lottery funded work will require match funding which can come from fundraising and existing museum resources.			

## **1. Background**

- 1.1** The Brampton Museum is a well-respected and supported local heritage museum. Part of this success comes from delivering previous National Lottery projects, especially the extension which delivered the gallery, education and event space and new cafe.
- 1.2** The museum's transformation has delivered significant increases in visitor numbers and income, alongside multiple awards, including "Best Small Visitor Attraction in Staffordshire" and "Regenerative Tourism" (Bronze). Feedback from visitors is consistently positive, with over 90% happy with their visit and
- 1.3** 79% saying that a museum event made them feel proud to live in Newcastle. Many of these benefits are delivered and sustained by externally funded projects. A proportion of this work will cease in March 2027 should new funding not be secured which would result in a drop in income, visitors, events, awards and positive reputation for the Council. Without additional project funding, it will revert to being able to deliver a limited service with 3.5 FTE equivalent staff. Its current project funded staff will no longer be employed, and the museum will no longer be able to draw on external funding for events, marketing and equipment purchase.
- 1.4** The museum team have developed this proposal for a National Lottery Scheme based on the museum's current needs and previous consultations.

The project will include:

- 1.4.1** Improvements to the upstairs exhibition area, the current displays include a lot of items but would benefit from a full review and redisplay to maximise customer engagement with their heritage. In order for the museum to retain its accreditation it needs to keep its approach up to date and to ensure it is engaging and immersive for its visitors.
  - 1.4.2** Two exhibitions to celebrate celebrating the history of Newcastle and changes through the years.
  - 1.4.3** School holiday activities for children.
  - 1.4.4** A vibrant programme of intergenerational events to bring older and younger people together to explore Newcastle's shared history.
  - 1.4.5** Cost saving measures such as improving the insulation and replacing lighting.
- 1.5** The project has already been endorsed by the new supporters of the museum group, who will each pledge their upcoming £25 membership to support the project. Following cabinet approval, a wider consultation will be carried out over the summer with Newcastle residents to refine the details of the proposals.
  - 1.6** The project meets the council's priorities and the National Lottery's four investment principles. These current priorities are:
    1. Improving the museum's financial and organisational sustainability
    2. Reducing utility bills whilst also protecting the environment
    3. Providing a range of vibrant activities and a warm welcome for all local

- people and families
4. Saving Newcastle's Heritage to ensure future generations can enjoy it

## 2. Issues

- 2.1** The council's current museum budget cannot cover the full range of events, school holiday activities and award-winning work that local residents have come to enjoy and expect. A significant part of the museum's outstanding work relies on external funding applications.
- 2.2** The museum's beloved Victorian Street Scene and Childhood Gallery has remained mainly unaltered since the 1990s. Recent funding bids have concentrated on the museum's ground floor. The collections on the first floor need reinterpretation and modernising to remain relevant for modern audiences. Some of the displays are beginning to look faded and dated. A common theme of feedback from visitors is the area is 'dark' and needs improving, and feedback from schools is that the gallery needs updating if it is to continue to meet their needs and be relevant to the curriculum.
- 2.3** The current display cabinets are no longer up to museum standard or dust safe. This means that toys over 100 years old that have been entrusted by residents to the museum care could begin to deteriorate over the coming years if they are not better protected.

## 3. Recommendation

### 3.1 That Cabinet:

1. Approve an application to the National Lottery of up to £150,000 to deliver a project between April 2027-March 2029.
2. Approve the museum to use its previous public fundraising and forthcoming public fundraising to provide the 10% match funding.
3. To meet the additional grant match funding, approve the use of £500 from the museum's annual conservation budget and £1,000 from the annual exhibition budget to carry out preventative conservation and create a high-quality exhibition celebrating the history of Newcastle high street.
4. Authorise the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader & Cabinet Member for Planning & Town Centres, to accept and utilise any funding allocated in line with the bid, including any necessary contracts.

## 4. Reasons

- 4.1** The Council benefits from the reputation, income and footfall from museum work that is externally funded. If the museum does not carry out externally funded work in 2027-29 it will only have minimal staff and budgets to deliver activities funded directly by the borough council. There will be a significant loss in footfall, income, activities and reputation.
- 4.2** Applying now for a National Lottery grant to begin April 2027 means no loss of capacity or momentum at the museum. Any delays to the application will result in much of the museum's work ceasing. If this capacity is lost, the museum will

no longer have the internal resources to apply for future funding bids or to support council wide cultural initiatives.

## **5. Options Considered**

- 5.1** The preferred option of employing a permanent events or fundraising officer for Brampton Museum has been previously considered, but it is difficult to confirm sufficient income to cover the full costs. The museum therefore continues to need to rely on short term external funding to deliver much of its award-winning work for the community.
- 5.2** Several years of fundraising and public donations have raised 10% of the cost of the proposed work. This demonstrates that public donations alone are insufficient to deliver the award-winning work local people have come to expect from its museum.

## **6. Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1** None foreseen - this project is entirely externally funded so can continue to be delivered during any local government reorganisation. Any procurement and contracting will be undertaken in accordance with the Council regulations.

## **7. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1** This funding application will increase access to the museum.

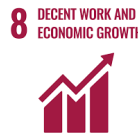
## **8. Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1** No additional council funding is required, matched funding will be provided by public fundraising.
- 8.2** The application will increase staff resources and finances available to the museum, not diminish it.
- 8.3** The existing museum team are experienced in delivering externally funded projects alongside their core work.
- 8.4** Council commits to continue allocating an annual £500 budget for museum conservation work, and £1000 from the exhibition budget which can be used as part of this project.

## **9. Major Risks & Mitigation**

- 9.1** Bidding for the funding and hopefully securing it is low risk. Should the Council secure additional funding then officers believe it is low risk to fund raise the match funding and have plans to meet the funding criteria.

## **10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)**



**11. One Council**

Please confirm that consideration has been given to the following programmes of work:

**One Commercial Council**

*We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.*

**One Digital Council**

*We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.*

**One Sustainable Council**

*We will deliver on our commitments and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle*

**12. Key Decision Information**

12.1 The total value of the grant will be above £100,000 so this is a key decision

**13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

13.1 In 2024 the Council approved an application for a funding bid for 2025-27.

**14. List of Appendices**

14.1 None

**15. Background Papers**

15.1 None