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(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Title of meeting:	Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Decision Meeting
Subject:	Transforming the D-Day Museum project completion
Date of meeting:	17 October 2022
Report by:	Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services
Wards affected:	All

1. Requested by Councillor Steve Pitt, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure & Economic Development

2. Purpose

2.1 To summarise the completion of the implementation phase of the project to Transform the D-Day Museum into The D-Day Story, that took place from 2016 to 2022.

3. Information Requested

3.1 The project to transform the D-Day Museum into The D-Day Story led to the creation of a modern, world class, award-winning museum. A wide range of activities has also ensured that more and a wider range of people engage with the museum, contributing to the achievement of the City Vision. The £4.85 million project was made possible by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the time and dedication of staff, volunteers and members of the local community.

3.2 The layout of facilities of the original D-Day Museum reflected the era in which it first opened and was in need of modernisation. The project enabled us to refurbish and reconfigure the building, creating new galleries, improved retail and café space and a dedicated learning and events space (The Dulverton Room). The area around the museum was re-landscaped to create an inviting public space that is well used by residents and visitors to the city. A bold and cosmopolitan new brand was created that runs through all the museum's activities, including the striking yellow and black colour scheme.

3.3 The exhibitions and displays were also transformed to tell the story of D-Day from different perspectives using the experiences of those who were there. The new interpretation is designed for three key audiences: families, schools and young

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people. There is a clear narrative that is conveyed using personal stories, artefacts, hands on activities and audio-visual displays. The new displays have been well received by the public, with comments about the clarity of the message and how moving they are.

- 3.4 The service also invested time and effort in ensuring that the displays were accessible. Gosport Access Group and Disability Forum were consulted and specialist organisation Vocaleyes throughout the design phase. The outcomes included ensuring wheelchair users could view displays, including tactile models and content in braille and an audio description of the Overlord Embroidery for visitors with visual impairments. In 2020/21 the museum won Silver in the Accessible and Inclusive attraction category at the Beautiful South awards.
- 3.5 The NLHF funding also enabled the conservation of the museum's largest exhibit, the Overlord Embroidery, and conservation work on three large vehicles and an artillery piece, all of which were to be used in the new displays. The glass in the display cases housing the Overlord Embroidery was changed for more modern glass which produces fewer reflections and enables the embroidery to be seen more clearly. The funding also enabled the purchase of a number of objects for use in the new displays while filled gaps in the museum's existing collections, for example, relating to the French Resistance or US forces.
- 3.6 The project delivered an ambitious and wide-ranging programme of activities to attract different audiences, including those who would not normally visit. Managed by the Public Participation Officer (PPO), it made a strong contribution to the values set out in Portsmouth's City Vision, such as a healthy and happy city, a city rich in culture and creativity and of lifelong learning. It included activities to engage with schools, ethnic minority groups, young people, older people and children facing significant life challenges. Examples include the D-Day 75 community project, which saw groups from across the city uncover their D-Day heritage, boosting their sense of personal wellbeing. A vibrant ongoing programme of events ensures that the museum brings the heritage of the city to a wide audience, creating a sense of pride and community belonging. Three paid internships gave young people the aspiration and skills to work in the museum sector and fostered lifelong learning. The post of Public Participation Officer is a permanent addition to the DDS team, initially funded by the project.
- 3.7 From the outset the museum achieved its income targets from admissions. It had a very good year in 2019/20 which was the 75th anniversary of D-Day. Even during the coronavirus pandemic visitor figures were above those experienced by the museum sector in general. In 2021/22, once adjustments were made for the late opening in May, the museum achieved similar numbers to previous years.

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- 3.8 The appointment of a General Manager for the museum has given the museum focus and helped to grow the offer. The museum functions as a standalone site, separate from the other museums of the service. Building a 'core team' at the site for the first time has not only ensured more efficient working practices but has also enabled the staff and volunteer team to grow the visitor experience offered. This in turn has allowed us to begin to unlock the commercial potential of the museum.
- 3.9 The service continues to strengthen and build on the investment by creating a layered offer that builds audiences and encourages repeat visits. This includes the creation of an attractive offer for the lucrative groups market, which has received very high interest since launching in 2022. A popular audio guide has been created to explore the museum in English, French and German. An escape room style trail - Resist! - has been launched for children and families.
- 3.10 The museum is multi-award winning, including Finalist for European Museum of the Year, 2019; Winner, Volunteer of the Year Award 2019 at the Museum and Heritage Awards (the late and much missed John Jenkins, D-Day veteran and volunteer); and Silver in the 2020/21 Beautiful South Awards, Accessible and Inclusive Tourism.
- 3.11 The total cost of the Transforming the D-Day Museum project was £4.85m. The main funder was the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). Contributions to the cost were as follows:

source of funding	amount (£)
NLHF	4,024,076
Portsmouth City Council	378,493
Portsmouth D-Day Museum Trust (PDDMT)	300,000
Increased management and maintenance costs	150,000
TOTAL	4,852,569

- 3.12 The funding from the Portsmouth D-Day Museum Trust included donations from the Victorious Festival (£61,000), the Dulverton Trust (£50,000) and Garfield Weston (£25,000), also some £25,000 cash donations from members of the public.
- 3.13 A separate contribution from Libor (£600,000) enabled the landscaping work in the vicinity of the museum and the conservation of the two D-Day tanks now displayed on Landing Craft Tank 7074.

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Signed by

Stephen Baily

Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

Appendices: None

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location