

Lichfield City Council

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Town Clerk: Christopher M Moulton

CM/JW/J1/2

27 September 2016

To: Members of the Johnson Birthplace Advisory Committee

Councillors R Awty, Mrs M Boyle, J Brooks, C Spruce, A Thompson and R Yardley

Representative of Johnson Society

Mr P Jones

Also to:

Museums and Heritage Officer (Joanne Wilson)

Dear Committee Member

Johnson Birthplace Advisory Committee

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Johnson Birthplace Advisory Committee to be held in Committee Room 1, Guildhall at **10.30am** on **Tuesday, 4 October** 2016.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Moulton
Town Clerk

Apologies for Absence

AGENDA

1 MINUTES

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 March 2016 (**copy attached**). [Minutes received by City Council on 18 April 2016].

2 MUSEUM ADMISSIONS 2015/2016 (ANNUAL REVIEW)

The Museums & Heritage Officer to report on admission figures for this period, as **Appendix 1** attached.

3 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

In the March meeting of the committee, it was recommended and adopted that "the principle of re-imagining and remodelling of the displays at the Museum be agreed", and "that the Museums and Heritage Officer undertake necessary investigatory work to establish costings for the appointment of consultants to carry out a review of the Museum, with a view to this being included within the 2017/2018 budget".

To this end, the M&HO's research has included attending a Heritage Lottery Fund workshop and discussions with colleagues at similar or relevant sites which have recently undergone or are planning such projects: including Erasmus Darwin House, St Mary's, Tamworth Borough Council and Dr Johnson's House in London. The M&HO also sought advice from Chris Copp, Senior Museums Officer, and Helen Johnson, Development Officer for Staffordshire County Council. Consultation and carefully planned development are the keystones to a successful project, and engaging a consultant to review and produce a proposed action plan for the Birthplace would not only shape a funding application, but would provide a firm 'future plan' for the Museum which would be looked on favourably by funders. Chris Copp advised that a budget of £5,000 would be appropriate for engaging a consultant for a site and project of our size. The approach used by SCC has been to write a brief which includes the maximum budget set, for selected consultants to bid for the work.

RECOMMENDED: *That £5,000 be included within the 2017/2018 budget for the recruitment of a consultant.*

4 ONLINE COLLECTION LAUNCH

There are now records on a 'modes complete' museum collection management database for all 8,300 items in the Birthplace collection. Modes have recently developed good value software to launch a database online with appealing visuals, using selected and non-sensitive information from the full database. A new website for the Birthplace Museum is currently in development (following the new LCC site last year), presenting an opportunity for a collection search facility to be easily linked to the new site. The ability to search the collection online would promote the Birthplace to a worldwide audience, increase partnership opportunities with similar institutions and the use of the libraries for research visitors. The set-up for a basic site is free of charge, with a cost of £74 per hour for any additional development work required, and an annual hosting charge of £150. Once the system is launched, an in-house terminal could be provided for visitors to search the stored and library collections on-site too. An application to the Johnson Society could be made for this further stage, using the remaining funding transferred from the Friends of the Birthplace Museum.

RECOMMENDED: *That the Museums & Heritage Officer undertake necessary work to launch the collection online, and that the ongoing costs and charges be approved.*

5 RECOVERED OIL PAINTING

The Museums & Heritage Officer to report on a returned painting, as **Appendix 2** attached.

6 GARRICK 300 (INFORMATION REPORT)

The M&HO is working with local partners to promote the 300th Birthday of David Garrick in 2017. Although born in Hereford, the Garricks were based in Lichfield and David spent his formative years in the city. The Birthplace has a strong collection of Garrick items and these will form part of an exhibition in the summer highlighting his close association with Johnson, scheduled to travel to Dr Johnson's House in London in the autumn. Other events at the Birthplace will include two productions by 'Intimate Theatre' written by David Titley. Local partners include Darwin House, St Mary's, Lichfield Festival and the Garrick, who have their own programmes of events. The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust has expressed an interest in helping to promote the programme. The city-wide Heritage Weekend will focus on the theme, and Visit Lichfield have offered support in the publicity and branding of the year.

7 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

In the Calendar of Meetings as 10.30am on Thursday 23 March 2017.

8 ANY OTHER URGENT OR NECESSARY BUSINESS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN

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Lichfield City Council

Minutes of the Johnson Birthplace Advisory Committee Meeting held in Committee Room 1, Guildhall at 2.00 pm on Thursday, 17 March 2016

PRESENT:

Representing Lichfield City Council:	Councillor R Awty, and Councillors Mrs G Boyle, C Spruce, A Thompson and R Yardley.
Representing Johnson Society	Mr P Jones
In Attendance:	Joanne Wilson (Museums & Heritage Officer) Christopher Moulton (Town Clerk)
Apologies:	Councillor J Brooks.

25 MINUTES

RESOLVED: *That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 October 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.* [Minutes adopted by Council on 19 October 2015.]

26 FORWARD PLAN

Members considered the updated Forward Plan 2016-2019. This had been updated from the full 2015-2018 Forward Plan and contained details of the key strategic aims for the Museum during the period.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: *That the Forward Plan 2016-2019 be adopted.*

27 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Members considered the agenda report noting that the last full redisplay of the collections and building layout was undertaken in 1989/90 and that much had changed in the intervening 26 years, not least of which was the huge increase in annual visitor numbers (now at over 18,000 per year). The Committee agreed that consideration should be given to planning a redisplay, but understood that there would be a considerable lead-in time required to develop proposals.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL:

1. *That the principle of re-imagining and remodelling of the collections at the Museum be agreed.*

2. *That the Museums and Heritage Officer undertake necessary investigatory work to establish costings for the appointment of consultants to carry out a review of the Museum, with a view to this being included within the 2017/18 budget.*

28 VOLUNTEER TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

The Committee considered the agenda report which explained the benefits brought to the Museum by a dedicated and hard-working team of regular volunteers which between them were the equivalent of an additional full time member of staff. The Committee noted that to date no out of pocket expenses payments had been made to volunteers, but recognised that such arrangement were seen as best practice in the sector; and that if introduced at the Museum for parking and public transport costs the annual cost would be less than £1,000 per year.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: *That the City Council adopt a policy of offering limited reimbursement in respect of certain travel expenses, to volunteers working at the Museum and Guildhall Cells.*

29 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

In Calendar of Meetings as 10.30am on Tuesday, 4 October 2016.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS

THE CHAIRMAN DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 2.40 PM

AGENDA APPENDIX 1



Visitor Numbers 2015/2016 Annual Report

2015/2016	2014/2015	2013/2014	2012/2013
18,523	17,291	16,756	15,508

This represents a 7% increase on the previous period

Analysis

This was the tenth full period after the introduction of free admission to the museum in October 2005. 2015/16 visitor figures represent a 67% increase on visitor numbers in 2007/08*. A significant rise in visitor numbers to 16,004 was seen during 2009/2010 for Johnson's tercentenary celebrations. Following an initial decrease in 2010/11, a steady increase has led to numbers that now exceed that previously unprecedented year.

Apr – Jun 2014	4,772	Jul – Sep 2014	6,027
Apr* – Jun 2015	4,813	Jul – Sep 2015	6,628
Quarterly difference: +1%		Quarterly difference: +10%	
Oct – Dec 2014	3,040	Jan – Mar 2014	3,201
Oct – Dec 2015	3,785	Jan – Mar 2015	3,075
Quarterly difference: +25%		Quarterly difference: -4%	

Of the 18,523 visitors to the museum in 2015/2016:

- 340 attended a paid event at the museum (329 in 14/15)
- 133 attended as part of an adult group visit (209 in 14/15), plus 203 outreach bookings
- 462 attended as part of a school group visit (272 in 14/15)

Sales income has dropped slightly with an average spend per head of 64p, down from 72p in the previous period. The 2015/2016 period has seen a 10% decrease in donations on the previous year, with annual donations at £6511 (before additional gift aid refund) and an average gift of 35p per head.

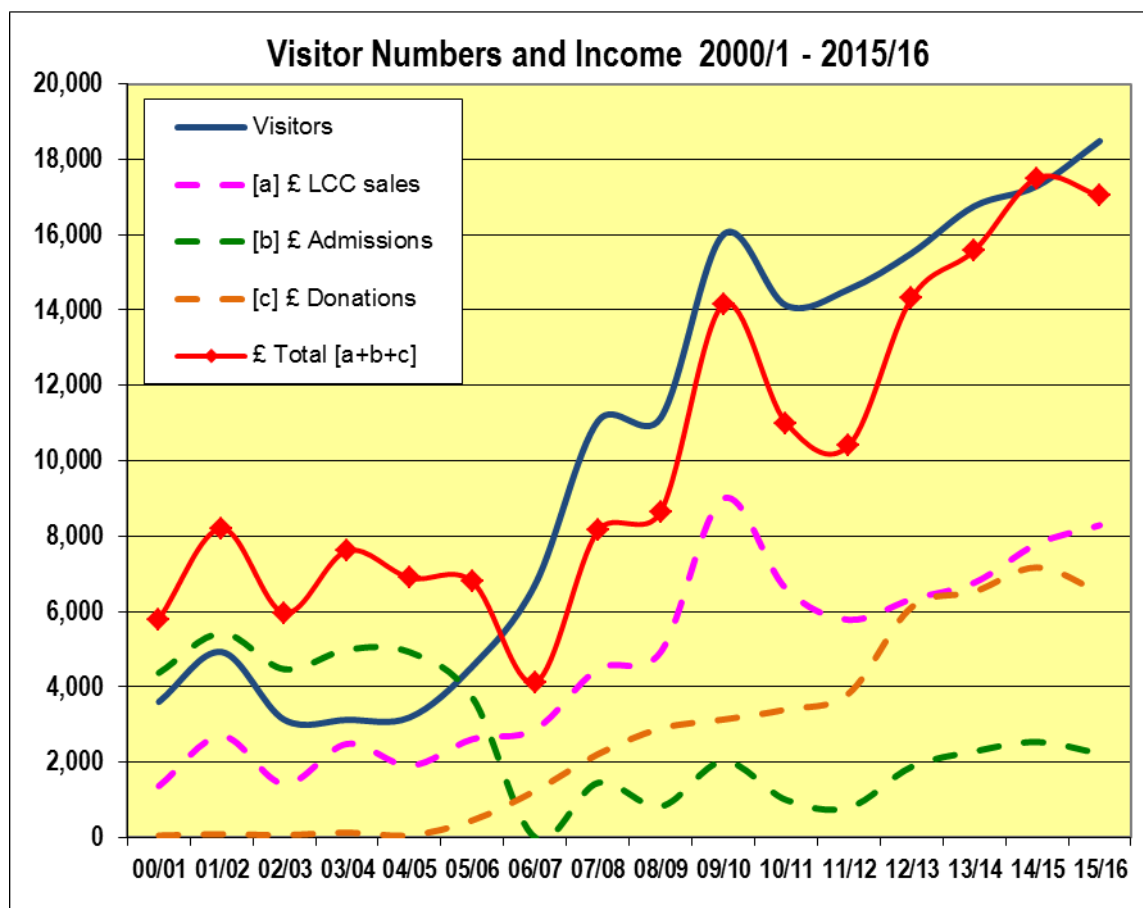
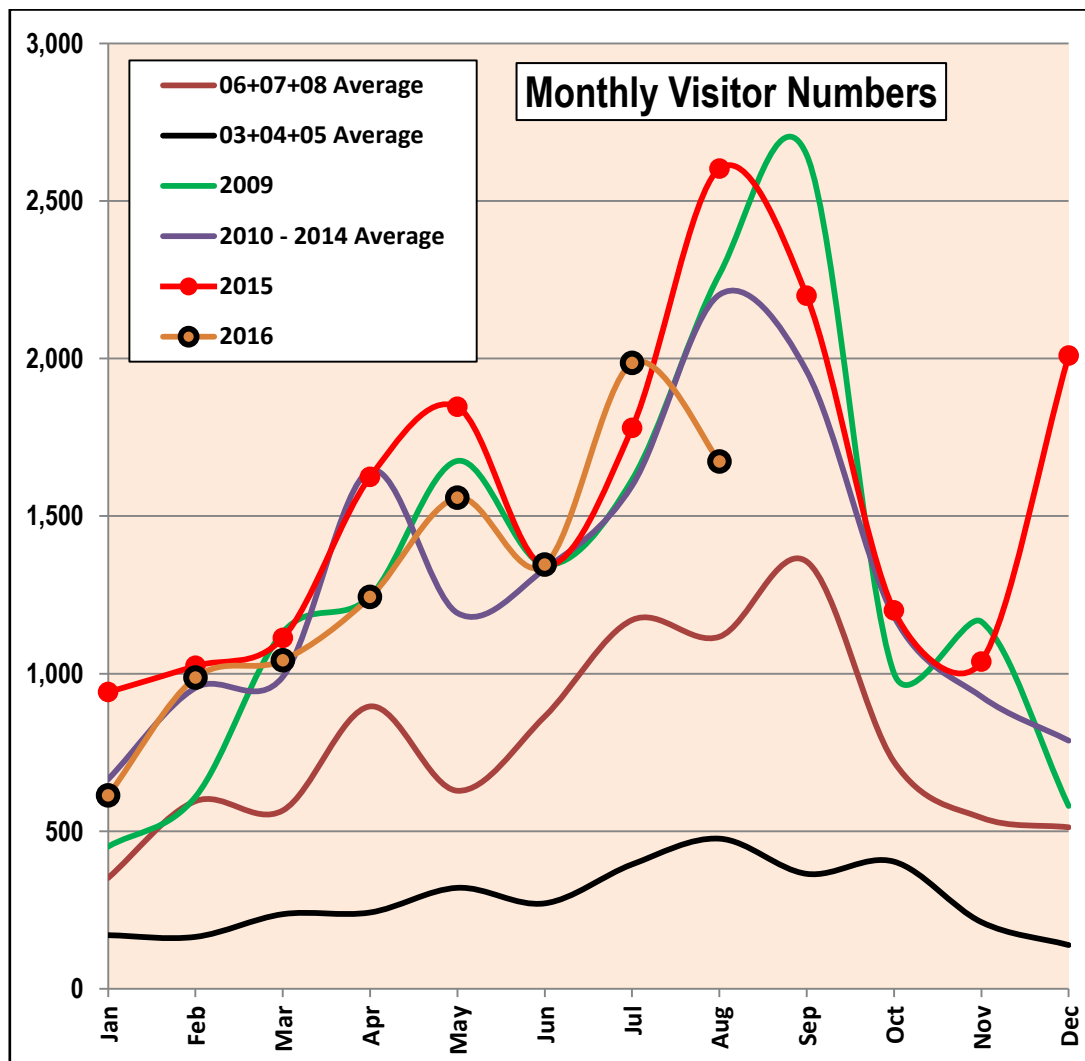
**2007/08 is used as the baseline because bookshop visitors were reclassified as service users from April 2007*

**the four quarters given total less than the annual figure, because week 1 fell in March in both years*

Indications from the beginning of the 2016/2017 period

The initial figures from the present financial year indicate a slight decrease in visitor numbers. However, reversing the trend from the 2015/6 period, sales and donations have increased in the period with averages sales of 75p per head and donations at 46p per head.

Apr – Jun 2015	4,813	Jul- 2 nd week of Sept 2015	4,399
Apr – Jun 2016	4,146	Jul- 2nd week of Sept 2016	4,095
Quarterly difference: -14%		Difference: -7%	



AGENDA APPENDIX 2

RECOVERED OIL PAINTING

An oil painting of 'Johnson Awaiting an Audience with Lord Chesterfield' (by Lumb Stocks, copy after E.M.Ward, c.1848) given to the Museum in 1901 by Alderman J Fowler and noted as missing, has been found with conservator Jesse Bruton. The painting was badly damaged in a flood of the Birthplace basement in 1973, which was then used as a collection store. Upon completion of the repairs in 1975 the painting conservator was requested to keep the painting in his store, but is now retiring and wishes all paintings to be returned. The painting has been stored along with some items that now form part of the Lichfield District Council collection which Mr Bruton has been more recently requested to continue storing, and this may explain the lack of contact in the intervening years. The costs to reclaim and frame the large painting will be approximately £600, including a storage charge, and it would be possible to hang it on the high wall in the Dictionary room, where it relates to the displays below.

Images show:

- the Stocks painting on display in the Bookshop room in the 1930s
- the original painting by Ward for information
- the proposed area for rehangng.

