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| Report To: | Education and Communities Committee | Date: | 30 October 2012 |
| Report By: | Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development | Report No: | EDUCOM/33/12/AW |
| Contact Officer: | Alana Ward, Libraries and Museum Manager | Contact No: | 01475 712347 |
| Subject: | Transfer of Exhibit from McLean Museum and Art Gallery | | |

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek Committee approval for the transfer of ownership of an item from the collections of the McLean Museum and Art Gallery to Riverside Inverclyde.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Since 1977, the McLean Museum and Art Gallery has been in possession of an engine from the Clyde buoy tender vessel "Torch" although due to its size, weight and state of incompleteness it has never been possible to either store it or display it in the Museum. It has remained in various storage locations without any purpose or use.
- 2.2 The engine can no longer be accommodated in its present location.
- 2.3 Riverside Inverclyde would like to acquire the engine and display it in Coronation Park, including it as part of a planned heritage walking trail along the Inverclyde waterfront.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the Committee approve the transfer of ownership of the "Torch" engine from the McLean Museum and Art Gallery collections to Riverside Inverclyde.

Albert Henderson
Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In 1977 the engine from the Clyde buoy tender vessel "Torch" was gifted to the McLean Museum by the Clyde Port Authority. The engine was built at the Ailsa shipyard in Troon, and not in Inverclyde.
- 4.2 As the engine is very large in size and also heavy, it has never been possible to display it at the Museum, or even to store it there. It remained in the former Scott Lithgow premises at James Watt Dock until 1998, and since then has been stored in a garage behind Glenburn School. It has now become necessary to vacate these premises.
- 4.3 In 2003, a report was commissioned into the feasibility of external display of the engine. The consultants, Heritage Engineering, found that it would cost £23,107.34 to prepare the engine for proper and safe exhibition. A bid for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to do this was turned down in 2003. Consequently, the engine is unable to be used in any way.
- 4.4 In terms of the McLean Museum's Acquisition and Disposal Policy previously approved by Inverclyde Council's Regeneration Committee in 2010, the engine has been assessed as contrary to the Museum's collecting policy.
- 4.5 In terms of the McLean Museum's Acquisition and Disposal Policy previously approved by Inverclyde Council's Regeneration Committee in 2010, any decision to dispose of an exhibit from the collections, whether by exchange, sale, gift or destruction must have Committee approval and that in the first instance any item for disposal should be offered to another museum. The engine was advertised for transfer on the Museum Association's website for several months, and, in addition, the McLean Museum's curatorial staff made direct enquiries to Scottish museums who would be likely to have an interest in the engine. The advice was that the engine was not special or unique enough to merit a place in any museum's collection.
- 4.6 Riverside Inverclyde have advised that their organisation would like to acquire the engine. They are currently working on a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund to support the development of a fully interpreted heritage walking trail along the Inverclyde waterfront with Coronation Park as a key access node to the route. This bid would stand more chance of success with actual pieces of heritage to display and interpret. Although the engine may not be special or unique enough to merit a place in the restricted area of an indoor museum collection, the presence of a refurbished and well displayed Torch engine in Coronation Park along with the Comet and Smith Rodley dockside crane would confer more credibility on the bid and start to make the park a more interesting place to visit.
- 4.7 Riverside Inverclyde propose to store the Torch engine in the Sugar Sheds until it can be restored and moved to Coronation Park.

5.0 PROPOSAL

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Committee approve the transfer of ownership of the "Torch" engine from the McLean Museum and Art Gallery to Riverside Inverclyde.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Finance: Riverside Inverclyde will pay to transport the engine from its current location and consequently there are no financial implications for Inverclyde Council.
- 7.2 Personnel: There are no Personnel implications.
- 7.3 Legal: The "Torch" engine is not a core Trust item and is administered through Service revenue budgets and so there is no impediment to the proposed disposal as it complies, as detailed above, with the approved Policy. The proposed disposal is not conditional on future

display and ownership will be transferred to Riverside Inverclyde at no cost implications to the Council.

7.4 Equalities: There are no Equalities implications.

7.5 Repopulation: There are no Repopulation implications.