

Colne Valley Museum – Charity Law Guidance

What was the issue?

The Colne Valley Museum Trustees were conscious that the Heritage Lottery Fund project that they have been working on for nearly ten years marked a significant milestone in the museum's history and that a review of its status as a charity needed to be carried out. Trustees wished to investigate changes that have been made in charity law towards the end of the project, particularly the introduction of Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs).

How did Museum Development Yorkshire help?

Colne Valley Museum asked MDY for guidance on the implications of changes in order to improve or change the organisational health of the museum. This resulted in a review of its governing instrument as well as development or revision of its Forward/Business plan.

What happened?

MDY introduced the Colne Valley Museum to Judith Court and Charlie Cattell, who met the Trustees and gave impartial advice on the options available to the museum. They then produced a report, reviewing their current situations and the implications for any changes they might make to their set-up. As a result of their work with the MDY consultants, the trustees decided to further investigate changing the status of the museum to that of a CIO, and will be presenting the outcome to the members later in the year at a special general meeting. All of the trustees support the change, but recognise that the agreement by members is vital and that they need to know the facts in order to make an informed decision. The change to a CIO would bring protection to trustees as far as liability is concerned, with the current status meaning that trustees may be unwilling to undertake such a role in the future when the current trustees decide to step down.

Find out more

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