



Glasgow City Council

City Administration Committee

Report by Bailie Annette Christie, City Convener for Culture,
Sport and International Relations

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Item 3

5th June 2025

GLASGOW LIFE – OUTWARD LOAN FROM CITY’S MUSEUM COLLECTION

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this paper is to review and approve the recommendation by Glasgow Life to organise, in partnership with an agent, a touring exhibition of Italian artwork from the city’s museum collections to museums in China.

Recommendations:

Committee is asked to:

- 1) Consider the civic and cultural benefits of presenting a touring exhibition in China
- 2) Consider the practical details relating to the protection of collection items included in the exhibition
- 3) Approve the touring exhibition as outlined

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐ consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

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1. Background

Culture and Sport Glasgow which operates under the name Glasgow Life manages services for Glasgow City Council under the terms of a series of service level agreements, which includes the running of the city's museums.

The museum collections are owned by Glasgow City Council with the Council being the 'Governing Body' in respect of the management and use of the collections. The governance and management arrangements for the collections are set out in the Collections Agreement entered into between the Council and Glasgow Life on 30 March 2007.

Under the terms of the delegated scheme regarding Lending of the Collections the Head of Museums and Collections has delegated authority to agree to the loan of objects on behalf of the Council except for those loans which require additional permissions and consents. As cited in the delegated scheme, permission from Glasgow City Council is required in order to lend:

- Large number of items from the collection
- To venues which are not Accredited under the Museums Accreditation Standard

2. The opportunity for Glasgow

2.1 Timing

With a new International Strategy, regular trade missions, links between the city's universities, businesses and China and the targeting of a direct air route into the city, the timing to use an exhibition as cultural exchange and the backdrop for other initiatives is now.

The timing of consideration by the Committee, means the exhibition can be announced and promoted on the Host City stand at the China Shanghai International Technology Fair, 11-13 June 2025. A significant city delegation is attending.

It is anticipated that the touring exhibition will have multiple benefits including:

- Raising the profile of a city in another market, leading to more inward tourism
- Offering an opportunity for cultural exchange and understanding
- Supporting business and academic sector partnerships and relationships
- Generating revenue for Glasow Life

2.2 Using the city's cultural assets

Glasgow Life Museums is aiming to develop future touring exhibitions which offer opportunities to raise Glasgow's international profile, promote cultural exchange and generate income through a sound business case.

The museums team are experienced in developing and delivering touring exhibitions and have presented exhibitions in the United States, Europe and Japan.

Unlike other cities and organisation in the UK, including some based in Edinburgh, Manchester and London, Glasgow has not presented a standalone touring exhibition in China.

Following Glasgow Life Museums' successful collaboration with the touring exhibition agency, NOMAD Exhibitions, on a loan to Nanjing Museum (2013) for their *A Tale of two Cities* exhibition and the *Highland Warrior* exhibition staged in Ottawa, Canada (2019), discussion has continued about opportunities.

In 2013 an exhibition of the city's Italian Art went on tour to the United States and was very well received. An updated version of this exhibition is proposed for a tour of China. Since this time all the paintings and objects included in the exhibition, except one, have been in storage. The replacement painting has been in storage since 2012 and provides an opportunity for visitors to Kelvingrove to see it again.

The exhibition will help leverage more visibility for the city, its businesses, visitor economy, cultural significance and academic institutions, resulting in more awareness of Glasgow in a number of cities across China.

2.3 International Strategy

The proposal supports Glasgow's International Strategy 2025-2030 which aims to:

- Acknowledge Glasgow's role as a place that has been connecting with the rest of the world in various ways for a very long time.
- Build on those links so that Glaswegian businesses and communities can benefit from them.
- Chart a course for future progress and prosperity through Glasgow's engagement with people and the global marketplace.

The exhibition is an opportunity to put the International Strategy into practice, led by the Lord Provost's office and supported by council departments.

Glasgow Life will work with the council and wider city organisations to take advantage of the touring exhibition as a backdrop for other initiatives. For example: the University of Glasgow has 9,000 Chinese students and many more Chinese alumni who are now professionally established in China. We will explore the opportunity to promote the tour through the university's networks. A number of Glasgow based multi-national companies have Shanghai offices, opportunity and mutual benefit will be explored.

Glasgow Chamber of Commerce delivers an annual trade mission for Glasgow inward investment, with particular focus on businesses in Beijing and Shanghai. The Chamber has expressed support for the exhibition, and we will explore connections through their networks.

Having a presence in China, over a 3-year period will mean Glasgow contributes to the Scottish Government's drive to deepen economic, social and cultural ties with China.

2.4 Destination Marketing

Glasgow's cultural assets are an important draw for inbound tourists. Taking an exhibition from our collections will support city positioning and messaging in this new market.

VisitBritain delivers trade missions and events in Beijing and Shanghai to attract Travel Trade business to Scotland and the UK. VisitBritain research demonstrates that Chinese respondents associate Britain highly 'with museums', 'opera' and 'films'.

In 2023, China was Scotland's fifth largest long-haul international market by number of visits. It was fourth by number of nights and fourth by expenditure.

The British Council have indicated a willingness to support a wider programme of meetings and visits.

Glasgow Airport is targeting a direct China to Glasgow air route. This will complement the two direct flights per week between Edinburgh and Beijing (four per week over the summer months).

2.5 Marketing and Communications

Showing the exhibition in several host cities will enable local marketing activity and engagement and increase visibility and awareness of the city.

The Destination Team will work with VisitScotland and VisitBritain to engage through social media/marketing in territory during the duration of each exhibition run.

The estimated value of marketing benefits, impacts and ROI by venue location will be calculated.

3. The exhibition, potential venues, governance, risk mitigations and notifications

3.1 Exhibition content

The exhibition will be titled to appeal to a Chinese audience "Prosperous Symphony - Italian Treasures from Glasgow Museums".

It will provide an exquisite and culturally-rich view of the visual arts in Italy produced circa 1400-1800. In addition to 33 masterpiece paintings, it includes exceptional examples of ceramics, glass, marble sculpture, textile, arms and armour, and comprises 58 objects in total. A crossbow and small marble sculpture from the Burrell Collection are included.

These objects constitute 0.2% of all the painting and decorative art objects in the city's collection.

Sharing the city's collection with other cities helps to maintain relationships with national and international partners and supports reciprocal loans from other

organisations, which brings important loans to the city for our local audiences to enjoy.

Upon return to Glasgow, the intention is to display the paintings in Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum.

To promote Glasgow, there will be information about the city within the exhibition space, helping visitors make a connection between the exhibition, the city and themselves.

3.2 Venues and dates

To be economically viable, a minimum of three venues are required.

The timetable for the exhibition is for a first venue, in Shenzhen, to host the exhibition from September 2025. The exhibition will then be shown in 5 or 6 other cities, with dates and venues being announced closer to actual dates.

Returning to Glasgow in 2028, the intention is to display the works at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum.

Links between Glasgow, its institutions and the host cities will be built upon as the programme develops.

Based on previous experience in China, NOMAD estimate c100,000 visitors per venue, meaning a direct connection with over 500,000 people.

3.3 Loan governance

Glasgow Life will enter a single tri-partite agreement with NOMAD Exhibitions and Sun Pavillion Culture and Technology Co. This will clearly outline the responsibilities of the parties and the requirements of venues. Glasgow Life will receive facilities reports and insurance certificates for each venue to enable necessary risk assessments to be carried out prior to transport.

The loan agreement with each city will be between the host venue and Sun Pavillion, as contract agent for Glasgow Life and NOMAD in China.

The contractual arrangement outlines a financial agreement whereby Glasgow Life will receive a fee from each of the host museums in China, as well as separately negotiated licensing fees.

3.4 Risk management measures

To ensure the safety and security of the artworks during the loan period, a number of risk management measures will be put in place, these include:

3.4.1 Loan Agreement

All risk measures will be incorporated into a single formal tri-partite agreement with Glasgow Life, NOMAD Exhibitions and Sun Pavillion Culture and Technology Co which will be signed by all parties in advance of release of any artworks.

3.4.2 Conservation and artwork condition

The artefacts have been conservation assessed as fit to travel; full written condition reports will be used as a benchmark against which all checks will be made during the loan period.

3.4.3 Transportation and Couriers

A transport agent will be appointed by Sun Pavillion and NOMAD with approval by Glasgow Life Museums. The agent will demonstrate thorough understanding of all necessary processes, procedures and documentation, and will comply with the council's insurance requirements.

High-specification, fine art packing cases will be used, and artworks will be transported in specified types of vehicles.

Couriers: a member of the museum team will oversee the outward loading of the exhibition for air transport and offloading upon return to the UK. Glasgow Life Museums will retain the option of sending a courier mid tour. Sun Pavillion will act as courier and oversee transit of the exhibition between each venue within China, artwork condition checking, installation and de-installation.

3.4.4 Venue Risk assessment

Each venue will be assessed by Glasgow Life Museums to ensure that all requirements for the protection of the artworks can be delivered. This includes environmental, security and operational provision with all requirements confirmed by the contractual loan agreement.

3.4.5 Insurance

All artefacts will be insured 'All Risks' during transport, display and storage. The insurance arrangement for the exhibitions is as follows:

- In Transit: commercial insurance paid for by Sun Pavillion
- In Venue: commercial insurance paid for by Sun Pavillion

All insurance certificates will cite Glasgow City Council as owner and will be checked and approved by Glasgow Life Museums and GCC Financial Services prior to dispatch of artefacts from Glasgow and before transit between host venues.

3.5 Notifications and Approvals

This touring exhibition has been approved by Glasgow Life in principle, pending approval by the City Administration Committee.

In line with the Burrell Lending Code, the Burrell Trustees have been notified for their consideration and approval in relation to the two objects in the Burrell Collection.

4. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	Low
<i>Legal:</i>	Input from Legal services regarding contract development
<i>Personnel:</i>	Will be managed within the current available resources
<i>Procurement:</i>	None

Council Strategic Plan:	Grand Challenge 1, Mission 4: Support Glasgow to be a city that is active and culturally vibrant.
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Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.

<i>What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?</i>	No significant impact
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Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:

<i>What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?</i>	NOMAD and Sun Pavilion have clear sustainability policies to counter the carbon footprint of the tour
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Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?

**Privacy and Data Protection
Impacts:**

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report Y/N

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out

5 Recommendations

Committee is asked to:

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