



**ARMAGH PLANETARIUM
BUSINESS PLAN 2009-10**

Dr T R Mason



Armagh Planetarium: Business Plan 2009-10

Armagh Planetarium's Mission

Armagh Planetarium's mission is to advance and promote the knowledge and understanding of astronomy and related sciences to all members of the community.

Armagh Planetarium – DCAL strategic focus

This is also in accord with the strategic focus of the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure which has as its overall aim the creation and maintenance of *"a confident, creative, informed and vibrant community."* The key objective of the Department (and of Armagh Planetarium) is: *"to protect, nurture and grow our cultural capital for today and tomorrow."*

This strategic focus has led to our deliberate positioning of Armagh Planetarium as a place where impressionable young minds can be encouraged to make career choices in the sciences. The choice it appears may often be made subliminally, to the extent that the people who have given me feedback have said that they did not realize the full extent of the Planetarium's influence until much later when they were more mature and involved in their career in science. They related vivid memories of seeing things in our theatre which inspired them, and filled them with awe. These people include Dr Mike McKay, now head of human spaceflight at the European Space Agency (ESA) in Darmstadt, Professor Carl Murray of Queen Mary College University of London, involved in the groundbreaking Cassini Mission to Saturn and Dr Mark Doherty Head of the EO Exploitation and Services Division, Earth Observation Programme Directorate, based at ESRIN, Frascati Italy.

It is difficult for the Planetarium to quantify such a socially important target, which distills down to how many children are inspired into scientific careers because of their visit to the Planetarium, or their experience on an outreach visit. Realistically, to discover these outcomes is a 15 year experiment, and my successors in the Planetarium Director's post will only discover this beneficial influence much later, just as I have been pleasantly surprised when a visitor tells me that their career choice in science or to become a teacher had been influenced by a visit to the Planetarium when they were at school.

The Planetarium also acts as a repository of information, and we have an information address which receives a steady stream of requests for explanations of unusual sightings in the night sky, as well as explanations of what is the bright star which is so obvious in the night or early morning sky. These are often planets, especially Venus and we encourage these amateur observers to continue to watch, even on those occasions when we cannot identify the object that is being described. Thus the Planetarium is a place which attracts adult visitors whose curiosity about the natural world is intact.

Our most pressing need is to maintain the number of visitors coming to see our shows and displays. We continually strive to update and upgrade our equipment as we are part of an extremely fast evolving area, with faster processors, more memory and greater pixel counts on our dome leading to better images to fire the imagination. We make extensive use of computer-generated imagery (CGI), and it is pertinent to note that one of the industries which may be less affected by the financial calamity is the computer imaging and gaming sector, with new jobs being created.

Review of Key Objectives for the 2008 – 2009 Financial year

Armagh Planetarium's key performance indicators for the 2008 – 2009 Financial year were:

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

<i>KPI</i>	<i>Actual 08/09</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Percentage + or -</i>
<i>Visitor numbers</i>	36139	50000	-28%
<i>Outreach numbers</i>	18412	10000	+84%
<i>Virtual Planetarium visitors (since September)</i>	174978	50000	+260%
<i>Internet hits per day</i>	1665	To be monitored	-
<i>TSN numbers</i>	738	1000	-26%
<i>Admissions income¹</i>	£130239	£200000	-35%
<i>Outreach income</i>	£11839	£7000	+69%
<i>Shop and Mail order income</i>	£58765	£93000	-37%
<i>External income as % of total income</i>	28.5%	31.7	-10%
<i>Total cost per visitor/ outreach</i>	£14.1	£13.5	+4%
<i>Administration costs as % of total costs</i>	13.1%	12.9%	+2%
<i>Absence – days</i>	14.5	To be monitored	
<i>Absence – percentage</i>	0.6%	To be monitored	

	Show	Overall	Staff	Displays	Booking
<i>Visitor satisfaction ratings to be monitored²</i>	85%	80%	79%	78%	82%

Friday, 20 February 2009

Notes

1 Admissions income is biased towards families who pay less per head than school visitors.

2 Visitor satisfaction is monitored using feedback forms which are filed anonymously.

Review of these targets

Visitor numbers

The projected total of on-site visitor numbers is disappointingly low, being only 71.4% of the projected target as fewer people came to the Planetarium than we projected. Research that we carried out in December also showed that school visitors were being deterred by the huge rise in transport charges to get to Armagh.

To address the shortfall we have taken a number of actions.

1. We need to have a greater presence in the public mind and increased advertising is the only way to improve that.
2. We have a planned TV and radio campaign that will be running from Easter onwards.
3. We are increasing our advertising and have signed up to a web based ticket sales promotion through Heritage Island based in Dublin. It is likely with the credit crunch that we will see an increase in visitors from the south and also from England as people try to economise on overseas holidays. We also have the second of two advertising poster series organised with the Belfast Telegraph. This is cost free, and its value to us is difficult to quantify: but six weeks of adverts plus newspaper articles is very valuable to us.
4. We are working with NITB and Armagh City & District Council on new advertising which promotes the Planetarium as a unique NI attraction and as a flagship Armagh attraction.
5. Apart from the newspaper adverts already mentioned we also have collaborated with Northern Ireland Tourist Board and their TV adverts that are running at the moment prominently feature the Planetarium.
6. We have formed a relationship with the teaching team at Victoria College in Belfast, so that we may be able to direct cash-strapped school visitors to attend events at Victoria run jointly by the school and the Planetarium.

Outreach numbers

In contrast to the on-site visitors the Outreach numbers are pleasingly high: it is 35% over the projected figure. This is in no small part due to the decision to continue to support large science festival and events wherever possible, and reinstating our schools outreach due to demand caused by the transport cost crisis. A question has been asked in the NI Assembly and the answer included data from Scotland on subsidized school transport that allowed Scottish children access to science centres and sites of historic importance. Armagh Planetarium scores on both of these criteria. It is hoped that the politicians may take note, and it is planned to provide the DCAL Minister with more information.

Virtual Planetarium visitors

Our website statistics show that the Virtual Planetarium received 174978 hits since it was opened by the Minister in September. This is 260% more than we estimated.

TSN numbers reached included above

This number is lower than predicted but we have taken measures to increase this figure by inviting special needs organisations to pay us a visit, which we are prepared to subsidise if the cost is too high. Special needs groups, by their nature tend to comprise very small numbers with an equal number of assistants to the special needs visitors. This figure is also underreported as most schools now have special needs children in their group and they are not always counted.

Income from admissions

This figure is 36% under target and is directly related to the number of visitors passing through our doors.

Income from Outreach Services



This figure also reflects the greater numbers than predicted achieved for this service: it is 100% over target. This will also be affected by the increased price that we are now charging for Science Technology Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) visits to schools. We also have opened up a new small revenue stream which will accrue from teacher training sessions with our International Space School Educational Trust (ISSET) partners. This is small, but has the potential to grow as the teachers make more use of this service.

Income from shop and mail order sales

This figure is 39% below target. To address this shortfall we will be making changes to the shop and mail order operation to try and increase our sales, especially over the internet.

External income as a % of total income

This figure is consistent with the 28.6% shortfall in the overall visitor numbers being 26% off target.

Total cost per visitor/outreach

This figure is much higher than we would like but it will fall as visitor numbers increase. It shows an increase of 16%.

The overall result for the past year is very unsatisfactory. The overall on-site visitor numbers is especially disappointing, considering that we had a very strong line up of new shows for all age groups. The feedback that we had from visitors was overwhelmingly positive with very few complaints; it is just that we did not have enough of them. The Outreach outcome is pleasing and we will now seek to further improve these figures.

The overall conclusion is that we must maximize the visitor numbers and this means that we must advertise more to attract visitors to the Planetarium, while maintaining a varied set of shows to cater for all of the different age groups.

Administration costs as percentage of total costs

This has risen slightly by 2%.

BUSINESS PLAN 2009–2010

- The primary Key Performance Indicator is visitor numbers, as this reflects the core business of the Planetarium.
- The projected visitor figures are based on a conservative estimate of how many people will visit the Planetarium: we are estimating a total of 42000 visitors during the year.
- Our Outreach target for 2009/2010 has been set at 10000.
- The fixed budget for 2009/2010 is based on the appended spreadsheet.
- We are working to support the aims of the Programme for Government and the Department's draft Public Service Agreements, as the desired outcomes overlap and coincide with the Planetarium's aims and objectives. The primary aim of the Armagh Planetarium is to promote the public knowledge and understanding of astronomy and related sciences. To do this effectively need to be recognised as the leading centre for space science, astronomy and related science education and advice in Ireland. Following the refurbishment of the Planetarium in 2005/2006 we have been working to rebuild our capacity to produce shows and live demonstrations in-house. We are continuing to develop the Planetarium and its educational services as an important component of the NI educational provision, with the Planetarium as a named resource for schools. To achieve this aim the following key objectives have been identified.

Key objectives for the 2009–2010 Financial year

Primary performance measures/targets

In order to measure our effectiveness in pursuing these objectives in 2009/2010 we will record performance against targets for the primary performance measures set out in the table below:

Performance measure	Target
Visitor numbers	42000
Outreach numbers	15000
Virtual Planetarium visitors	200000
TSN numbers reached included above	1000
Income from admissions	£150000
Income from Outreach Services	£14000
Income from shop and mail order sales	£65000
External income as a % of total income	31.7%
Total cost per visitor /outreach	£14.3

In addition to the above we will:

- track staff absences due to illness against the DCAL target of 5% for 2009-2010.;

- monitor distinct e-mail visitors to our website;
- monitor visitor satisfaction ratings.

Actions required in 2009/2010 to achieve performance targets

Admission Charges

We need to consider varying our admission charges. If we increase the charge of a family ticket from the current £18 for a family (of up to 5, mother father & three children) to £20 we can generate £14000 of extra income, and we ought to consider changing the price charged to school visitors to boost their numbers, following the rise in transport costs. It may be worthwhile to consider this as an experiment during slow times of the year, such as September October and January. We think that a charge of £2 per head entrance fee may help to boost numbers at these traditionally slack times. We also plan to approach Translink to find out if they would be interested in promoting a package with us.

We have already increased our Outreach charges from £250 to £350 per day as we provide a significant service for this price and we are keen not to undermine the attraction of a visit to the Planetarium.

Staff Resources

To sustain our opening hours, the full staff complement of education and support staff needs to be carefully rostered to alleviate the long hours that accumulate at busy periods. After the Science and Skills funding which enabled us to maintain a significant Outreach Presence was ended last year, we decided to curtail our Outreach service. We advertised to bring schools to the Planetarium site, but the huge increase in fuel and transport costs meant that most schools were unable to afford transport to the Planetarium. It was costing them more to travel than we were charging for their entrance fee (£7 vs £5). While our Outreach numbers were maintained by expansion and collaboration with colleagues in Cork, and working with NISO we were asked to reinstate the Outreach service as part of the STEM initiative.

We will continue to support science festivals and special events locally and in the Republic, and following the recognition by the Education and Library Boards of the importance of the new STEM (Science, Technology Engineering and Maths) programme we are actively promoting our ability to help teachers deliver the STEM objectives. We anticipate that this will lead to a greater participation with KS3 school parties. We have new programmes ready to use in the Digital Theatre and staff have been trained in running teacher training events and small workshops on space related subjects.

We are collaborating with our colleagues at the Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) and Blackrock Castle Observatory (BCO) in Cork city in a new Outreach service that will be jointly administered and concentrate on schools in the south of Ireland. As this joint service will be based in Cork city the primary targets will be in Cork, Waterford, Wexford and Kerry. Thus, we have an external joint Outreach service maintained in a part of the island where it has little or no impact on our visitor numbers, but will achieve a high profile for the joint venture.

Our staffing profile will have to be kept under review with the figures that are being achieved. To achieve this end, one ESO has resigned to take up a post in W5 as it is closer to her home and she will save almost £4000 in fuel costs. We have replaced her for the summer with a temp and to allow the other ESOs and front desk staff have some time off, we will engage another temp to help. This is cheaper than employing a full time person. It is also to be noted that it is very difficult to run a 7 day operation with too few staff. We need the staff to service the story telling for younger visitors, run the theatre shows, launch the rockets and run the workshops which are staggered to allow visitors to see a show and take part in a workshop. In these times value for money is paramount.

Public Shows

Mindful of our continuing need to attract repeat visitors we are putting on several new shows this year, one of them is called "*We are Astronomers*" and tells the story of what UK astronomers actually do. This new show will come to us from Leicester, as we have been part of a multi-venue consortium funding and making this show which will be simultaneously launched across the UK in May. Our new Mars show is a co-production between Evans & Sutherland–



Spitz, GoTo, Armagh Planetarium and the European Space Agency. Another show (Two small pieces of glass) will come to us free because the Planetarium is a member of the International Planetarium Society (IPS).

We continue to run four different versions of *Pole Position* which have been scripted, designed and programmed in-house by the Theatre Manager. These are popular live shows narrated by the person in the theatre and show visitors the constellations and sights in the night sky as the seasons progress. A new venture this year is to translate four of our existing shows into Irish to service the demand for Irish medium shows from local schools. We are collaborating on this project with experts from the BBC and Armagh City and District Council.

School Shows

We have overhauled all of our school visitor programmes, with an emphasis on live shows and interaction with Planetarium staff as the gold standard. We have developed a triangle of activities for school visitors, including a theatre show (usually interactive) and an activity (usually to do with rocket manufacture and launch) and a third activity. The average trip also includes visits to the shop and an opportunity to look at the exhibits. The interactive shows are all unique and have been made in-house. One is a new KS3 interactive show for schools which is related to the teaching curriculum.

Curriculum development and teacher training are topics in which the Planetarium is increasingly involved, and we have joined forces with the International Space School Education Trust (ISSET) to provide teacher training "Space Camps". Feedback from the first one run in December has been excellent, and we hope to run many more in the future. This interactive show is provisionally titled *The Universe and the Solar System* and will involve the school audience in question and answer sessions with the presenting staff. This is quite staff intensive as two are needed to successfully run an interactive show of this type. The darkness of the theatre which is needed to fully appreciate the images on the projection ceiling also needs to be preserved, creating operational problems which we have solved. A further innovation is that we have installed an electronic scoreboard which allows the presenters to pit different groups in the theatre against each other. This is the first such system to be installed in any planetarium theatre.

Another Armagh produced interactive show called *Destination Earth* is also ready for use with KS2 children, and will provide a further new offering for our primary school visitors. To assess this output it is worth noting that all of these shows have been developed and scripted in house, and they are the equivalent of scientific papers or conference proceedings in another context.

We anticipate that we will have further curriculum developments and associated shows this year, and what we have tested in Armagh will be rolled out country wide. This has been facilitated by the involvements of the Northern Ireland Space Office (NISO) at Armagh Planetarium, which is run by Robert Hill.

The recent ETI audit of the Planetarium's operations was complimentary of what was being done, but suggested that we needed to pay greater attention to the variety of learning outcomes that can be achieved. To this end we have recently introduced all live shows for the school so that the children are engaged by the presenters and interact with the shows. Likewise we have new workshops which are continuously updated and refreshed by staff which are run in parallel with the shows in the theatre. We also run problem solving workshops which seek to engage the children in peer-to-peer discussions and collaboration.

Exhibition Area & Displays

We continue to refine the accommodation, fittings and displays to allow for a more efficient use of space. We continually make small modifications and adjustments to the building to make it more user friendly for staff and visitors. We have fitted out a former office in the administration building as a lunch room for junior schools as this is something which is in demand. We are revising the café operation by working with a local businessman to help us improve this aspect of the visitor experience. This is associated with our continuous review of our procedures relating to visitor bookings, and this will continue in 2009-2010.

We had new display panels and satellite models fitted last summer and want to add more new scale models, especially of the planned new Martian landers which are part of the projected major exploration of Mars by robotic vehicles, by NASA and ESA. We will continue to seek more up-to-date display items within our limited budget. As the Ulster Museum's meteorite display will be returning to the Museum in the autumn, we have embarked on a purchase



programme to replace the celestial objects on display as these are very popular with the public. A new nickel iron meteorite is on its way, and when we have installed it, it will be the largest on display in Ireland.

We are also looking into making new displays for the very young visitors as we have very little to keep them occupied.

European collaboration: Northern Ireland Space Office (NISO)

Our contribution to the European astronomy scene now includes not only the Northern Ireland Space Office (NISO) at the Planetarium which is staffed by Rob Hill, but also a presence on the International Astronomical Union (IAU) planning committee that is responsible for events related to the UN-supported International Year of Astronomy which runs throughout 2009 (IYA 09).

Our lobbying also has firmly placed Armagh Planetarium in the European agenda, and we are involved in new projects with the Faulkes Robotic Telescopes, Earth Observation schools programme (European Union Hands on Universe project), and have applied for funding to do more, in partnership with our European colleagues. We also continue to work with the European Space Agency, EURISY, UNESCO and the British Council on various international projects that are operational or being planned. Planetarium staff serve on influential committees of many of these agencies which are deciding the future direction of space education.

Worldwide collaboration: IPS president and planning

The Planetarium continues to punch above its weight on the international scene and evidence of this is the Director's role as IPS President for the next two years. This entails working with the other IPS officers to make sure that the professional planetarium organization represents the interests of its worldwide membership. It also involves travelling to other places where the planetarium professionals are not yet fully integrated into the worldwide community: a recent trip to India looks like it will translate into a strong bid for the Indian planetarians to form themselves into an affiliate member of the IPS. This has been promoted and encouraged by the Director's IPS presidential influence.

Targeting Social Need (NTSN)

We continue to include as many underprivileged or otherwise disadvantaged schools or other bodies in our work as possible, being conscious of the New Targeting Social Need programme (NTSN). Our Outreach Programme lends itself well to this work and we have also continued to offer an evening adult education service in Belfast and Omagh. One of the courses is run in association with the Queen's University of Belfast. The other is run at the Tara Centre in Omagh, which is a centre for community based adult learning. All of the feedback has been extremely positive and we plan to continue these courses in the autumn. This accords with government aims to create a more scientifically literate population while promoting lifelong learning. These adult education courses meet both of these aspirations. Members of the public attending the courses are keen for us to broaden their scope and content we have agreed to expand these activities. These courses require a considerable time commitment from our staff members and a certain amount of staying power on the part of the people attending the courses. We are exploring ways of funding these activities more efficiently.

Science Technology Engineering & Mathematics programme (STEM)

The new STEM programme for schools has provided funding which will allow them to set up an enhanced provision of Science educational activities. The Planetarium has been making up new programmes for this project and we will expand this to fulfil the demand. The STEM programme will allow schools to have the Planetarium staff visit the school as well as make a visit to the planetarium, so that they can have the benefit of both experiences. Before the programme was announced we had withdrawn most of our outreach service to concentrate on the delivery in the Planetarium. The fuel increases led to increased demand for our outreach as the school said that they could not afford to come to Armagh and so we have reviewed our policy and made the necessary changes.

From the Planetarium's perspective the STEM project has illustrated how earmarked resource funding can make a significant difference to our operation. So while our continuing priority is still to build up on-site numbers, we will revert to supporting outreach visits too.



Financial Plan

Details of our projected income and how this will be spent are provided in the attached financial appendix. It should be noted that our earned income is essential to help us maintain the operational flexibility to make the most of opportunities as they arise. When we are very busy we are working at full staff capacity and successful off-site and weekend events lead to an increase in overtime. Similarly putting on more evening events also affects this budget line. We have attempted to better control this aspect of the business by recruiting full-time Education Support Officers who can fill the positions formerly occupied by temps during the summer. This experiment has been very successful and we will seek to make this an integral part of our normal operation. Reducing our dependence on temps has resulted in a more stable operational rota.

Advertising & PR

Now that we have a product which is the equal of any in the world we must make sure that our shows and events are as widely publicized as possible. In the past we mostly advertised in the print media, but we now believe that we raise our profile using radio and television adverts. We have a planned advertising campaign on radio, TV and print media for 2009 which will cost £20000.00. The advertising which we have chosen will provide us with a media profile throughout the year. In addition we have worked on two astronomy projects with the Belfast Telegraph which has produced a series of astronomy posters badged with our logo in January this year and we have negotiated a second astronomy poster set aimed at KS2 children with the Telegraph's educational department. This series is planned to run from May 6th and will appear for 6 weeks. This project will also be badged with the Planetarium's logo. This is the equivalent of many tens of thousands of pounds of free advertising, so we expect that this will boost our profile and visitor numbers.

Our advertising attempts to maximize our impact with what is a very small budget. Professional advertising advice will be sought during this year, and we will ring fence the advertising budget as recommended by the advertising audit which was carried out. The audit did say that we were making the best of what we had, and we have been very lucky to get a great deal of free exposure through our advertising ventures with the Belfast Telegraph where over 13000 children took part in a newspaper led educational event in May and June. All of the scientific content and presentation of the posters were written and proofed by the Planetarium staff, so we are contributing both to the promotion of scientific careers and spreading scientific literacy with these activities. The From the Earth to the Universe posters in Belfast City Hall are also affording an opportunity to promote the Planetarium as a place worth visiting.

Astronotes

Our in house newsheet AstroNotes is distributed around the world: we also publish a PDF version on our website and we have PDFs of the last four year's worth of back issues. This is a considerable flagship publication for us and we have extracted articles from the main publication and have listed them as PDFs on the new website under topic headers. The articles have been reprinted and used by other organisations and we gain a great deal of exposure by this publication and generate many compliments. All of the articles are written by Planetarium staff and the newsheet is edited and built in house.

Website

Like all modern businesses our website is a critical part of informing the public and schools about our operations. The Planetarium's current website is quite old now but has stood the test of time well. It was designed and built over 5 years ago. We added a Virtual Planetarium website last year and are now ready to launch our new, completely redesigned website which has taken into consideration all of the technical changes that have happened over the past five or six years. This was planned and built over the past 8 months. The content of the old site was an information-rich static list. The new one is much more interactive with videos, science demos and how to do things along with a selection of free stuff for the web visitors, all made by us. As it has been designed and built in house with minimal outside help we now are ready to upload a dynamic new site that would have cost us around £50K to be built by an outside company. We have also decided to move from having our site and content hosted by an outside body to running the site on our own server as this will provide greater flexibility and control over the site. There will be no limits on the site size and no more problems trying to upload files to a remote site.

Digistar upgrade & technical issues

In our technical planning for 2009-2010, and also in our 5 year strategic plan, it is essential that we can make a decision which will result in the upgrade of our Digistar 3. This can be achieved in two ways. The first is to participate in a service contract with Evans & Sutherland- Spitz for the Digistar 3 digital theatre equipment. Such a contract would run for 5 years and would involve a complete hardware and software replacement of the current D3 with the newer D4 configuration. The second option is to seek full capital funding for an upgrade from a Digistar 3 to the new Digistar 4 model which was announced in the middle of last year. A diagram is appended which shows the Digistar 3 layout. The Digistar 4 would be a more compact system with a completely new software operating system.

It is worth mentioning that the planning for the 2006 refit of the Planetarium contained an extensive assessment of the critical issues that would lead to greatest stability and least downtime of the Digistar 3 computers and the BARCO projectors. We have had a very low downtime and few problems as we maintain a constant operating temperature and do not stress the electronics by multiple power cycles. In our assessment of other reported D3 operator's problems almost all can be ascribed to a lack of discipline with network connections and subsequent viral infections of the systems, allied with unauthorized downloading of software, playing games on the machines while they are running shows(!). We maintain a very tight grip on the system. It is never connected to the internet, nothing is loaded without authorization, and only two staff actually work with the operating system and loading of shows. We attribute this more disciplined approach to the good operational record.

We keep critical equipment spares to ensure that our downtime is minimal, and this is a critical operating target. We now have a spare BARCO projector and other D3 computer spares that should alleviate any near term future problems, but this needs continual monitoring to keep the risks low. It is the nature of computer equipment that it rapidly ages and we must keep up-to-date by upgrading to the most modern graphic cards and maximize on card memory, as well as keeping well informed about the latest developments in projector resolution and projection technology.

It is now becoming apparent that the computer equipment will suffer a sharp decline in reliability as it ages. It should also be noted that the audit of or IT needs mentioned that there was too much reliability placed on the Director for technical backup. This will have to be addressed soon, if only to secure the technical future of the Planetarium.

Coincidence of the Planetarium's aims and Objectives and the DCAL's Public Service Agreements

Public Service Agreement 9 stipulates that we should contribute to meet DCAL's aim of contributing to Northern Ireland's economic, health and educational goals by increasing participation and access to Culture, Arts and Leisure activities. For example, the Planetarium runs a New Year event for the Chinese community and we aim to provide a service to all of Northern Ireland's population as well as visitors from the Republic and further afield. We help to improve all of our visitors' quality of life by experiencing the Planetarium's world class facility. This is a significant cultural asset. As many of our visitors are young people we also provide an environment where they can see potential future career paths in science, and we provide a safe place for children to visit as part of their school community or as part of their family. Our Outreach programme achieves the same outcome, and our adult classes provide for the enhancement of the population's understanding of science and helps promote the establishment of a scientifically literate and well informed community.

The Planetarium is a well known tourist attraction around the world and we are seeking to exploit this by advertising widely to attract both local and overseas visitors to experience what is a unique venue on the island of Ireland. We ought to be able to exploit the new found ability of Northern Ireland to attract tourists once more. To this end we are advertising in the magazines that are sent to all of the ferry passengers entering Belfast, and that will bring the Planetarium to the attention of all of the hotel guests visiting the city. This supports the DCAL's PSA 5 which aims to promote tourism. The Planetarium is a unique venue in Ireland and an important part of the cultural infrastructure of Museums and Galleries.

Our activities support the needs of children of all age groups, and indeed of people of all ages to access information about science and astronomy in an easy accessible way. We welcome people of all ages and make an effort to make sure that we are inclusive for those with special needs, learning difficulties or any form of disability. Where we have no system in place our policy is very clear, that we will make the effort to provide a stimulating and informative visit to everyone. This also is in accord with DCAL's PSA 10 helping children and young people achieve their full potential through education. We also do this through our recruitment policy which does not seek to exclude people but rather



to nurture and encourage staff to achieve their full potential by stretching themselves and discovering talents that they may not have fully appreciated or used.

Dr T R Mason
14th June 2009

Armagh Planetarium

Last up-date 2009 February 20

1. Recurrent Income and Expenditure Summary	2009/2010	2008/2009	2008/2009	2008/2009	2007/2008	2006/2007
	Draft Budget	Projection	Budget	To 31/1/2009	Actual	Actual
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Income						
Baseline DCAL recurrent grant	483.0	483.0	483.0	418.0	390.0	390.0
Additional DCAL in-year recurrent grant	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.4
Contribution to running costs from the Skills and Science Package	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	29.4	19.7
Re-allocation of recurrent grant to the Observatory	0.0	-5.0	-35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Admissions	150.0	127.0	200.0	113.0	150.6	127.5
Shop/mail order gross profit	24.0	20.9	37.5	17.8	23.3	16.8
Outreach	14.0	14.0	7.0	9.2	23.7	13.7
Other grants and miscellaneous income	6.7	17.6	4.6	11.3	13.7	25.3
Total Income:	677.7	659.5	697.1	569.3	630.7	598.4
Expenditure						
Core staff salary costs						
Education staff salaries	275.3	239.0	240.4	198.2	220.1	209.9
Front desk and shop staff salaries	52.3	51.2	51.0	42.2	48.9	32.8
Cleaning staff salaries	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.0	4.4
Administrative support staff salaries	58.1	57.0	56.8	47.1	54.0	52.6
Total staff salary costs:	385.7	347.2	348.2	287.5	330.0	299.7
Education costs						
Travel and subsistence	15.0	16.9	15.0	15.1	13.2	17.2
Production of shows	15.0	15.1	20.0	15.1	15.3	8.7
Exhibits and events	30.0	32.5	20.0	29.1	17.8	27.2
Advertising	35.9	43.5	40.9	40.0	15.8	12.9
Digistar projection equipment maintenance	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.8	0.9
Equipment maintenance/minor equipment	22.0	32.0	30.0	30.1	48.4	41.4
Agency staff	0.0	0.0	12.0	0.0	19.0	41.2
Other education costs	17.4	19.0	27.2	16.0	23.5	20.6
Total education costs:	135.3	159.0	185.1	145.4	153.8	170.1
Estate costs						
Heat, light, power	50.0	50.5	40.0	45.9	54.2	44.7
Property repairs and maintenance	30.0	31.7	36.0	20.5	22.4	26.5
Insurance	15.0	14.5	16.0	13.3	14.8	19.1
Contract cleaning	14.0	14.0	20.0	9.5	11.2	11.0
Other buildings costs	3.5	2.5	4.0	2.4	7.2	4.7
Total estate costs	112.5	113.2	116.0	91.6	109.8	106.0
Administration and corporate governance costs (audit, postage, stationery, professional fees, Management Committee etc.)						
	44.2	40.1	47.8	29.2	38.4	57.7
Total Expenditure:	677.7	659.5	697.1	553.7	632.0	633.5
Surplus/-deficit before net pension costs	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.6	-1.3	-35.1
2. DCAL capital/refurbishment grant						
	2009/2010	2008/2009	2008/2009	2008/2009	2007/2008	2006/2007
	Draft Budget	Projection	Budget	To 31/1/2009	Actual	Actual



	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Baseline DCAL capital grant	25.0	25.0	25.0	6.6	6.5	6.4
In-year DCAL capital grant	0.0	42.0	0.0	0.0	52.5	0.0
Buildings refurbishment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	178.8
Total DCAL capital/refurbishment grant:	25.0	67.0	25.0	6.6	59.0	185.2
3. Operational (Unrestricted) Reserves	31/3/2010	31/3/2009	31/3/2009	To 31/1/2009	31/3/2008	31/3/2007
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Balance of operational reserves at stated date:	6.3	6.3	6.3	21.9	6.3	7.6
4. Shop/Mail Order Gross Profit	2009/2010	2008/2009	2008/2009	2008/2009	2007/2008	2006/2007
	Draft Budget	Projection	Budget	To 31/1/2009	Actual	Actual
Sales	65.0	56.6	93.0	50.6	68.3	61.9
Cost of Sales	41.0	35.7	55.5	32.8	45.0	45.1
Gross Profit	24.0	20.9	37.5	17.8	23.3	16.8
Gross Profit %	36.9	36.9	40.3	35.2	34.1	27.1