

Consultation

## **Isle of Man Heritage Railways Independent Review and Economic Impact Assessment**

Closing Date: 13<sup>th</sup> August 2023.

### Douglas Borough Council's Response

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The heritage railways are a very valued attraction in the City of Douglas and important to conserve heritage.

No railways could mean no cruise ships and overall fewer visitors to Douglas so to protect the vibrancy of the city, Douglas Borough Council would wish to see the heritage railways retained.

The heritage railways is one of the few attractions the Island can offer in that it is different to elsewhere so if the Government were to not support the attraction going forward then the question is what will the Island be able to offer other than for those who like the outdoors. There would certainly be far fewer attractions in Douglas if they were unsupported.

### **How the Railways can be improved**

- Better signposting of the railway station from the sea terminal and prom would be welcomed;
- The Heritage Railway should be a connected and holistic service, and it should provide a transport corridor along the full length of Douglas Promenade;
- The Heritage Railways could be better used for commuting into and from Douglas all year and not just during TT, assisting with Net Zero targets;
- There should be better markers for where the horse tram stops are on the prom, these are very hard for visitors to find;

## **Feedback from the Officer Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

- The railways are valued, however, they're not managed well enough to provide a more holistic experience;
- They don't advertise well enough;
- They should be more holistic in terms of use (i.e. joined up connections, same season pass etc.); and
- There was a question over whether they should sit under DoI or Tourism? Are they heritage railways for tourism or are they part of the overall transport network on the island? Because they sit under the DoI they tend to be regarded and treated as part of the overall infrastructure but maybe a more tourism/leisure/recreation focus is needed.