

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

10 JANUARY 2013

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

Arts, Leisure & Culture – Lead Cabinet Member – Cllr Kenneth Dixon

COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY (Preston Hall Museum Accreditation)

1. Summary

The report seeks approval for the Collections Development Policy for Preston Hall Museum's re-accreditation submission in January 2013. The Museum last underwent Accreditation in 2009 with the Museums Libraries and Archives Council prior to the refurbishment project. Responsibility for the newly revised scheme has changed and an invitation to re-accredit was issued in September 2012 and a submission must be made to the Arts Council by January 29th 2013 in order to maintain this important National standard.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to approve the Collections Development Policy for Preston Hall Museum.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

To enable a submission for reaccreditation to be made.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in **paragraphs 9 and 11** of the Council's code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of **paragraphs 12 - 17** of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 16** of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, **in accordance with paragraph 18** of the code, consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest and the business:-

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or
- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code)

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SUMMARY

The report seeks approval for the Collections Development Policy for Preston Hall Museum's re-accreditation submission in January 2013. The Museum last underwent Accreditation in 2009 with the Museums Libraries and Archives Council prior to the refurbishment project. Responsibility for the newly revised scheme has changed and an invitation to re-accredit was issued in September 2012 and a submission must be made to the Arts Council by January 29th 2013 in order to maintain this important National standard.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to approve the Collections Development Policy for Preston Hall Museum to enable a submission for reaccreditation to be made.

DETAIL

Introduction

1. The Museum Registration Scheme was established in 1988. Since then it has supported museums across the UK to focus on standards and identify areas for development. In 2004, the scheme was renamed Accreditation to better reflect its purpose.
2. The Accreditation Scheme sets nationally agreed standards for museums in the UK. There are currently just under 1,800 museums participating in the scheme, demonstrating their commitment to managing collections effectively for the enjoyment and benefit of users. Accreditation is administered by Arts Council England in partnership with CYMAL (Museum, Archives, Libraries Wales), Museums and Galleries Scotland and the Northern Ireland Museum Council.
3. Preston Hall was last accredited in 2004 and has been invited to resubmit under the revised scheme in early 2013.
4. The Collections Development Policy combines the previous Acquisition and Disposal Policy and the Collections Rationalisation "Too Much Stuff" Policy

Accreditation process

5. The Accreditation Scheme has recently been developed to keep pace with the times. This is intended to help museums develop their resilience through effective forward planning, to balance aspects of collection management and to encourage all museums to be responsive to user needs and expectations. Museums are judged on three main areas around organisational health, collections, and users and their experiences
6. There are clear benefits to the accreditation of Museums under the Scheme.
 - Accreditation enables museums and governing bodies to assess their current performance, and it supports them in planning and developing their services.
 - It acts as a quality standard that serves as an authoritative benchmark for assessing performance, rewarding achievement and driving improvement.
 - It raises awareness and understanding of museums, so building confidence and credibility both within the governing body and among the public.
 - It helps museums to improve their focus on meeting users' needs and interests and developing their workforce.
 - It helps museums to examine their services and to encourage joint working within and between organisations.
 - It helps with forward planning by formalising procedures and policies.
 - It demonstrates that the museum has met a national standard, which strengthens applications for public and private funding and gives investors confidence in the organisation.
7. Although Accreditation is not required for the consideration of collections for Designation, it is certainly an advantage to the process. The importance of the collections at Preston Hall is clearly recognised and the ultimate aim is to submit them for Designation under the Arts Council's scheme.
8. Stockton has benefitted directly through the accreditation of Preston Hall by the ability to attract external funding such as that currently being utilised to research and interpret a number of less well known collections through the Unlocking the Past project. This funding, from the Arts Council's Strategic Fund, was only available to accredited museums and in 2012/2013 provided over £50,000 of support.
9. Following the review of the service and the refurbishment of Preston Hall, Stockton's accredited Museum enjoys a well deserved respect and reputation as a key player in the delivery of quality heritage services in the Tees Valley. Accreditation is vital to the maintenance of this reputation.

Following an updating of the Accreditation Scheme and a transfer of responsibility to the Arts Council, all museums are being invited to re-accredit in a number of tranches. Preston Hall received its invitation to re-accredit in September 2012 and a submission must be made to the Arts Council by January 29th 2013 in order to maintain accredited status.

10. The Collections Development Policy

The process of accreditation requires the submission of a number of plans and documents, including a Collections Development policy which has been formally adopted by Cabinet. The updated full policy is attached as Appendix 1 to this report and updates and amalgamates the previous "Too Much Stuff" and Acquisition and Disposal policies.

11. The collections development policy serves a number of purposes.
- It provides a framework for the future development of the collections of Preston Park Museum and Grounds and combines the Rationalisation Project's 'Too Much Stuff' policy to create an overall approach to acquisition and disposal within Preston Hall Museum.
 - Balances the needs and objectives of the Museum within the resources available
 - Replaces all previous versions of the Acquisition and Disposal Policy
 - Replaces all previous versions of the Too Much Stuff Policy
 - Acts as a reference document to guide curatorial decisions in the present and in the future
 - Encourages public confidence in Preston Hall Museum as a suitable repository for material
 - Provides a basis for open and transparent decision-making
12. The Policy will be reviewed every five years and will be next scheduled for consideration in January 2017.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13. In some cases, external grants are only available to Accredited Museums under the scheme and for many others there is an increased likelihood of success in obtaining funding due to the recognition of the Standard as an indicator of quality.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14. There are no legal implications to this process.

RISK ASSESSMENT

15. There is risk to the ability of Preston Hall Museum to attract external funding if Accreditation is not maintained and therefore an impact on its capacity to continually develop as an important visitor attraction in the Tees Valley.
16. There would be a significant loss of reputation for the Museum and for Stockton Council if the Museum is unable to maintain its accredited status under the revised scheme in light of the recent refurbishment and improvement project.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

17. Contributes to the following Sustainable Community Strategy themes:

Economic Regeneration and Transport
Culture and Leisure
Our Organisational effectiveness

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

18. In discussion with the Diversity team, an EIA is not required for this report as the changes requested will have no impact on any of the strands of diversity.

CORPORATE PARENTING

19. Not Applicable.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

20. Not applicable

Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services

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Background Papers

Arts Council Accreditation Guidance

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors

None

Property

None