

Agenda item:

Title of meeting: Culture, Leisure and Sport Decision Meeting

Date of meeting: 10 October 2014

Subject: Museums Care and Conservation Policy

Report by: Head of City Development and Cultural Services

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To present the Portsmouth Museums Care and Conservation Policy.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the draft Portsmouth Museums Care and Conservation Policy be approved.

2.2 That a Care and Conservation Plan is developed to drive the operation of this Policy. The Plan to be presented at a later date.

3. Background

3.1 A Care and Conservation Policy is an essential tool as part of an effective collections management framework for the museums service. It states the aims of the service for the care of its collections. Effective care of collections is achieved through working practices and specifications for physical security, environmental conditions, storage methods, documentation, housekeeping, handling, transport and conservation driven by the policy statements.

3.2 The Policy provides guidance for staff and decision making in the area of collections care. It encourages public confidence in the museum as a suitable repository for collections items.

3.3 The Care and Conservation Policy is one of the key documents museums are required to submit to Arts Council England (ACE) as part of the Accreditation return. The plan incorporates wording required by ACE for the Accreditation Standard as at April 2013 which supersedes the previous accreditation and registration schemes.

- 3.4 The aims of the Accreditation scheme, as laid down by ACE are: to encourage all museums and galleries in the UK to achieve agreed standards in how they are run, how they manage their collections and the experience of users.
- 3.5 Museums are required to reapply every four or so years. It is a continuous process, the Accreditation standards are evolving requirements. They are designed to drive improvement and development within the museum sector so each round demands more of the applicant organisations. The service achieved full Accreditation for all its sites in previous applications, most recently in 2007. Our next application is due in April 2015.
- 3.6 A similar Accreditation scheme is being introduced for archives and will be rolled out over the next three years.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 A Care and Conservation Policy is a vital tool in a collections management framework. It provides staff with guidance, ensures that council resources are not wasted in undirected measures endorsing the principles of 'value for money' and the appropriate management of public funds.
- 4.2 A Care and Conservation Policy is one of the required documents to support an application for Accreditation for the museum service. If such a document is not submitted, then our Accreditation application will fail.
- 4.3 Accreditation is a 'passport' to many services and funding streams from external bodies such as the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). Grants from several external organisations demand full Accreditation status as a condition for grant-aid. It also encourages joint working within and between organisations such as when borrowing items from other institutions.
- 4.4 Full Accreditation status provides proof that the museum meets a professionally recognised quality standard that serves as an authoritative benchmark for assessing performance and that the museum operates ethically and professionally, promoting public confidence in the service.
- 4.5 A Care and Conservation Plan describes current practice and identifies areas for improvement and action.

5. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

- 5.1 An equality impact assessment is not required as the recommendations do not have a negative impact on any of the protected characteristics described in the Equality Act 2010.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.
- 6.2 Under Part 2, Section 3 of the City Council’s Constitution (responsibilities of the Cabinet) and further in accordance with the Scheme of Delegations at Appendix A to the Executive Procedure Rules in Part 3 of the Constitution, the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport has authority to approve the recommendations in this report.

7. Head of Finance Comments

- 7.1 The Care and Conservation Policy is fundamental to the operation of the museum service as it provides a framework for the management of the collections. The policy document must also be submitted to ACE in order to achieve full accreditation status.
- 7.2 This is a core policy which has and will continue to be funded through the approved budget of the service.

.....
Signed by:
Stephen Baily
Head of City Development and Cultural Services

Appendices: Appendix A: Care and Conservation Policy

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Arts Council England Accreditation Standard	Electronic download, Collections Manager’s folder on ‘w’ drive
Benchmarks in Collections Care for Museums, Libraries and Archives. A Self	Electronic download, Collections Manager’s folder on ‘w’ drive

Assessment Checklist, 2011	
PAS (Publically Available Specification) 197:2009	Hard copy, Collection Manager's office, Portsmouth Museum
PAS 198:2012	Hard copy, Collection Manager's office, Portsmouth Museum

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport on 10 October 2014.

.....
Signed by:
Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport