

Agenda item:

Title of meeting: Culture, Leisure and Sport Decision Meeting

Date of meeting: 10 October 2014

Subject: Return of Geological Specimens to Winchester City Museums

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 a request from Winchester City Museums for the return of seven geological specimens on loan to Portsmouth. These were mistakenly accessioned in 2009 so will need to be formally de-accessioned.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That the seven specimens are de-accessioned from Portsmouth's museum collections.**
- 2.2 **That the seven specimens are returned to Winchester City Museums.**
- 2.3 **That the early life display at Cumberland House is re-displayed after the removal of these specimens and that alternative specimens are sourced.**

3. Background

- 3.1 In 2004 a group of fossilised bones was borrowed by the museums service from Winchester City Museums for display at Cumberland House. The specimens are: Iguanodon axis, scapula, femur, vertebrae; Ichthyosaur skull and vertebrae.
- 3.2 The loan was taken out by a former member of staff before we centralised our loans documentation and before we computerised loans. In 2009 another former member of staff accessioned these items, assuming that they were owned by Portsmouth City Council.
- 3.3 In July 2014 we received a request for the return of these items as they are for inclusion in a forthcoming display. It was at this point that we realised that these specimens were on loan and not owned by Portsmouth.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 Any de-accessions of museum items must be referred to the Cabinet Member, as laid down in the Collections Development Policy of the service.
- 4.2 The specimens are owned by Winchester City Museums and should be returned at the request of their legal owner.
- 4.3 There will be gaps in the display and it will be necessary to re-display this section of the displays at Cumberland House. Our own collections do not have such striking specimens, which is why the loan was taken out in 2004. Therefore we may need to source other loans to supplement our own collections to maintain the display of this popular subject.
- 4.4 Our loans system is now centralised, with a computer entry for each loan under the control of the Registrar, rather than individual members of staff in separate buildings initiating loans. Mistakes with loan documentation such as were made in 2009 are extremely unlikely to happen now.

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 de-accessioning of collection items is part of the museums core service as detailed in the Collections Development Policy.
- 7.2 The recommendations contained in this report will be funded from the approved service budget.

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

Appendices: None

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
Collections Development Policy	Electronic copy, Collections manager's 'W' drive

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

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Signed by:
Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport