

Title of meeting: Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Decision Meeting

Date of meeting: 8 February 2022

Subject: Museum Collection Development Policies

Report by: Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To present the Collection Development Policies for Portsmouth Museums (Appendix 1) and The D-Day Story (Appendix 2).

2. Recommendations

2.1 **That the priorities for future collecting, rationalisation and disposal in the two documents are noted.**

2.2 **That the Portsmouth Museums Collection Development Policy is approved.**

2.3 **That The D-Day Story Collection Development Policy is approved.**

3. Background

3.1 A Collection Development Policy is an essential part of the council's collections management framework. It describes what the council will and will not acquire for its collections, the process for acquisition and disposal of items, in what circumstances it will borrow items from (loan in) and lend them to (loans out) other institutions. It includes priorities for future collecting, rationalisation and disposal.

3.3 Along with other formally approved policies, a Collection Development Policy is required for Accreditation, the national standard for museums in England managed by Arts Council England (ACE). Through Accreditation ACE aims to



encourage all museums and galleries to achieve agreed standards in how they are run, how they manage their collections and the experience of users.

- 3.4 Museums are required to reapply approximately every four years. Accreditation is a continuous process. The standards are evolving requirements, designed to drive improvement and development within the sector. Each round demands more of the applicant museums.
- 3.5 Portsmouth Museums achieved full Accreditation for all its sites in 2016 and is due to reapply in early 2022.
- 3.6 The Collection Development Policies included at Appendices 1 and 2 are based on a template provided by ACE and include standard paragraphs required by ACE.
- 3.7 On previous occasions we have produced a single Collection Development Policy for the service. However, following the detailed research and work on the collections that has informed the development of The D-Day Story and the recommendations of the specialists that produced the Conservation Plan for the museum (Halahan Associates), a separate Collection Development Policy has been produced for The D-Day Story.
- 3.8 The priorities for future collecting, are:

Portsmouth Museums (excluding DDS)

- Material which relates and is relevant to under-represented or missing local communities and minority groups, collected in dialogue with the communities concerned. For example, material relating to migration.
- Material covering the last 50 years in Portsmouth from the 1970's to the present-day reflecting Portsmouth peoples' lived experiences, selected in dialogue with residents and local community groups.
- Invertebrates and plants collected in Portsmouth or the Solent.

The D-Day Story

- Material which addresses weaknesses in the D-Day collection

- 3.9 The priorities for rationalisation and disposal are:

Portsmouth Museums (excluding DDS)

- A review of collections in dialogue with the community to ascertain relevance to people and place. The review would target specific communities, in low-income neighbourhoods for example.
- Ordnance (cannon) with little connection to Portsmouth and / or that we cannot adequately care for, including ordnance already on long term loan to institutions outside Portsmouth. This includes items acquired with grant-aid in 1973. Disposal will be expensive and dependent on lifting gear etc.



- A review of local and social history collections in store to identify material that is not accessioned or has become disassociated from accession number with a view to disposal where these items have no clear provenance or relevance to Portsmouth.
- A review of furniture held in the decorative art and local / social history collections focusing on duplicates and the potential for rationalisation - for example duplicate sets of utility furniture.
- Building on recent work on the decorative art furniture collection in store, identify items in poor condition for disposal.
- Natural history items damaged beyond repair due to pest infestations, geology specimens affected by pyrite disease, geology and plant specimens with no data.

The D-Day Story

- An audit of the D-Day and military history collections to identify items to be transferred to the D-Day collection, potential disposals and to separate out unaccessioned items stored within the main reference collection with a view to disposal.

3.10 Both Collection Development Policies are due for review by January 2026.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 A Collection Development Policy is an essential tool in a collections management framework. It provides staff with guidance, ensures that council resources are not wasted in undirected activity thus endorsing the principles of 'value for money' and the appropriate management of public funds.
- 4.2 The policy is one of the documents required to support an application for Accreditation. ACE requires that such documents have formal approval by the governing body.
- 4.4 Accreditation is a 'passport' to many services and funding streams from external bodies such as the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). Grants from several external organisations demand full Accreditation status as a condition for funding. It also encourages joint working within and between organisations such as when borrowing items from other institutions.
- 4.5 Full Accreditation status demonstrates 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.
- 4.6 The priorities for future collecting, rationalisation and disposal are shared in the body of the report to ensure the Cabinet Member is fully informed of the museum services plans for the five-year period covered by the collection development policies.

5. Integrated impact assessment

5.1 Integrated Impact Assessment attached at appendix 3

6. Legal implications

6.1 As outlined in the body of the report, the proposed Collections Development Policies have been prepared with a view to ensuring that the Museums Service meets the relevant standard required by Arts Council England's Museums Accreditation Scheme.

7. Director of Finance's comments

7.1 These policies are fundamental to the operation of the museum service as they provide a framework for the management of the collections. The policy documents are required by ACE in order to achieve full accreditation status.

7.2 These are core policies which have and will continue to be funded through the approved service budget.

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Signed by:

Stephen Baily
Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Portsmouth Museums Collection Development Policy (excluding the D-Day Collection)
- Appendix 2 - The D-Day Story Collection Development Policy
- Appendix 3 - Integrated Impact Assessment

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



The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/
rejected by on

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Signed by:

Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Growth