

Report of:	Head of Commissioning
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Key Decision:	No
Report Track:	Cabinet: 20/02/13

CABINET
20 FEBRUARY 2013
ADOPTION OF COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2013 – 2018
MUSEUM OF CANNOCK CHASE

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval for the adoption of the Collections Development Policy for the Museum of Cannock Chase 2013 -2018. The proposed policy is attached as Annex 1.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet endorses the adoption of the Collections Development Policy for the Museum of Cannock Chase 2013 -2018.
- 2.2 That Cabinet authorise the Head of Commissioning in consultation with the Portfolio Leader for Culture and Sport to approve, where considered appropriate, acquisitions and disposals.

3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Museum of Cannock Chase must have a current Collections Development Policy to meet the Arts Council England accreditation standard (formerly Museum, Libraries and Archives (MLA)). In 2011 the standard was changed and any new policy needs to reflect the current recommended practice and requirements for accreditation.
- 3.2 Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust (WLCT) are responsible for the management of the Council's museum collections. However, under these arrangements, the Council retains ownership of the collections. Consequently, a policy about the acquisition and disposal of museum objects must be a Council policy.
- 3.3 The policy must be formally approved by the Museum's governing body (the Council) in the form of a dated, duly authorised committee minute.

- 3.4 This policy sits outside the Council's Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules with regard to procurement and asset disposal.
- 3.5 Adopting the principles set out in this policy document will provide the Council and WLCT with a framework and clear procedures for acquiring and disposing of museum artefacts. Clarifying these processes will assist in ensuring good practice and protecting the future of the collections.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This report supports the Council's Corporate Priorities in a number of ways. Developing cultural services and facilities are at the heart of local communities. They offer places for people to come together, find common interest and a sense of shared identity. They provide diversionary activities, improve community safety and make places more pleasant and attractive improving the day to day life of all who live and work in the district (People, Place and Prosperity).

5 Report Detail

Background

- 5.1 Following an extensive procurement process during 2010-11, Cabinet on 17th November 2011 approved Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust (WLCT) as the preferred long term partner for the management contract for the Council's culture and leisure services, including the Museum of Cannock Chase.
- 5.2 The contract commenced on the 1st April 2012 and is initially for 10 years with the option to extend by 2 five year periods.

Collections Development Policy

- 5.3 Under the contract arrangements, WLCT are responsible for the management of the Council's Museum collections whilst the Council retains ownership.
- 5.4 The Museum collections are an important community resource, reflecting the history and heritage of the district and the aim of the policy document is to specify the criteria, procedures and guidelines to assist the decision making process for the acquisition and disposal of Museum objects.
- 5.5 The Arts Council England (the new monitoring body for Museums in the UK) has a model policy document to which local information is added. The local information relates to the collections that are held by the Council at the Museum of Cannock Chase and will guide future acquisitions and disposals.
- 5.6 The Collections Development Policy includes the following:
- (i) Museum's statement of purpose
 - (ii) An overview of current collections

- (iii) Themes and priorities for future collecting
 - (iv) Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal
 - (v) Limitations on collecting
 - (vi) Collecting policies of other museums
 - (vii) Policy review procedure
 - (viii) Acquisitions not covered by the policy
 - (ix) Acquisition procedures
 - (x) Spoilation
 - (xi) The repatriation and restitution of objects and human remains
 - (xii) Management of archives
 - (xiii) Disposal procedures
- 5.7 The policy has been prepared and checked by professional curators and museum staff who have confirmed that the attached policy is fairly standard, in line with current practice and draws upon the model policy endorsed by the Arts Council England.
- 5.8 The key points to note are that although collections are central to museum activity, acquisitions and disposals will only be made by the Council on the advice of WLCT's professional museum staff and in accordance with the attached policy. In addition to the policy, disposals can only be made upon written notification from the Council.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

- 6.1.1 Acquisitions and disposals are governed by the Collections Development Policy. The policy states that a disposal generating a receipt will be used for the benefit of the collections. Consideration should be given to stating that the Governing Body would consider whether such money would be used for the benefit of the collections.
- 6.1.2 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

6.2 Legal

- 6.2.1 Any legal implications are referred to in the report.

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Section 17 (Crime Prevention)

None

6.5 Human Rights Act

None

6.6 Data Protection

None

6.7 Risk Management

6.7.1 The adoption of the policy will reduce the risks of items being disposed of wrongly and also any being acquired in an ad hoc manner, which may incur additional costs to the Council.

6.8 Equality & Diversity

None.

6.9 Best Value

6.9.1 The policy is designed to ensure an open, transparent and co-ordinated approach to the acquisition and disposal of collections, avoiding duplication and collecting items which are not within the area stipulated in the policy and requires assessment of existing collections, identifying those that no longer fit the criteria.

7 Appendices to the Report

Appendix 1 Museum of Cannock Chase – Collections Development
Policy 2013 -2018

Previous Consideration

Background Papers

Museum of Cannock Chase

Collections Development Policy 2013 - 2018

Name of museum: Museum of Cannock Chase

Name of governing body: Cannock Chase District Council

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body:

Date at which this policy is due for review: January 2018



This policy will be used at all times as guidance for all matters relating to the management of the collections at the Museum of Cannock Chase and to ensure that collections management continues to meet the Accreditation requirements of Arts Council England.

1. Museum's statement of purpose

To give residents of and visitors to the Cannock Chase District both a 'sense of place' and the opportunities to actively participate in the preservation and exploration of the area's cultural heritage.

2. An overview of current collections

The museum's aim is to collect, document, conserve, store, display and interpret items pertaining to the social, industrial, military and local history of the Cannock Chase area.

The collection embraces a range of objects, many from the earlier twentieth century. The collection comprises of material relating to:

2a Coal mining industry. Coal mining formed the backbone of the economy and the community, until the last pit closed in 1993, and therefore the museum makes it a priority to collect items pertaining to the Cannock Chase coalfield. The museum is the only museum in Staffordshire holding considerable collections pertaining to the coal mining industry, and its local and regional importance has increased as the museum has developed. Including banners, paintings, books, documents and awards.

2b Working Life. Objects made for or relating to work or business purposes.

2c Military History. Cannock Chase was a particularly important area in relation to the military history of Britain. Its open heathland landscape, central location, cheap land, good transport links and plentiful supply of coal made it particularly suitable for military training. From the late 19th century and throughout the 20th century the area saw a large scale military presence from general manoeuvres to two Great War training camps (Brocton and Rugeley) and RAF Hednesford.

2d Community Life. Objects used in education, warfare, health, entertainment and sport. Examples include mineral water bottles, local guidebooks, commemorative objects, school uniforms, religious items, local government, police and objects from the Home Front during the Second World War.

2e Domestic and Family Life. A large collection relating to the history of toys and games, food and drink, home-making (including housekeeping, laundry and furnishings), hobbies, crafts, pastimes and travel.

2f Personal Life. Objects belonging to or normally used by one person, rather than general domestic objects. Examples include clothes, shoes, jewellery and other accessories.

2g Photographs and Prints. This largely comprises photographs and prints depicting the people, landscape and buildings of the Cannock Chase area. The collection is particularly rich in images relating to the coal mining industry and local topography.

2h *Items for Education Use.* The museum runs a busy education service which includes artefact handling. Duplicate items are collected for educational and/or handling use. These items may fall outside the geographical collecting area if they fill a gap in the collection. The donors of such items are made aware that they will be used in such a way. These items are marked with an 'E' suffix to the accession number.

Other items from the collections may be used for educational or interpretive use at the discretion of the collections staff, but these may not be handled by visitors except under exceptional circumstances and under supervision.

Reproductions may be collected only for educational use or to fill in a gap in a particular display.

3. Themes and priorities for future collecting

General Criteria

- The museum will continue to collect in accordance with the themes listed above.
- The museum will not acquire any object unless there are adequate resources for its care.
- The museum will only collect objects for which suitable storage and exhibition facilities are available. In particular, the museum has limited storage space for large items and careful consideration must be given to the acquisition of any large object.
- The museum has limited storage for costume and therefore these items may be offered to the County Museum.
- Geological items will not be collected, as the museum does not have specific expertise in this subject.
- Archival material will be offered to the County Records Office, or duplicates as appropriate.
- Potentially hazardous items will not be collected – eg, mining explosives, chemicals, etc
- As the museum has no in-house conservation resources it will in general acquire only objects which are in good or excellent condition. In exceptional circumstances objects which are in poorer condition may be acquired provided (a) resources are available to carry out the necessary restoration work; and (b) they are important acquisitions of a type otherwise unlikely to become available.
- Items collected should bear a clear relationship to the Cannock Chase area by manufacture or use. Items from outside the area may be collected in the following circumstances:
 - Where there is a gap in the collection
 - Where there is clear evidence that objects of this type were used in the area
 - Where there is strong relevance to items already in the collection
 - For outreach and handling activities
- The museum collects items from any time period, but concentrates on the modern historical period.
- The museum collects contemporary items which reflect current society in the Cannock Chase coalfield area.
- There is particular interest in collecting toys from the area and mining rescue service.

- Supplementary information concerning the origins, provenance and former use of objects in the collection may also be acquired, including in the form of documents, photographs, oral history recordings or digital archives.
- Duplicates should not be collected, unless the second item is in better condition or the item is needed for educational use (see section 1)

4. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

The Museum of Cannock Chase will only dispose of objects for curatorial reasons and will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons. Disposal will be made by gift or sale and in accordance the procedures outlined in Section 13 below. The Museums Association's *Code of Ethics for Museums* and *Disposal Toolkit* will be used to guide disposal.

Objects from the collections will be considered for disposal on a case by case basis under the following criteria:

- Poor condition
- Duplicates exist
- Falls outside the Collections Development Policy
- Public benefit better served by transfer to another organisation.

5. Limitations on collecting

The museum recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation Standard. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

6. Collecting policies of other museums

The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

Specific reference is made to the following museum(s):

Staffordshire Arts and Museum Service
Lichfield Record Office
Walsall Local History Centre

7. Policy review procedure

The acquisition and disposal policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years. The date when the policy is next due for review is noted above (page 1).

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the acquisition and disposal policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of existing collections.

8. Acquisitions not covered by the policy

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the governing body of the museum itself, having regard to the interests of other museums.

9. Acquisition procedures

- a. The Museum of Cannock Chase will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- b. In particular, the Museum of Cannock Chase will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).
- c. In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.
- d. The Museum of Cannock Chase will not acquire any biological or geological material.
- e. The Museum of Cannock Chase will not acquire archaeological antiquities (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure as defined by the Treasure Act 1996.

f. Any exceptions to the above clauses 9a, 9b, 9c, or 9e will only be because the Museum of Cannock Chase is:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
- acquiring an item of minor importance that lacks secure ownership history but in the best judgement of experts in the field concerned has not been illicitly traded
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin
- in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970

In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

g. The Museum of Cannock Chase does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

10. Spoliation

The Museum of Cannock Chase will use the statement of principles 'Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period', issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

11. The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

The Museum of Cannock Chase's governing body, acting on the advice of the museum's professional staff, if any, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005), objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 13a-13d, 13g and 13n below will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

The disposal of human remains from museums in England, Northern Ireland and Wales will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums'.

12. Management of archives

As the Museum of Cannock Chase holds / intends to acquire archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, its governing body will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (third edition, 2002).

The museum will refer to Stafford County Record Office for advice when archive material is offered to the museum, or for specialist advice on conservation care. When it is agreed that the museum is the most appropriate custodian for an archive collection, the museum will supply information about the collection or facsimiles to the County Record Office.

The museum will make the archive collections available for public consultation and study by appointment. A list of guidelines for this have been prepared and are to be followed at all times.

As a general principle, the museum will not break up an archive collection. Advice will be sought from the County Records Office if large archives are offered to the museum.

Archive material will be stored in appropriate archive-quality storage. Delicate items will not be available for public consultation except in special circumstances. Duplicates of fragile items will be made wherever resources and conservation restraints allow.

13. Disposal procedures

Disposal preliminaries

- a. The governing body will ensure that the disposal process is carried out openly and with transparency.
- b. By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for society in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons for disposal must be established before consideration is given to the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.
- c. The museum will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item and agreements on disposal made with donors will be taken into account.
- d. When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.

Motivation for disposal and method of disposal

- e. When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined in paragraphs 13g-13o will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale or exchange.
- f. The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.

The disposal decision-making process

- g. Whether the disposal is motivated either by curatorial or financial reasons, the decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including the public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. External expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

Responsibility for disposal decision-making

- h. A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the

responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator of the collection acting alone.

Use of proceeds of sale

- i. Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England
- j. The proceeds of a sale will be ring-fenced so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard.

Disposal by gift or sale

- k. Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain, unless it is to be destroyed. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- l. If the material is not acquired by any Accredited Museums to which it was offered directly as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material, normally through an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal, and in other specialist journals where appropriate.
- m. The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.

Disposal by exchange

- n. The Museum of Cannock Chase will not dispose of items by exchange.

Documenting disposal

- o. Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.