

**CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL**  
**BRIEFING NOTE**  
**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**  
**4<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2009**  
**LEISURE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER**  
**MUSEUM ACCREDITATION SCHEME**

**1. Purpose of Briefing Note**

To provide Members of the Children and Young People Policy Development Committee with information regarding the Museum, Libraries and Archives (MLA) Council's Museum Accreditation Scheme for UK Museums.

To inform Members of the work programme required to meet the latest Accreditation standards

**2. Recommendation(s)**

<p>That Members support the Museum of Cannock Chase in its application for Accredited Status and note the necessary work programme.</p>
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**3. Key Issues**

- Within the Culture and Leisure sector there is a range of existing and emerging improvement tools, for example Quest for leisure centres and sports development and the Green Flag Award for parks.
- The industry standard for Museums and Galleries is the MLA Accreditation Scheme. Introduced in 2004 this replaced the previous Museums and Galleries Commission Registration Scheme, which originated in the mid 1980s.
- Museums have been reassessed under a five- year rolling review programme. The Museum of Cannock Chase first gained Fully Registered Status in December 1993 and has successfully maintained this to date.
- The new scheme has been introduced incrementally across the UK and as previously Registered Museums have come up for review, they have been invited to make submissions for Accredited status.
- As with other service improvement schemes, each round brings with it new and more stringent conditions, and measures continuous performance against the minimum accepted professional and industry standards and against national performance indicators and external inspections, e.g. CAA.
- Accreditation also provides service users with a reassurance of quality service provision.

- As with the previous Registration Programme, Accreditation is a voluntary scheme, but the status confers a range of benefits to museums, not least the eligibility to make applications for external funding. For example, the Heritage Lottery Fund determines Accredited Status to be a prerequisite for museum applicants.
- The Accreditation Standard runs to over 40 pages but, in brief, Accreditation covers the following *foundation* level standards in four key areas.
  1. Governance and Museum Management – covering the museum's forward plan, emergency plan and operating procedures, including those for staff and volunteers. Museum volunteers are considered to be 'staff'.
  2. User Services – the museum must have published information about its local, opening arrangements and services; it must ensure that its services are accessible to a wide range of users; it must consult with its users regularly; it must interpret collections for the users' benefit.
  3. Visitor Facilities – the museum must provide a range of accessible public facilities; it must have internal and external signage and orientation; it must have proper arrangements for customer care; it must have arrangements in place for maintaining the areas used by visitors.
  4. Collections Management – the museum must have in place the specified collections documentation paperwork and procedures; it must get expert advice on security arrangements and implement the measures recommended.
- The Museum of Cannock Chase was invited to apply in January 2009. It will then have 6 months to prepare the application. During this time, a large number of the museum staff and resources will be directed towards achieving Accreditation.
- The museum has already identified and has been working towards improving or implementing procedures to ensure that it can meet the stringent standards. However, certain aspects of the criteria also require certain standards to be met corporately, for example, HR policies relating to volunteers and child protection in the organisation, so Accreditation cannot be considered as something that the museum can achieve in isolation.
- The checklist of actions to be carried out between January and June 2009 to achieve Accreditation are attached overleaf.

Adrienne Whitehouse – Leisure Development Manager

Culture, Leisure and Major Projects

Extension: 4682

Head of Service – Mike Edmonds

**Museum Accreditation – Actions and items to be addressed from January – June 2009**

Area of work for Accreditation	Staff responsible	Actions/Info available to date
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**Governance**

Governance/Constitution documents – Committee minute or declaration of CE	AS – AW	Minute on file. Members services to provide copy
Who has the powers to approve policy documents? What is the procedure?	AS – AW	DMT/CYPPDO/Cabinet/ Council/ Constitution
Written copy of occupancy of premises	AS – AW	Property Services
Two years budgets, signed by Finance person	AS - JB	<i>Financial Services</i>
<p>Emergency Plan – Review and check against ‘model’ emergency plan. Needs to include:</p> <p>Arrangements for staff and visitors</p> <p>Arrangements for collections and buildings</p> <p>Risk assessments of threats such as fire, water, theft and vandalism or other disasters</p> <p>Procedures to be followed by staff on discovery of an emergency</p>	NP/YC & assistance from SAMS	
Procedures for reporting to the governing body – it must be shown that the museum professional on the staff has a direct input into policy development and decision making – the line of communication must be shown between the museum professional and the decision making in local government.	AS - AW	AW Leisure Development Manager (Assoc. Museums Association) reports to HoS/ DMT - to Policy Development Committee/Cabinet/Council
Volunteer Policy – the council must show that it has official procedures for recruiting and using volunteers	AS – AW & HR dept	<b>Requires Corporate Policy - HR</b>
Forward Plan – incorporate a spending plan into the action plan	ASJB/AW	Budget process to determine this
Explain staffing changes and impact on the service since Registration 1998	AS	
Copy of council Investors in People award letter	AS – HR	Training officer to supply

## User Services / Visitor Facilities

Research facilities for visitors – show the procedure for visitors wanting to carry out research on the museum collections/archives	AS/YC	
Visitor Surveys – how do we find out who our visitors are?	NP/LJ/JS/KW	
Visitor Surveys – show how we analyse them, record our findings and act on them	NP/KW	
Access Audit by the council Access Officer – report showing what has been done and what (if anything) is still needed	NP/Building control/AW	Show improvements since 1997 Externally conducted audit and adopted Access Policy – possible revised policy to C&YP Pol.Dev't Committee.  Building control
Access – are there any ways to improve physical or intellectual access in order to encourage a wider range of visitors?	AS/NP/ AW/KW/ JS	Tourism Network/ 6 Visitor Centres etc.  Chase Heritage Trail computer kiosks and access leaflets
Web surveys – can we use Chase Online to carry out visitor and non-visitor surveys? Investigate	LJ	
Access to collections in storage – any ways in which we could do this?	AS/YC	
Make more info available about the artefacts we have in store	AS/YC	
Publish historical info from the galleries on the website	AS/LJ	
Child Protection Policy – Check legal issues re: child protection and corporate child protection policy	AS	
Crime prevention officer's inspection and report – new inspection post refurbishment	NP/ Staffs Police	

## Collections

Adlib – computer cataloguing system -show that is updated and in use	YC	
Documentation Procedure Manual	YC	Revised and updated
Security copy of Accession Register – where is it kept, and where is this information recorded?	YC	
Documentation Plan to deal with backlog	YC	

Written manual and record for environmental monitoring and housekeeping. Description of procedures for collections care/environmental monitoring/housekeeping	YC	
Conservation cleaning rota – for galleries and stores	YC	
What percentage of the collections are loans?	YC	
Collections Management Policy – formal approval by council	AS/AW	Revised Policy approved by Portfolio Leader 2007.
Planned programme to institute improvements in collections care	YC/AS	
Documentation records for procedures as defined by SPECTRUM must be available for inspection	YC	

Key: AW	Adrienne Whitehouse	Leisure Development Manager
AS	Alisa Smith	Museum Services Officer
NP	Nicola Peace	Visitor Services Officer
LJ	Leon Jevons	Visitor Services Assistant
YC	Yvonne Cooper	Documentation Officer
JS	Julie Shire	Bookings Officer
KW	Karen Ward	Economic Development Officer (Tourism)
SAMS		Staffordshire Arts and Museums Service