

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Cabinet – 23 January 2023

**Report Title**

Rotherham Museums, Arts & Heritage Collections Management Policy

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

Yes

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

**Report Author(s)**

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**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

This report sets out the updated Collections Management Policy for the Rotherham Museums, Arts & Heritage Service. The Policy forms part of the key evidence base which enables the service to achieve Museums Accreditation from Arts Council England. Without Museum Accreditation, the Museums, Arts and Heritage Service cannot apply for funding to the Arts Council of England (ACE) and will not be able to take forward its conditional offer to join the Arts Council of England National Portfolio Organisation programme, which represents an investment of £250,000 per year for the next three years.

**Recommendations**

1. That Cabinet approves the Collections Management Policy (2023).
2. That Cabinet approves the delegation to the Assistant Director of Culture, Sport and Tourism in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion for any future changes or new versions of the Collections Policy.

## **List of Appendices Included**

- Appendix 1 Rotherham Museums, Arts & Heritage Collections Management Policy
- Appendix 2 Equalities Screening & Analysis Part A & Part B
- Appendix 3 Carbon Impact Assessment

## **Background Papers**

- Rotherham Cultural Strategy 2019-2026
- Rotherham Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2025
- Rotherham Collections Development Policy 2016
- Rotherham Collections Care and Conservation Policy 2016
- Rotherham Collections Documentation Policy 2016

## **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

N/A

## **Council Approval Required**

No

## **Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## **Rotherham Museums, Arts & Heritage Collections Management Policy**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 This report outlines updates and amendments to the Collections Management Policy, which is a key document for the Museums Accreditation process via Arts Council England.
- 1.2 The Museums Accreditation scheme is the UK industry standard for museums and galleries and ensures museums are managing their collections, engaging with visitors and are governed appropriately. It is managed as a UK partnership between Arts Council England, the Welsh Government, Museums Galleries Scotland and the Northern Ireland Museums Council. It is a national benchmark for a well-managed museum, demonstrating professionalism, accountability and gives confidence to donors, partners, and supporters. Being Museums Accredited also opens up opportunities for museums, including funding opportunities, donations and new partnerships.
- 1.3 Full Museums Accreditation lasts for five years and the Museums, Arts & Heritage service was last accredited on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016. However, due to backlogs within Arts Council England caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the application process for renewal has been delayed and is expected in 2024. This gives the service time to ensure all policies and procedures are current, fit for purpose and embedded within the service delivery plan in preparation for the next application window.
- 1.4 Museums Accreditation will also enable the Museum, Arts & Heritage service to secure external funding through Arts Council England and other funders, for the Rotherham Collection and the wider service. Although relating to the collection the accreditation is applied to a specific venue where the collection can be displayed, in this case Clifton Park Museum. As part of the accreditation process the service must demonstrate appropriate policies and procedures to support the care of collections.

### **2. Background**

#### **2.1 Strategic Context**

- 2.1.1 The Collections Management Policy aims to ensure that there is a well-managed collection for residents and visitors to enjoy which is representative and inclusive of its residents and can be accessed and enjoyed by people at all stages of their lives. The Rotherham Collection enables the Museums, Arts & Heritage service to develop a range of activities and programmes from toddler clubs to dementia workshops which utilise the objects in the collection to inspire learning, share stories, build cohesion, develop civic pride and improve the mental health and wellbeing of residents from across the borough.
- 2.1.2 Throughout 2018 partners from across the culture, voluntary and community sectors came together to collectively develop a new Cultural

Strategy for Rotherham, which was adopted by a number of organisations, including Rotherham Council in June 2019. The strategy sets out seven game-changers for transforming the cultural landscape of Rotherham, three of which underpin the development of the Collections Management Policy:

- Vital Neighbourhoods - focusing on ensuring that services, venues and programmes are truly representative of Rotherham's communities and enabling access to high-quality cultural provision locally.
- A Vibrant Heart – developing a rich and diverse cultural offer in the Town Centre including Clifton Park Museum.
- Passion to Profession – enabling engagement opportunities which build confidence and skills for life and work.

The Collections Management Policy aims to deliver against these objectives through the provision of access to collections at Clifton Park Museum and the creation of a collection which seeks to ensure appropriate representation and inclusion of the diverse range of communities in Rotherham.

2.1.3 Rotherham's joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2025 sets out four strategic aims which include:

- All children get the best start in life and go on to achieve their potential
- All Rotherham people enjoy the best possible mental health and wellbeing and have a good quality of life
- All Rotherham people live well for longer
- All Rotherham people live in healthy, safe and resilient communities

The Collections Management Policy will support the achievement of these aims through ensuring that the Rotherham Collection, which underpins many of the activities of the Museums, Arts & Heritage Service is well managed, appropriately maintained and accessible to a wider range of communities both in museum and community settings.

## 2.2 **Museums, Arts & Heritage**

2.2.1 Established in 1893 the Rotherham Collection holds more than 76,000 objects which tell the story of Rotherham's communities and shared heritage. Formed under the close supervision of the V&A, the collection included treasures from Rotherham's illustrious history, from the pottery that graced the tables of Buckingham Palace's finest banquets to the tools from the coal face of industry and the stories of ordinary working life across the borough.

2.2.2 Alongside the care of the Rotherham Collection, the Rotherham Museums, Arts & Heritage service manages Clifton Park Museum and

Boston Castle, as well as five heritage sites across the borough which are: Keppel's Column, Catcliffe Glass Cone, Rockingham Waterloo Kiln, Payne Mausoleum and Walker Mausoleum. It is also responsible for the statutory Rotherham Archives and Local Studies Service and is the caretaker of the Rotherham York & Lancaster Regimental Collection on behalf of the sole trustee, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.

### **3. Key Issues**

#### **3.1 Collections Management Policy**

3.1.1 Guidance on Museums Accreditation states that the Collections Management Policy should clearly set out how the service will develop, document, and look after its museum collections. The Museum Collection Policies were last updated in 2016 for the last Museums Accreditation renewal. The policies were published as three individual policies:

- Collections Development Policy
- Collections Care and Conservation Policy
- Collections Documentation Policy

The new Collections Management Policy rationalises these policies creating a single Collections Management Policy which covers the above requirements and takes on board the areas for improvement recommended in the recent Museum Collection Audit.

3.1.2 The Collections Management Policy has four main sections detailing:

- Collections Development – showing how collections development activities (acquisition, appraisal, deaccessioning, and disposal) link clearly to the service's mission and meet ethical commitments and legal requirements.
- Collections Care and Conservation – outlines the duty of care and responsibilities towards the collection, ensuring the long-term preservation of objects.
- Collections Documentation - ensures that collections documentation activities provide useful and useable information, are linked to the service's overarching mission and meet ethical commitments and legal requirements.
- Collection Loans – showing how the service manages collection loans in and out of the service, to ensure transparency, collection care and responsibility.

3.1.3 The Collections Management Policy is intended to be delivered in conjunction with the following documents:

- Collections Management Plan – which sets out priorities, activities and resources required to implement the Collections Management Policy.

- Collections Management Procedures Manual – which includes the processes of managing collections effectively using UK collection management standards (known as ‘Spectrum’.)
- Business Continuity Plan – which sets out the procedures required to implement in an emergency or disruption to normal working and outlines actions to secure and care for all assets, both during and after.

3.1.4 The policy sets out key themes for the future development of the collection which include:

- Archaeology - This will include all land within the boundaries of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough. Priority will be given to artefact material and residues from processed samples dating from the Palaeolithic period to the Medieval period. Particular emphasis will be placed on non-flint material of the pre-Roman period, and also to the early Medieval period where there are gaps in the collection.
- Decorative Art – Priority will be given to wares produced by the potteries that manufactured within Rotherham Metropolitan Borough that enhance and fill gaps in the current collections along with decorative and utilitarian glassware produced by the manufacturers that operated within Rotherham Metropolitan Borough.
- Fine Arts – Priority will be given to works produced by Rotherham artists or of Rotherham scenes, especially produced within the last 50 years; Sample arts works owned or displayed by Rotherham people of different classes and cultures, from different eras, to show art in the home; Commissioned works by contemporary artists and/or works associated with Rotherham.
- Natural Sciences – Priority will be given to vertebrates, especially older documented specimens of historic or by named local taxidermists or specimens from a Rotherham collector, but only where specimen source is known or assured; Palaeontology, with a focus on palaeontological specimens and palaeobotanical material, not represented in the collections; Geology, collecting will prioritise local specimens with good data that fill gaps in the existing collection. Advice will be sought in acquiring specimens from sites of scientific interest where specific rock types or exposures are very scarce or better preserved in situ.

## **4. Options considered and recommended proposal**

### **4.1 Do Nothing**

The current collections policies were adopted in 2016 as part of Museums Accreditation and have not been updated in light of the current guidance for Museums Accreditation or the changes to the service in terms of its refreshed mission and stronger focus on community engagement and participation.

To 'Do Nothing' would risk the loss of Museums Accreditation as the policies would not be fit for purpose. In losing accreditation the service would also lose the conditional offer of NPO funding from Arts Council England, having a financial impact of £750,000 over the next three years.

#### **4.2 Adopt the Collections Management Policy**

The Collections Management Policy appropriately reflects the current mission and values of the Museums, Arts & Heritage service and its commitment to ensuring community voice and influence within its activities.

The draft policy responds to and implements the recommendations from the recent Internal Audit of the Museum Collection and ensures that plans are in place for the safe and appropriate care of collections for future generations.

The policy will enable the service to retain its Museums Accreditation and fully participate in the Arts Council England NPO Programme. Although a conditional offer has been received from Arts Council England of £750,000 for the service and the communities it serves over the next three years, the process of due diligence checks will take place over the next three months to ensure that the appropriate policies are in place to support delivery.

This is the recommended option.

### **5. Consultation on proposal**

- 5.1 In developing the Collections Management Policy, consultation has taken place with the Council's Equalities, Asset Management and Climate Change Teams and Arts Council England. Consultation and benchmarking has also taken place with Museums Development Yorkshire and other local authority museum services across South Yorkshire to ensure that the policy is in line with best practice nationally.

### **6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

- 6.1 The Collections Management Policy is being presented for adoption by Cabinet on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023. Should the policy be approved, it will be adopted with immediate effect, subject to call-in procedures.
- 6.2 The Head of Creative Programming and Engagement and Museums, Arts & Heritage Manager will have overall accountability for the implementation of the policy and the supporting Collections Management Plan working closely with the Collections and Exhibitions team within the service.
- 6.3 Museums Accreditation inspection is expected to take place early 2024 but the timeframe has not yet been announced.

## **7. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications**

7.1 The Museums Arts and Heritage service operates on an approved net budget of £436,895 (Gross £594,175). By having a compliant Collections Management Policy, the service can better avail itself of funding opportunities from within the wider sector.

7.2 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.

## **8. Legal Advice and Implications**

8.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

## **9. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

9.1 There are no direct human resources implications arising from this report.

## **10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

10.1 The Rotherham Collection forms the foundation for the outreach, engagement and learning activities across the Museums, Arts & Heritage service and forms the basis of all exhibitions and associated programmes at Clifton Park Museum. Without the Rotherham Collection these programmes would not offer the same level of high-quality experience which supports education and learning, health and wellbeing, community cohesion and civic pride in museums, schools, care homes and community settings.

10.2 As Rotherham prepares to become the world's first Children's Capital of Culture in 2025, the Museums, Arts and Heritage Service is working to ensure that the voice and influence of children and young people is prevalent in its collections and programmes. Consideration will also be given to the Young Producer programme opening up opportunities for traineeships in collections management and development.

## **11. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

11.1 An Equalities Impact Screening, Assessment and Action Plan can be found at Appendix 2.

11.2 The Museums, Arts & Heritage service has undertaken extensive service transformation over the last three years which has included a number of research activities and pilot programmes with targeted groups to better understand their current levels of participation and engagement, representation within the collection and exhibitions, and barriers that prevent greater levels of engagement. Through these carefully co-produced programmes the service has begun to see a change in its audience profile with more communities from Global Majority backgrounds engaging, as well as a growth in engagement from children and young



people. These programmes have enabled the service to test new models of co-production and co-creation, building greater voice and influence for communities which guide the activities of the service including its management of collections. An example of how the service has co-produced with communities, is in relation to language. Through consultation, the service has reviewed language related to equalities and worked with residents to identify preferred terms when referring to “BAME” communities, such as “Global Majority” in order to more accurately represent ethnicity within the work of the service.

- 11.3 The Collections Management Policy seeks to build on the learning from these projects and further embed voice and influence into the policies that govern the development, management and care of the Rotherham Collection. Based on the experiences of these programmes and the data gathered through the Audience Finder programme the service has identified the following key audiences with which to form deeper connections with both the museum and collections. The service will therefore have a focus on the following:
- Global Majority Communities – specifically those of Pakistani, African, Roma/Slovak, Chinese and Yemeni descent whose heritage is more prevalent in Rotherham’s communities.
  - Children & Young people – through a focus on intergenerational families and the key relationships that children and young people have with significant adults in their lives.
- 11.4 Whilst the service will focus on these groups for development purposes, it will strive to ensure that all of Rotherham’s communities are represented and included.
- 11.5 The Equalities Action Plan sets out a series of measures for improving equalities at three levels of implementation:
- Museums, Arts & Heritage – service level, ensuring that equalities, diversity and inclusion is embedded at all levels of the service
  - Rotherham Collection – utilising the Collections Management Policy to improve inclusivity and relevance of the objects within the care of the service

Clifton Park Museum – Museums Accreditation is assigned to a specific venue as such consideration has been given in ensuring that this venue where most of the opportunity for displaying collections exists, is fit for purpose in ensuring inclusivity for a diverse range of audiences.

## **12. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change**

- 12.1 A Carbon Impact Assessment can be found at Appendix 2.
- 12.2 The key implication for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change is related to the storage of the collection, which is currently in two locations: Wath and Bailey House, Rotherham. Rationalising the collection will enable it to be

stored in a single facility and will eventually help to reduce the CO2 emissions by moving to a single space.

In addition, a Decarbonisation report has been carried out on Bailey House, which included a review on heating systems, and identifying emission improvements including insulation in the building.

### **13. Implications for Partners**

- 13.1 There are no direct implications for partners as the policy relates only to those collections wholly owned by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.

### **14. Risks and Mitigation**

- 14.1 Lack of sustainable funding model for the service:  
Through the adoption of the Collections Management Policy the service is enabled to secure Museums Accreditation, and therefore additional grants from funders such as Arts Council England and Art Fund.
- 14.2 Inappropriate storage for museum collection:  
The Collections Management Policy enables the service to begin the process of auditing and rationalising collections at Wath Store with a view to creating a single store at Bailey House.
- 14.3 Lack of inclusion within and access to the collection:  
The Museums, Arts & Heritage Service acts as a custodian of the Rotherham Collection on behalf of the borough. Through its programme of exhibitions, events, and educational activities it will ensure that the collection is developed to become representative of communities from across the borough and that greater access for engagement with the collections is made available both within museum and community settings. The Equalities Action Plan contained at Appendix 2 provides mitigation for this risk.

### **15. Accountable Officers**

Leanne Buchan, Head of Creative Programming & Engagement  
Lisa Howarth, Museums, Arts & Heritage Manager

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	09/01/23
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	03/01/23
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phillip Horsfield	23/12/22

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