

**STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Cabinet Delegated Decision**

**27 September 2013**

<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Nicholson Museum – Collection Management Framework</b>
<b>PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>Councillor Cawley - Portfolio Holder for Communities</b>
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>David Smith - Head of Communities, Culture and Climate Change</b>
<b>WARDS INVOLVED:</b>	<b>All Leek North.</b>

**Appendices Attached – Appendix A:** Collections Development Policy; **Appendix B:** Collections Documentation Policy; **Appendix C:** Collections Care & Conservation Policy; **Appendix D:** Access Policy; **Appendix E** Collections Care and Conservation Plan; and **Appendix F** Collections Documentation Plan

**1. Reason for the Report**

- 1.1 To obtain approval for the adoption of a Collections Management Framework for the Nicholson Museum.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Portfolio Holder approves adoption of the Collections Management Framework and associated plans.

**3. Executive Summary**

- 3.1 The Arts Council England's Museum Accreditation Scheme is the UK industry standard for museums and galleries. The scheme sets out nine standard requirements under three main headings: Organisational Health, Managing Collections, and Users and their Experiences.
- 3.2 Accredited museums must follow the primary Spectrum documentation procedures. Spectrum is the collection management standard that has been developed by the Collections Trust.
- 3.3 The Council is not currently well placed to achieve accreditation should it wish to do so. The museum is about to be reinvigorated via the Levelling Up Fund, and many supporting policies are either not in place or are very dated. The Accreditation Scheme does however provide a useful

framework for the development of the museum and facilitates a future application for accreditation if desired. The structure provided by the accreditation also assists the Council to ensure high quality, clearly defined and accountable collections management, resulting in an improved public service.

3.4 It is important that the museum has an effective collections management framework. The policies presented for approval in this report are designed to provide that framework and were developed using the Spectrum policy templates:

- Collections Development Policy,
- Collections Documentation Policy,
- Collections Care & Conservation Policy, and
- Access Policy.

3.5 These policies are supported by a Collections Care and Conservation Plan and a Collections Documentation Plan that sets out our approach to improving the documentation system. These have developed using the Spectrum plan templates.

#### **4. How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

4.1 The report links primarily to:

Aim 1: To help create a safer and healthier environment for our communities to live and work.

Aim 3: To help create a strong economy by supporting further regeneration of towns and villages.

#### **5. Alternative Options**

5.1 None identified.

#### **6. Implications**

6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

None

6.2 Workforce

None

6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment

The collections management framework includes an Access policy.

6.4 Financial Considerations

None

6.5 Legal

None

6.6 Climate Change

None

6.7 Consultation

None

6.8 Risk Assessment

There is a reputational risk if the Council does not management its collection appropriately.

Neil Rodgers  
**Executive Director (Place)**

**Web Links and  
Background Papers**

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/supporting-arts-museums-and-libraries/uk-museum-accreditation-scheme>  
<https://collectionstrust.org.uk/spectrum/>  
<https://collectionstrust.org.uk/accreditation/>  
<https://www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/article/2121/The-Nicholson-Museum-and-gallery>

**Contact details**

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**7. Detail**

*Background*

- 7.1 The Arts Council England's Museum Accreditation Scheme is the UK industry standard for museums and galleries. Assessment of applications takes account of size and type of museum and assistance is available through the Accreditation Mentors scheme.
- 7.2 As outlined below, the scheme sets out nine standard requirements under three main headings: Organisational Health, Managing Collections, and Users and their Experiences.

<b>Museum Accreditation Scheme</b>		
<b>Organisational Health</b>		
<b>1 Have appropriate governance and management.</b>		
<i>To meet the standard, we need:</i>		
1.1	A clear statement of purpose.	
1.2	An appropriate constitution.	
1.3	A satisfactory structure for your governance and management.	
<b>2 Plan ahead and have the resources to deliver your plan.</b>		
<i>To meet the standard, we need:</i>		
2.1	A forward or business plan which covers the current and subsequent planning year.	
2.2	Financial sustainability.	
<b>3 Assess and manage risk to your organisation.</b>		
<i>To meet the standard, we need:</i>		
3.1	Secure occupancy of all premises containing collections.	
3.2	A risk assessment of security arrangements.	
3.3	A clear, workable emergency plan.	
<b>Managing Collections</b>		
<b>4 Hold and develop collections.</b>		
<i>To meet the standard, we need:</i>		
4.1	To take responsibility for all the collections we manage.	
4.2	A policy, approved by the governing body, for developing collections, including acquisitions and disposals.	<p>“Your collections development policy must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the museum’s statement of purpose</li> <li>• an overview of current collections</li> <li>• themes and priorities for future collecting</li> <li>• themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal</li> <li>• information about the legal and ethical framework for acquiring and disposing of items</li> <li>• the date you’ll next review the policy.”</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">– Accreditation Standard 2018</p>

<b>5 Hold useful and useable information on collections.</b>		
<i>To meet the standard, we need:</i>		
5.1	An approved documentation policy.	<p>“Your museum must follow a collections documentation policy approved by your governing body.</p> <p>This policy may be a separate documentation policy or statement, or it may be part of a wider collections management or documentation plan.” – Accreditation Standard 2018</p>
5.2	To follow the primary Spectrum documentation procedures.	
<b>6 Care for and conserve collection.</b>		
<i>To meet the standard, we need:</i>		
6.1	An approved collections care and conservation policy.	<p>‘Your museum must have a care and conservation policy approved by your governing body.</p> <p>It should show how the collection care and conservation activities of your museum link to your statement of core purpose. It should meet ethical commitments and legal requirements.</p> <p>This policy may be a separate care and conservation policy or statement or may be part of a wider collections management framework, care and conservation plan, or in your forward or business plan.’ – Accreditation Standard 2018</p>
6.2	A collections care and conservation plan.	<p>‘Your museum must have a plan to maintain and, where possible, improve the way you care for and conserve your collections.</p> <p>This plan may be a separate collections care and conservation plan, part of an overall collections</p>

		management framework or in your forward or business plan.’ – Accreditation Standard 2018
<b>Users and their experiences</b>		
<b>7 Be accessible to the public.</b>		
<i>To meet the standard, we need:</i>		
7.1	An approved access policy.	“Your museum must have an access policy or statement approved by your governing body. It should cover how people can see, use, and reference your collection, gain access to your museum buildings and sites, and how you share information about the collection with people. This should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• using a variety of interpretative methods to exhibit the collections</li> <li>• enabling public access to the collections, buildings and sites, and associated information</li> <li>• the date you’ll next review the policy’</li> </ul> – Accreditation Standard 2018
7.2	An access plan.	
<b>8 Understand and develop your audiences.</b>		
<i>To meet the standard, we need</i>		
8.1	To understand who uses our museum, and who doesn’t.	
8.2	To use information to assess our users’ needs.	
8.3	To have a plan for developing our range of users.	
<b>9 Engage with your users, and improve their experience.</b>		
<i>To meet the standard, we need:</i>		
9.1	To provide stimulating learning and discovery activities, including exhibitions and programmes based on our collections.	
9.2	To communicate effectively with users and potential users through a range of access, marketing and promotional activities.	

- 7.3 As outlined in the following table, requirement 5.2 specifies that accredited museums must follow the primary Spectrum documentation procedures. Spectrum<sup>1</sup> is the collection management standard that has been developed by the Collections Trust (one of Arts Council England's Investment Principles Support Organisations (IPSO)) and provides "tried-and-tested advice" on museum collection management. Spectrum calls these activities procedures and there are nine primary procedures (and 21 in total).
- 7.4 UK museums wanting to meet the requirements of the Accreditation scheme will have to demonstrate that they meet, or have a plan to achieve, the Spectrum standard for all nine primary procedures:
- Object entry
  - Acquisition and accessioning.
  - Location and movement control.
  - Inventory.
  - Cataloguing.
  - Object exit.
  - Loans in (borrowing objects).
  - Loans out (lending objects).
  - Documentation planning.

### *The Nicholson Museum*

- 7.5 The Council is not currently well placed to achieve accreditation should it wish to do so. The museum is about to be reinvigorated via the Levelling Up Fund, and many supporting policies are either not in place or are very dated. The Accreditation Scheme does however provide a useful framework for the development of the museum and facilitates a future application for accreditation if desired. The structure provided by the accreditation also assists the Council to ensure high quality, clearly defined and accountable collections management, resulting in an improved public service.
- 7.6 As a starting point, it is important that the museum has an effective collections management framework<sup>2</sup>. The policies attached to this report are designed to provide that framework and were developed using the Spectrum policy templates:
- Collections Development Policy (Standard requirement 4.2),
  - Collections Documentation Policy (Standard requirement 5.1),
  - Collections Care & Conservation Policy (Standard requirement 6.1), and
  - Access Policy (Standard requirement 7.1).

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<sup>1</sup> Spectrum 5.1 was published in September 2022 and offers revised guidance on cataloguing and the use of collections, resulting from the Collection Trust's 'rethinking cataloguing' initiative. <https://collectionstrust.org.uk/spectrum/spectrum-5/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/collections-management-framework/>

- 7.7 These policies are supported by a Collections Care and Conservation Plan (Standard requirement 6.2) and a Collections Documentation Plan that sets out our approach to improving the documentation system. These have developed using the Spectrum plan templates.
- 7.8 Further policies, including an access plan, will be brought forward for consideration as the redevelopment of the Nicholson Museum progresses.