

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 9TH JANUARY 2008

ARTS AND MUSEUMS ACQUISITION AND DISPOSAL POLICY

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet ratification of the Council's Arts and Museums Acquisition and Disposal Policy.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 An Acquisition and Disposal Policy sets out a museum or museum service's priorities and procedures in terms of the objects and information it formally acquires through donation, purchase and loan, and also the procedure for the disposal of objects from the collections.
- 2.2 An Acquisition and Disposal Policy, ratified by the relevant committee or governing body is a key requirement of the Museum Accreditation Scheme, (formerly known as Registration). Administered by the Scottish Museums Council (SMC) on behalf of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), the Accreditation Scheme sets nationally agreed standards for UK museums. To qualify for accredited status, museums must meet clear basic requirements on how they care for and document their collections, how they are governed and managed, and on the information and services they offer to their users. The benefits to museums of being accredited include access to funding sources they would otherwise be excluded from; the ability to carry out loans, transfers and other arrangements and agreements within the museums sector; and a clear recognition by all that the museum meets a certain standard.

3. CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 In November 2007 East Ayrshire Arts and Museums five museums (The Dick Institute, Kilmarnock; Dean Castle, Kilmarnock; The Baird Institute, Cumnock; Burns House Museum, Mauchline; and Doon Valley Museum, Dalmellington) were all awarded provisional Accredited status following a 12 month process. This is the first time that all of the Council's museums have achieved this quality standard. This provisional status lasts for a period of 6 months and is awarded on the provision that East Ayrshire Arts and Museums Acquisition and Disposal Policy is amended and ratified by the Council within that timescale. Failure to do so will mean the withdrawal of Accredited status, but ratification will mean that the museums will be Fully Accredited.
- 3.2 It has been necessary to update the current Acquisition and Disposal Policy (2006-2011), and as a result Council ratification is required. The amendments do not change the tenor or overall content of the Policy, but adopt phraseology recommended by MLA and bring the Policy into line with the MLA's model

Acquisition and Disposal Policy as laid out in the MLA's Accreditation Standard. There are no significant issues arising from the minor changes required.

- 3.3.1 Key examples of changes from current policy include strengthening our acquisitions policy to allow us to meet MLA standards. These include statements that we recognise 'Treasure Trove' and other Museums standards. It also clearly defines the role of the 'Curator', acting on the council's behalf, as the ultimate determinant for making acquisitions in line with policy.
- 3.3.2 The disposal part of the policy outlines our position as not offering collections for disposal other than if it is based on sound curatorial reasons. The policy covers the circumstances in which disposals may take place and outlines the key standards that need to be applied, including offering objects first to other public collections, with any proceeds being reinvested into the collection purchase fund.
- 3.3.3 A copy of the revised policy is available on the Councillors' Information Portal and in hard copy in the Members' Information Point.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications to the Council.

5. LEGAL AUTHORITY/IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Accreditation will support the Council's Community Plan and emerging Leisure and Cultural Strategy.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Accreditation will enable the Arts and Museums service to more effectively meet the objectives of the Community Plan and the department's Continuous Improvement Plan.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Achieving Accredited status supports the aspirations of the Council as a major Museum Service provider in Scotland and will highlight the importance of our collections within a national context.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Cabinet are recommended to:-

- (i) ratify the Arts and Museums Acquisition and Disposal Policy;
- (ii) note the provisional Accredited status awarded to the Council's museums; and
- (iii) otherwise note the content of this report.

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Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

WS/JAG/AG

3 January 2008

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Acquisition and Disposal Policy 2007-2012 (showing amendments)
2. MLA Accreditation Standard (extract)

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Any person wishing to view the background papers listed above should telephone 01563 578179 and ask for John Griffiths, Head of Leisure Services.