

Individual Executive Member Decision

Title of Report:	Museum Acquisition & Disposal Policy
Report to be considered by:	Individual Executive Member Decision
Date on which Decision is to be taken:	3 May 2011
Forward Plan Ref:	ID2225

Purpose of Report: To approve revised collecting policy for West Berkshire Museum

Recommended Action: Approval

Reason for decision to be taken: To bring A&D Policy in line with MLA Accreditation Standard template and Executive decisions of 28 May 2009 concerning museum collection development.

Statutory: **Non-Statutory:**
Other:

Other options considered: None

Key background documentation: Conservation Management Plan: Museum Collections

Portfolio Member Details	
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Contact Officer Details	
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Implications

Policy:	A revised A&D Policy is required to meet the MLA template to enable the Museum to secure the national Accreditation Standard
Financial:	The revised A&D Policy will have a neutral impact on revenue budgets. The costs of acquiring any collection material through donation or purchase (including storage, conservation, display, etc) will be taken into account by officers when considering acquisition and acquisition will only be considered within available budgets. Any proceeds from the disposal of items by sale will be ring-fenced for future purchases of items of merit, subject to the repayment of any external funding granted in acquiring items.
Personnel:	
Legal/Procurement:	
Environmental:	
Partnering:	
Property:	
Risk Management:	The revised A&D Policy will provide better control of acquisition and disposal of collections, which will tend to reduce the Council's liabilities for claims for loss or damage of objects, disputes over title, etc.
Community Safety:	
Equalities:	N/A

Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council: No comments

Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman: No comments

Select Committee Chairman: No comments

Ward Members: N/A

Opposition Spokesperson: No comments

Local Stakeholders: Responses to consultation on a late draft A&D Policy were received from 13 museums and archives with collecting areas including or adjoining West Berkshire as well as the Museum Development Officer for Berkshire. All comments have been accommodated in the final version of the policy, as detailed in section (3).

Officers Consulted: Amanda Loaring, Heritage & Tourism Services Manager
Duncan Coe, Archaeological Officer

Trade Union:

Is this item subject to call-in.	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by OSC or associated Task Groups within preceding 6 months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>

Supporting Information

1. Background

1.1 The Museum's existing A&D (Acquisition & Disposal) Policy was approved by individual decision by the portfolio holder on 14 February 2008.

1.2 The MLA (museums, Libraries & Archives Council) introduced a new template for A&D Policies in April 2008.

1.3 The A&D Policy is a key collection management document; it determines what types of material the Museum may collect and from where. It also determines the procedure for disposing of material from the collections.

1.4 The adoption of an A&D Policy in accordance with the MLA template is a prerequisite for meeting the national Accreditation Standard for museums.

2. Collection Development Plan

2.1 A CMP (Conservation Management Plan) for the museum collections was prepared in March 2009 as part of the HLF-funded project planning for future redevelopment of the Museum.

2.2 The CMP was adopted by the Council's Executive on 28 May 2009, including a collection development plan that identified the types of material that the Museum should be collecting in the future.

2.3 The collection development plan also identified a range of existing material that should be considered for future rationalisation, including possible disposal.

2.4 The CMP was informed by the Sense of Place theme also approved by the Executive, and therefore a focus on West Berkshire for future collecting.

2.5 The A&D Policy has been revised in accordance with the CMP and collection development plan.

3. Consultation

3.1 Comments on a late draft of the A&D Policy were invited from 19 museums and archives with collecting areas that include or adjoin West Berkshire.

3.2 Responses were received from 13 organisations of which eight offered no comment. In addition staff met with the County Archivist to discuss arrangements for archive material. The Museum Development Officer for Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire was also consulted.

3.3 Substantive comments were received from five museums and archives, summarised below.

Museum, etc	Comments	Responses
Berkshire Record Office	Ensure liaison with BRO over acquisition or disposal of archives, ephemera, photographs, maps and books.	A&D Policy amended including reference to ensure integrity of collections.
Museum of	Archaeology – might wish to collect	No change to A&D Policy, but ensure

Reading	material from sites in West Berkshire for which Reading already holds archaeological archives.	improved liaison over acquisitions and possible future re-location of archives
	Social History – greater Reading urban area includes some overlap with West Berkshire.	No change to A&D Policy, but need to ensure liaison over future acquisitions and possible future re-location of material.
	Handling Collection – suggested that handling material be included in core collection rather than separate collection.	A&D Policy amended to allow for collection management based on current best practice.
Oxfordshire Museums Service	Suggested transfer of archaeological archives held for former [West] Berkshire sites now in south Oxfordshire.	No change to A&D Policy, but ensure improved liaison over acquisitions and possible future re-location of archives
Museum of English Rural Life	Suggested that handling material be included in core collection rather than separate collection.	A&D Policy amended to allow for collection management based on current best practice.
Wessex Film & Sound Archive	Proposed that WFSA is mentioned explicitly in 3.8.3 as a body with which films and sound recordings are deposited, including digital material.	A&D Policy amended to highlight liaison with WFSA and integrity of collections. No further reference to WFSA as collection management arrangement, not policy issue.

4. Revised A&D Policy

4.1 The revised A&D Policy follows the required MLA template:

- (1) Statement of Purpose – explains the aims of the Museum and its contribution to Council aims.
- (2) Existing Collections – material held by the Museum (excluding loaned items) under the following headings: Natural Sciences, Geology, Archaeology, Social & Local History, Fine Art, Decorative Art, Costume, Photographs, Local Studies Resources, Handling Material.
- (3) Criteria Governing Future Acquisition Policy – details future collecting policy for each group of material, to reflect Sense of Place theme and restriction to collecting material from West Berkshire.
- (4) Limitations on Collecting – including responsibility to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation Standard, taking into account limitations imposed by staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.
- (5) Collecting Policies of Other Museums – including requirement to take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields.
- (6) Policy Review Procedure – A&D Policy to be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years. (It is proposed that revised A&D Policy is next reviewed in December 2012.)
- (7) Acquisitions Not Covered By The Policy - acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances.
- (8) Acquisition Procedures – standard procedures required by the MLA.
- (9) Spoliation – requirement to follow the statement of principles ‘Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period’.

- (10) The Repatriation & Restitution of Objects and Human Remains - requirement to follow the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums'.
- (11) Management of Archives - requirement to follow the 'Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom'.
- (12) Disposal Procedures - standard procedures required by the MLA in accordance with the Museums Association.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The Museum seeks to secure material offered as donations and the majority of items are acquired in this way at no cost to the Council beyond collection care and collection management costs covered by revenue budgets, which will be taken into account by officers when items are being considered for acquisition.
- 5.2 The costs of storage, conservation, display, etc for some material, that would otherwise meet the A&D Policy, may exceed available revenue budgets and therefore prohibit its acquisition.
- 5.3 From time to time the Museum is offered items for acquisition by purchase. Where this material is of sufficient merit its purchase may be funded from the Heritage & Tourism Service acquisitions fund, with or without supporting grant aid.
- 5.4 The A&D Policy allows for the disposal of items by sale, subject to following the required disposal procedures. The MLA requires that the proceeds from any sale will be ring-fenced so that it can be demonstrated that they are spent in accordance with the Accreditation Standard.
- 5.5 Any proceeds from the disposal of items by sale will be paid in to the Heritage & Tourism Service acquisition fund towards the cost of future acquisition by purchase, subject to 5.6 below.
- 5.6 When disposal of an item 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.

Appendices

Appendix A - Acquisition & Disposal Policy 2011/14