

# BRIEFING PAPER

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**SUBJECT:** ARTS AND HERITAGE COLLECTIONS POLICY  
**DATE:** 12 DECEMBER 2013  
**RECIPIENT:** OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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## THIS IS NOT A DECISION PAPER

### SUMMARY:

A report is scheduled to be presented to the 17 December 2013 meeting of Cabinet requesting that the Arts and Heritage Collection Development Policy 2013-17 is approved by the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Leisure. This Policy, attached as Appendix 1, sets out the framework and criteria for developing the maritime, archive, local history, archaeology and art collections for Arts and Heritage over the next four years. It governs what can be acquired and what can be disposed of.

### BACKGROUND and BRIEFING DETAILS:

1. A Council approved acquisition and disposals policy is an essential requirement of the Arts Council Accreditation Scheme for museums. A separate but similar Accreditation scheme governing archives is administered by the National Archives. Without Accreditation, eligibility for funding for Southampton from the Arts Council, Heritage Lottery Fund and other lottery, trust and foundation grant giving sources would be significantly restricted.
2. The Arts & Heritage Collection Development Policy will guide the work of the Arts and Heritage team over the next three years as it rationalises current holdings, adds new material to its collections that reflect the needs of a modern city, and provides enhanced public access to this important learning resource.
3. The policy has developed in consultation with the council's curatorial team. The Chipperfield Advisory Committee has also been consulted; their key request was that a separate Arts Collection Policy was provided. Given that the proposed policy sets out a distinct section for the Art Collection and follows Arts Council guidance in terms of structure, an integrated policy is proposed, to retain a sense of cohesion for the City's collections and to make efficient use of officer's time.
4. The policy outlines how the collections have been shaped by the vision and Stewardship of our city forefathers over the last 100 years. It describes the strategic context within which they now play an important role in including:
  - Promoting Southampton and attracting investment
  - Supporting the development of Cultural Quarter projects
  - Making the City more attractive and sustainable
  - Supporting City learning and educational attainment agendas

Implementing better ways of working to manage reduced budgets and increasing demand.

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## RESOURCE/POLICY/FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

### Financial

5. In order to retain Accreditation – one of the most important marks of the gallery's status, Council must ensure it applies Arts Council's guidelines. The guidelines state that only in exceptional cases, may any disposal be motivated principally by financial reasons. Furthermore the guidelines state that where disposal is motivated by financial reasons, the governing body will not undertake disposal unless it can be demonstrated that all the following exceptional circumstances are met in full:
- the disposal will significantly improve the long-term public benefit derived from the remaining collection,
  - the disposal will not be undertaken to generate short-term revenue (for example to meet a budget deficit),
  - the disposal will be undertaken as a last resort after other sources of funding have been thoroughly explored.

### Property / Other

6. There are no property resource implications inherent in the policy itself. It will ultimately inform a collection review and storage relocation project which will have property implications in due course.

### Legal

7. Pursuant to the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, a local authority may provide and maintain museums and art galleries within its area and may do all such things as may be necessary or expedient for or in connection with the provision of maintenance thereof.
8. An acquisitions and disposals policy is a requirement of Arts Council England which is the strategic public body tasked by the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) to develop and implement national museums policy and to distribute DCMS museums funding to non-national museums. Items owned by the Council on trust must be kept, maintained and disposed of in accordance with the terms of the relevant trust's Scheme. A failure to do so may result in legal or regulatory action being initiated by interested parties.

### Policy

9. The report is in line with the Policy Framework.

## Appendices/Supporting Information:

Appendix 1 - Collections Development Policy 2013-17

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