

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 11 September 2012
title: MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT POLICY
submitted by: JOHN HEAP, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
principal author: CHRIS HUGHES, HEAD OF CULTURAL & LEISURE SERVICES

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To ask members to endorse the enclosed Museum Development Policy.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's priorities/objectives
 - **Council Ambitions** – This report contributes to making sure that the Council provides efficient services and improves access for all.
 - **Community Objectives** – the report contributes to encouraging access for all, community cohesion, and culture & tourism.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In October 2009, Committee endorsed the museum's Acquisitions & Disposals Policy that was updated as a result of the re-development of the museum, and the need to seek formal registration from the Museums, Libraries & Archives (MLA).
- 2.2 This was part of a range of documents required for registration.
- 2.3 Registration was a condition of the original lottery grant, and also opens up further avenues for the museum, some of which may include future funding opportunities.
- 2.4 Due to a re-structure within the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the MLA has been wound down, and responsibility for museum registration passed on to the Arts Council for England, hence the need to amend the documentation.
- 2.5 Whilst the museum and its collection is managed on behalf of the Borough Council by Lancashire Museums Service (LMS), the Clitheroe collection remains in the ownership of the Council, so we are the governing body for the purpose of this policy.

3 CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The enclosed document is broadly similar to the previous one, and accurately reflects the current status of the collection and how it is managed.
- 3.2 The document is based on a standard template, used across all facilities under the management/ownership of LMS, but makes specific reference to local details/issues.
- 3.3 The key headings are:
 - Statement of Purpose
 - Overview of the current collection
 - Future themes and priorities

- Rationalisation/Limitations
- Acquisitions
- Disposals

3.4 It should be recognised that the policy's primary aim is to set out the guiding principles for the Clitheroe collection. The future direction and care of the collection will need to be tied into the resources implications associated with it eg the cost of acquisitions and their future care.

3.5 Any changes to the policy would be discussed by the soon-to-be-established local advisory forum, with recommendations to the Council, as Governing Body.

4 **RISK ASSESSMENT**

The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- **Resources** – There are no specific resources associated with the care and management of the Clitheroe collection, apart from a small element as part of the LMS management agreement. Any changes, however, would need to take any additional resources into consideration.
- **Technical/Legal** – It is important that the museum attains its registration, and this cannot be achieved without a Development Policy.
- **Political** – As owners of the collection, the Borough Council is expected to manage it in a responsible manner.
- **Reputation** – There are elements of the collection that have a high profile within the local community. There are also elements that have been either loaned or gifted to the collection, making it important to demonstrate a responsible approach.

5 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

5.1 Notes the contents of the report and adopts the enclosed Development Policy;

5.2 Ensures that nominated members of the advisory committee have an active role in its future development.

JOHN C HEAP

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

CHRIS HUGHES

HEAD OF CULTURAL & LEISURE SERVICES

For further information, please ask for Chris Hughes 01200 414479

Ref: CS 11.9.12 CH/IW

Name of museum: Clitheroe Castle Museum

Name of governing body: Ribble Valley Borough Council

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body:

Date at which this policy is due for review: (To be completed 5 years from approval date)

1. Museum's statement of purpose

Under the terms of the management agreement, the Clitheroe Castle Museum Collection remains the property of Ribble Valley Borough Council, but is managed on their behalf by Lancashire County Museum Service (LCMS), Lancashire County Council:

'Our core purpose is to be a County-wide provider of museums and heritage services, working with partners to preserve our shared heritage and deliver quality experiences to engage and inspire our diverse users and audiences, both within Lancashire and beyond.'

2. An overview of current collections

Clitheroe Castle Museum has acquired collections of local artefacts, many of which are significant in the history of the town and its region. The following is a summary of the collections held by Clitheroe Castle Museum. All numbers are approximate.

Social History

The collection comprises about 5,000 items, mainly photographs, ephemera and mixed artefacts, pertaining to 18th, 19th and 20th century local history. It concentrates upon social, domestic and rural life in the Ribble Valley area and especially upon Clitheroe town history.

Costume

There is a small costume collection including civilian dress, accessories and occasional wear such as wedding dresses. The collection is sporadic and includes items from the 18th, 19th and 20th century. There has been no real thematic direction on collecting costume representative of the community past or present.

Natural History

There is a modest natural history collection composing of small amounts of ornithological, entomological and lepidoptera specimens in addition to some flora and fauna.

Art

The modest art collection includes oil paintings, watercolours and drawings of Clitheroe Castle and other topographical scenes in the town itself, principally by local artists. It also includes a collection of prints in all media of Clitheroe, its castle, and other historic places (Whalley Abbey, the Hodder Bridge, Waddington Church, Gisburn Priory, etc.) in the Ribble Valley region, dating largely from c. 1750 to c. 1850. In addition, the collection includes several portraits of 19th Century local industrialists and their families.

Archaeology

The collection is less than 150 items. Most notable of these are items recently found by Oxford Archaeology North's excavation during the recent refurbishment and building work

at Clitheroe Castle Museum. It has mixed origins, generally collected and donated by local worthies.

Geology

This area of the collection concentrates upon the geology of the Ribble Valley area. There are less than 1000 specimens, but the collection includes four type and figured specimens within this total, mainly from the Carboniferous Limestone of the area.

3. Themes and priorities for future collecting

In some areas there is overlap between the collecting policies of the Clitheroe Castle Museum and LCMS. Due to the limited storage available at Clitheroe Castle Museum, LCMS may wish to collect large items should Clitheroe Castle Museum not be able to accommodate them. These items would then form part of the LCMS collections.

The Clitheroe Castle Museum seeks to collect works of art and objects associated with the history of Clitheroe, and the Ribble Valley area. In particular artefacts associated with the following historical events will be sought:-

- Items relating to Clitheroe Castle and its history from its construction by Robert de Lacy in the 12th century, and its many military conflicts, including its capture by Royalists during the Civil War in 1644.
- Items relating to Henry VI and his capture near Clitheroe by Yorkist forces during the Wars of the Roses in 1465. In the context of this Acquisitions Policy, it is relevant to mention that up to the early 20th century a private museum, formerly at Bolton Hall, near Clitheroe, held a collection of personal memorabilia associated with Henry VI and said to have been left in the district after his capture.
- Items relating to Clitheroe and the Pendle Witches in the early 17th century, who were executed at Lancaster on August 20, 1612.
- Items relating to Clitheroe as a historic market town, well known for its fairs which have been regularly held there since the 12th century. Items relating to Industrial Revolution in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and Clitheroe's cotton spinning, and related industries. In addition, Clitheroe was the main centre for the manufacture of quick lime and plaster for the building industry, using the natural limestone of the region as a ready source of supply for the ten limekilns in the town.

Clitheroe Castle Museum will seek to strengthen the collections in the following collection areas:

Social History

The Governing Body will endeavour to strengthen its collections of material relating to social, domestic and rural life of the Ribble Valley Area. The collections should also concentrate on collecting items pertaining to the history of the Castle. The Museum will take steps to establish collections relevant to all communities in Ribble Valley Area.

Costume

The Governing Body will not seek to expand the costume collection, unless the costume piece in question is of exceptional significance and meaning to the history of Ribble Valley area.

Art

The Governing Body will seek to improve its general art collection of paintings, drawings, sculptures and other works of art, as a visual record of Clitheroe and the Ribble Valley over the past centuries. Works from contemporary artists will be considered. Areas of collecting will include local topography, events and activities, portraits and sculptures of local landowning families, local industrialists and local people.

Clitheroe Castle has been a tourist attraction for visitors for over 200 years, and has been drawn and painted by many major artists including J.M.W. Turner. In this context it is interesting that the local historian, the Rev. T.D. Whittaker, Rector of the nearby Whalley, was a personal friend of Turner. The Castle and its surrounding landscape features in many prints from the 18th and 19th centuries, either as a picturesque scene recorded on the tourist circuit on the way to the Lake District, or as a romantic setting for the legends associated with the Witches of Pendle. The Picturesque Movement of the late 18th and early 19th Centuries represents an important phase in the history of English art and Clitheroe Castle and its surrounding landscape was part of that tradition. The Museum will therefore seek to add to its collection of prints, and to augment it with oil paintings, watercolours and drawings by artists of national importance who have painted Clitheroe and its castle, and the Ribble Valley area.

Archaeology

Since LCMS is the repository for archaeological material for the County, the collection of archaeological material should be limited to the environs of the castle site, other than in exceptional circumstances. Material pertaining to Clitheroe and the surrounding Ribble Valley area should be directed to LCMS in the first instance.

Geology

Local rocks, minerals and fossils, with particular reference to the Carboniferous Strata and gritstones of Clitheroe and the adjacent area, will be acquired. The LCMS holds an extensive geology collection. Any new acquisitions for Clitheroe should not duplicate anything in the existing LCMS collections.

Natural History

The Governing Body will not seek to expand the Natural History collection, unless the specimen in question is of exceptional significance and meaning to the history of Clitheroe and surrounding area.

4. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

Clitheroe Castle Museum seeks to preserve, promote and improve access to all its collection areas. There are no areas of the collections that are thought to be a priority for review and disposal at the present time. However, an inventory project is being carried out on the Clitheroe Castle Collections. Until this process is complete, there is no intention to dispose of collections. A review/rationalisation of the collections will only be carried out once this project is completed. By responsible curation the museum will continue where necessary to rationalise collections on the grounds of relevance, duplication and condition.

Lancashire County Council Cultural Services will be undertaking a review of archival and photographic collections. Lancashire Archives, Lancashire County Library and Information Service, and Lancashire County Museum Service, all collect such material. Clitheroe Castle's collections of archive material will be reviewed as part of this larger project. This could result in the relocation of material within the County Councils Heritage Service, but would not affect ownership of any material.

5. Limitations on collecting

The museum recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation Standard. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

6. Collecting policies of other museums

The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

Specific reference is made to the following museum(s):

Lancashire County Museum Service
Lancashire Archives (formerly Lancashire Record Office)
Craven Museum, Skipton
Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery
Towneley Hall Art Gallery and Museums, Burnley
Haworth Art Gallery, Accrington
Ribchester Roman Museum

7. Policy review procedure

The acquisition and disposal policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years. The date when the policy is next due for review is noted above.

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the acquisition and disposal policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of existing collections.

8. Acquisitions not covered by the policy

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the governing body of the museum itself, having regard to the interests of other museums.

9. Acquisition procedures

- a. The museum will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- b. In particular, the museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally

owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).

- c. In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.
- d. So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.
- e. The museum will not acquire archaeological antiquities (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure as defined by the Treasure Act 1996.

- f. Any exceptions to the above clauses 8a, 8b, 8c, or 8e will only be because the museum is:
 - acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
 - acquiring an item of minor importance that lacks secure ownership history but in the best judgement of experts in the field concerned has not been illicitly traded
 - acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin
 - in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970

In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

- g. The museum does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

10. Spoliation

The museum will use the statement of principles ‘Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period’, issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

11. The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

The museum’s governing body, acting on the advice of the museum’s professional staff, if any, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the ‘Guidance for the care of human remains in museums’ issued by DCMS in 2005) , objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 13a-13d, 13g and 13o/s below will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

The disposal of human remains from museums in England, Northern Ireland and Wales will follow the procedures in the ‘Guidance for the care of human remains in museums’.

12. Management of archives

As the museum holds archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, its governing body will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (third edition, 2002).

13. Disposal procedures

Disposal preliminaries

- a. The governing body will ensure that the disposal process is carried out openly and with transparency.
- b. By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for society in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons for disposal must be established before consideration is given to the disposal of any items in the museum’s collection.
- c. The museum will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item and agreements on disposal made with donors will be taken into account.
- d. When disposal of a museum object 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.

Motivation for disposal and method of disposal

- e. When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined in paragraphs 13g-13s will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale or exchange.

- f. The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons

The disposal decision-making process

- f. Whether the disposal is motivated either by curatorial or financial reasons, the decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including the public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. External expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

Responsibility for disposal decision-making

- g. A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator of the collection acting alone.

Use of proceeds of sale

- h. Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England.
- i. The proceeds of a sale will be ring-fenced so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard.

Disposal by gift or sale

- j. Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain, unless it is to be destroyed. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- k. If the material is not acquired by any Accredited Museums to which it was offered directly as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material, normally through an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal, and in other specialist journals where appropriate.

1. The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.

Disposal by exchange

- m. The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.

Documenting disposal

- o. Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.