

SUBJECT: MUSEUM ACCREDITATION POLICIES

MEETING: Individual Cabinet Member Decision – Councillor Angela Sandles

DATE: 29th November 2023

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

PURPOSE:

1.1 To seek approval of the following policies:

- Collections Development Policy, MonLife Heritage Museums
- Museums, Documentation Policy, MonLife Heritage Museums
- Museums Care and Conservation Policy, MonLife Heritage Museums
- Abergavenny Museum Access Statement
- Caldicot Castle Access Statement
- Chepstow Museum Access Statement
- Shire Hall Museum, Monmouth Access Statement

1.2. All of these policies are essentially the same as those approved in 2016 for the last round of Museum Accreditation, with small updates as needed and close alignment to the Community and Corporate Plan made where appropriate. In particular we have updated our policies to meet our 10 year Heritage Strategy 2022-2032. We have a clear set of vision, mission and goals, which we follow within our annual Heritage and Culture Delivery Plan:

The Management of all heritage assets within MonLife to enhance the vibrancy of Monmouthshire, deliver inspirational and inspiring experiences and promote a deeply rooted sense of place.

In particular **Goal 1:** Contribute to the delivery of both the Council's key policy objectives and Welsh Government Priorities – including the Programme for Government, the Well Being of Future Generations Act, the Anti Racist Wales action plan and Curriculum for Wales, in order to deliver excellence at our sites, whilst including tackling social injustice, climate change and promoting our service for everyone.

Please note that some elements of the policies are standard pre-written paragraphs, which cannot be altered.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That the policies be adopted

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1. Abergavenny Museum, Caldicot Castle, Chepstow Museum and currently Monmouth Museum are all 'Accredited' under the national scheme administered by Arts Council England via Welsh Government Culture Division. The Accreditation process requires museums to meet minimum standards for a range of service provision. It provides users,

stakeholders and funders with clear reassurance about the professional status of a museum. Only Accredited Museums (or those working towards) are eligible for most Welsh Government Culture Division funding opportunities and other support, such as National Lottery Heritage Fund.

- 3.2. The revisions made to the previous policies are all considered to be ‘non-contentious’, in that they are in keeping with the spirit and purpose of the previous policy, and do not involve any additional financial commitments or obligations for the Council. All of the policies are based on templates recommended by professional museum bodies and take into account national legislation and local issues.

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

- By successfully going through the Accreditation Process we will be able to retain our position as a trusted organisation both to our communities, our users and our funders.
- A set of museum policies means we have systems in place to care for and provide access to our collections.
- As a thriving and viable museum we can contribute to many deliverables relating to equalities, Future Generations, Welsh language and socio economic duty.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- Approve Policies – preferred option,
- Do not approve policies – non preferred option. This means we will not be able to submit our application for Accreditation. Accreditation is a national scheme which provides the public, stakeholders and fundings reassurance that a museum meets nationally agreed guidelines and operates as a professional, credible and trusted service.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

6.1. There will be ongoing monitoring to ensure that Accreditation continues to be a scheme that is beneficial both to the public reputation, professional status and access to funding for museums.

7. REASONS:

7.1. The Accreditation Scheme invites museums to seek Accreditation approximately every three to five years. (There has been an extended gap since the last return due to Covid-19), Evidence must be submitted to show that the revised policy has been formally approved under delegated powers.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 ‘Accredited’ status for the Council’s museums is regarded as essential in order to maintain eligibility for a range of outside funding, advice and support. No additional resources are sought beyond the normal museum budget.

9. CONSULTEES:

Ian Saunders, Chief Officer, Customer, Culture and Wellbeing
MonLife Departmental Management Team

Megan de Silva – Collections Manager, MonLife Heritage Museums

Anne Rainsbury – Community Curator, MonLife Heritage Museums

Karin Molson – Learning Manager

Front of House staff, MonLife Heritage Museums (for Access Policies)
Sarah Paul, Welsh Government, Culture Division
Joanne Davies, MonLife, Development and Performance Manager

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- Collections Development Policy, MonLife Heritage Museums
- Museums, Documentation Policy, MonLife Heritage Museums
- Museums Care and Conservation Policy, MonLife Heritage Museums
- Abergavenny Museum Access Statement
- Caldicot Castle Access Statement
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- Shire Hall Museum, Monmouth Access Statement

All proposed for endorsement.

11. AUTHOR:

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12. CONTACT DETAILS:

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