

# **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

## **Report by the Executive Director of Educational Services**

**Educational Services Committee: 22 August 2012**

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**Subject: Updated - Acquisition and Disposal Policy**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To inform the Committee of the National Accreditation Scheme for Museums and the requirement to adopt an updated Collections Management and Development Plan to govern Clydebank Museum's collecting strategy. This includes the renaming of the document to Acquisition and Disposal Policy.
- 1.2** To inform Committee of the National Recognition Scheme, and the requirement to adopt an updated Acquisition and Disposal Policy in order to seek Recognition of the council's Singer Collection.

### **2. Recommendations**

#### **2.1** Members are asked:

- i. To note the contents of this report and the requirement for an updated Acquisition and Disposal Policy in order to maintain national Museum Accreditation.
- ii. To note the contents of this report and the progress being made to achieve National Recognition of the council's Singer Collection.
- iii. To approve the updated Museum Acquisition and Disposal Policy as appended.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1** Museum Accreditation is a voluntary quality assurance scheme for museums across the United Kingdom. The scheme is operated by Arts Council England, and Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) is responsible for the administration of it in Scotland. To qualify, 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.
- 3.2** West Dunbartonshire Council last submitted its approved Museum Collections Management and Development Plan to the SMC in December 2006. As a result Clydebank Museum achieved full Museum Accreditation. This enabled the attraction of substantial amounts of external funding to improve services. This plan now requires updating to reflect progress made in collections management.

- 3.3** In 2007 the Scottish Government initiated the National Recognition Scheme to acknowledge collections that demonstrate the nation's identity and diversity. The Scheme's main purposes are to highlight these collections, and to widen access for more people to enjoy them by providing funding for improvements.
- 3.4** WDC holds the largest and most comprehensive collection of sewing machines and associated archive material in Europe, with 831 machines from 130 different manufacturers (approx. 1/3 Singer) and over 36,000 items in the Archive. The Machine Collection showcases the development in technology of one of the most important inventions of the Second Industrial Revolution over a 130 year period with many rare and some unique examples.
- 3.5** In 2008 the Singer Collection held by West Dunbartonshire Council was recognised as being of National significance by the National Museums of Scotland. Subsequently in 2009 £56k was secured from the Esme Fairbairn Foundation to employ a Technical Curator to research and widen access to the Singer Collection, with a view to applying for National Recognition of the collection.

#### **4. Main Issues**

- 4.1** The existing Museum Collections Management and Development Plan has been updated to reflect updates to collections management in museums nationally. As part of these updates, the Plan has been renamed the Acquisition and Disposal Policy. Details of this are contained within the attached document Acquisition and Disposal Policy 2012 (Appendix 1).
- 4.2** Approval of the updated Museum Acquisition and Disposal Policy is essential to maintain our Museum Accreditation status, with the related funding opportunities which can result from this.
- 4.3** An application seeking National Recognition of the council's Singer Collection is being submitted. In order to meet the application criteria, an updated and approved Acquisition and Disposal Policy is required.

#### **5. People Implications**

- 5.1** There are no personnel issues involved.

#### **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1** The lack of an approved Acquisition and Disposal Policy will result in an inability to secure external funding from National bodies such as Museums Galleries Scotland. In addition it will result in the council's application for National Recognition of its Singer Collection being unsuccessful.

## **7. Risk Analysis**

- 7.1** There is no increased risk to the Council associated with the contents of this report.

## **8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 8.1** There are no equalities impact issues raised as a consequence of this report.

## **9. Consultation**

- 9.1** Consultation with Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) has taken place in the development of this updated Acquisition and Disposal Policy to ensure it meets the required criteria for Museums Accreditation. Similarly there has been ongoing consultation National Museums Scotland, and other national bodies in developing a bid for National Recognition of the Singer Collection.

## **10. Strategic Assessment**

**10.1** How does this (project/initiative) contribute to economic and social regeneration?

An up to date Museum Acquisition and Disposal Policy is a requirement to achieve national Accreditation status for Clydebank Museum. In achieving this status significant external funding can and has been attracted bringing additional monies to the authority. This has resulted in refurbishment of the museum and two new heritage centres increasing visitor figures and enhancing tourism; also a 4 year programme of paid internships providing employment opportunities.

**10.2** How will this help make best use of our money?

Museum Accreditation offers opportunities for attracting external funding which would not be achievable otherwise. WDC monies can and have been doubled and in some cases tripled through the securing of grants through external agencies such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, and Esme Fairbairn Foundation thereby maximising the potential of WDC investment.

**10.3** How does it make better use of our physical and human assets?

Through the securing of additional monies it has been possible to make significant improvements in the storage, security and environmental monitoring of the councils museum and archival assets. This has been achieved through a number of initiatives, including improved security, centralising stores and the purchase of museum and archive standard rolling storage.

**10.4** How does it change or impact on service provision?

In order to maintain and develop museum provision in the authority, and the care of the council's museum collections, it is essential that an approved Acquisition and Disposal Policy is in place. Lack of such a policy will result in removal of the museum's existing Accreditation, and will negate any application for National Recognition of the council's Singer collection. This will result in the loss of the potential of significant external funding opportunities available. In addition there is the potential loss of achieving prestigious National Recognition of the council's Singer Collection.

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**Appendix:** WDC: Acquisition and Disposal Policy 2012

**Wards Affected:** All wards are affected.