

**REPORT TO: CHILDREN'S & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON
20 AUGUST 2008**

SUBJECT: MUSEUM ACCREDITATION

BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The Committee is invited to note the outcome of the Museums Service's application for Museums Accreditation and approve the recommended action to ensure future full compliance.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section D(22) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the provision of museums and related services.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **Committee is asked to note that the Council's Museums Service has obtained "Provisional Accreditation" rather than "Full Accreditation" under the MLA (Museums, Libraries and Archives Council) Museums Accreditation Scheme.**
- 2.2 **Committee is asked to endorse the action plan contained in Appendix II outlining the essential remaining steps to securing Museums Accreditation.**
- 2.3 **Committee is asked to approve the Draft Key Aims and Purpose for the Museums Service contained in Appendix III and the Acquisition and Disposal Policy contained in Appendix IV.**
- 2.4 **Committee is asked to note that significant progress has been made towards securing Museums Accreditation and in supporting other museums and heritage providers through Council's approval of the post of Visitor Development Officer.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Museum Accreditation Scheme is administered in Scotland on behalf of the MLA by Museums Galleries Scotland, formerly the Scottish Museums Council (SMC). The Museum Accreditation Scheme was introduced in 2004 as the replacement for Museums Registration and the Council's Museums Service was invited to apply in 2007.
- 3.2 Museums Accreditation sets out nationally agreed standards for UK museums and provides a benchmark for grant making organisations, sponsors and donors. Compliance with Full Museums Accreditation is a prerequisite for

external funding from the majority of sources that are open to the Council for museum funding including the Museums Galleries Scotland grant aid schemes, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the majority of charitable trusts that might fund the museum directly or indirectly. Compliance is also a pre-requisite for the allocation of finds by the Treasure Trove Advisory Panel to the Museums Service.

3.3 Intimation was received from the Scottish Museums Council on 14 December 2007 that the Accreditation Panel of the MLA had agreed to award the status of Provisional Accreditation rather than Full Accreditation, that this Provisional Accreditation would be awarded for 12 months in the first instance and that there were outstanding action points to be achieved before Full Accreditation could be awarded. The correspondence from the Museums Galleries Scotland and areas for “required action” are contained in **Appendix I** of this report.

3.4 Falconer Museum

3.4.1 The significant number of actions in respect of the Falconer Museum require to be considered within the context of the museum being closed for major refurbishment during the accreditation period.

3.4.2 The museum re-opened in November 2007 and Members privileged to be at the official re-opening on 30 November will be aware of how the museum has been transformed, of the skilful blending of new technology and display techniques within the visitor experience, and of the vibrant community outreach and education programmes. Subsequent to that the Museum has been further enhanced by the incorporation of the Tourist Information Centre.

3.4.3 The Museums Service is confident that all of those actions in sections 2 and 3 and in 1.7 and 4.6 of the MLA report can be met in full before December 2008.

3.4.4 This leaves 2 aspects for consideration: 1.8 - Staff appropriate in numbers and experience; 4.5 - Minimising risk of damage to and deterioration of collection.

3.5 Tomintoul Museum

3.5.1 With regards to Tomintoul Museum there is a need to “progress with plans to install intruder and fire alarms in the museum”.

3.5.2 The redevelopment of the museum is currently the subject of joint discussions with VisitScotland, Crown Estate, HIE Moray, the Cairngorm National Park and the community. Hence specific plans in respect of intruder and fire alarms will form part of any essential redevelopment of the museum.

3.6 Service Wide

3.6.1 The action required under section 4.2 of the MLA report has been addressed by the preparation of a revised Acquisition and Disposal Policy contained in

Appendix III and the preparation of a draft Key Purpose and Aims of the Museums Services contained in **Appendix IV** for committee's approval.

- 3.6.2 The Educational Services Committee at its meeting of 10 August 2005 (para 5 refers) approved a proposal whereby the Council's Museums Service entered into an arrangement with Aberdeenshire Council whereby Aberdeenshire Council would provide conservation support at a cost of approximately £10,000 per annum. In effect Aberdeenshire Council was unable to fulfil its intention. Thus these challenges of collections care and conservation remained to be addressed.
- 3.6.3 In addressing this particular problem and the key challenge of inadequate staffing levels Council has taken into consideration the essential role of the Museums Service in supporting tourism and in supporting the Moray Museums and Heritage Forum and individual museums and heritage centres within that organisation. Essential provision has been made within the budget for the post of Visitor Development Officer to increase the number of visits to and usage of Council and other museums and heritage centres in Moray through appropriate marketing, outreach and development programmes, thereby ensuring that the existing Museums Officer's post will be able to concentrate on collections management.
- 3.6.4 Under 4.6 of the MLA report an external review of security arrangements was carried out in January 2008 with existing standards being confirmed as appropriate.
- 3.7 Thus considerable progress is being made in ensuring Museum Accreditation, with the essential steps being contained in **Appendix II** for Committee's endorsement.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan

The attainment of appropriate museums provision as outlined in this report supports the Council's priorities in respect of Educational Attainment and Economic Development and Tourism.

It also supports the Wealthier theme within Community Planning.

The securing of Museum Accreditation is contained within the Educational Services Service Improvement Plan.

(b) Policy and Legal

The Council has a statutory obligation to ensure there is adequate provision of facilities for cultural activities for inhabitants in the area, hence museums.

(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)

Financial - Without Full Accreditation the Museums Service will not be in a position to attract external funding. The service currently depends on Museums Galleries Scotland grant aid to commission any external conservation work. The redevelopment of Tomintoul Museum may be eligible for European Funding.

Risks - Without Full Accreditation the museums service will be unable to fulfil its strategic and monitoring roles and will be unable to apply for significant essential external funding.

Staffing - There are no staffing implications.

Property - There are no property implications.

(d) Consultations

The members of the Educational Services Senior Management Team have been consulted and support the recommendations within the report.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 That Committee endorses the action plan outlining the essential steps to securing Museum Accreditation.

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Background Papers: Correspondence from SMC
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