



Doncaster Council

Report

**Date: 6 November
2018**

To Councillor Nigel Ball Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure and Culture

Approval of three Archives documents – the Collections Development Policy, Collections Care Plan and Emergency Plan

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Nigel Ball	None – borough wide service	No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report is being submitted as official approval of the following three Archives documents; Collections Development Policy, Collections Care Plan and Emergency Plan, which is required for our application for Archives Accreditation.
2. The Collections Development Policy sets out for the next five years how, and what the Doncaster Archives will collect. The Policy has reviewed the current collections and identified areas of under-representation, and the Policy commits to making these collecting priorities for the Archives; this includes the Council's own 'Born Digital' records.
3. The Collections Care Plan looks at how the collection is cared for, including environmental conditions, security, fire prevention. As part of this work it assesses the current state of the building, outlining what is being done to address this and care for the collection. There is an action plan for improvements that are being made.
4. The Emergency Plan is a comprehensive plan for how to rescue the collection from a disaster such as fire or flood.
5. In 2013, the first scheme for Archives Accreditation came into effect, mirroring the successful Museum scheme that has been in place since 1988. Archives Accreditation is currently aimed at Archives that are Places of Deposit, which are official locations for public records, and aims to define good practice and agreed standards for archive services across the UK, thereby encouraging and

supporting the development of an excellent archive service.

6. As Doncaster Archives are an official Place of Deposit we were asked to apply this summer and submitted our application at the end of August. This approval is required before the Committee meet to discuss our application on 21 November.
7. The documents can be found at Appendix A (Collections Development Policy), Appendix B (Collections Care Plan) and Appendix C (Emergency Plan).

EXEMPT REPORT

8. The Emergency Plan (Appendix C) is exempt from publication for security reasons as it contains important information about the building and the most historically significant artefacts, as well as personal staff contact details. It is not for publication as this type of information is exempt in keeping with paragraph 7 of schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended - information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

RECOMMENDATIONS

9. To approve the Archives Collections Development Policy, Collections Care Plan and Emergency Plan.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

10. This will mean in the longer term a better archives service for the people of Doncaster. Archives Accreditation is designed to promote high standards of governance, collections care and services to users within archives. It will therefore ensure a better standard of care for the archives; which is the custodian of the written memory of the borough, as well as promoting a better service to users.

BACKGROUND

11. The Accreditation Scheme has been running in museums for 30 years and has led to significant improvements in governance arrangements; collections care and the delivery of services to users. It is the hallmark of a well-run museum. Therefore it is welcome that this is now being extended to Archives to promote improvements across the profession.
12. The National Archives (TNA) has determined that all Places of Deposit must be accredited in order; to ensure that the public records are cared for to a high standard and that they are as accessible as possible to the public who own them. A Place of Deposit we were asked to apply for Archives Accreditation in August 2018.
13. As a Place of Deposit Doncaster Archives is entitled to hold public records. Public records are defined by the Public Records Acts 1958 & 1967, as records of departments, or agencies of central government. Most of the records of central government, which it decides are important enough to preserve as archives are to be found in the Public Record Office in London. These include the archives of the railway companies and of the coal industry since

nationalisation. However, archives of institutions which are thought to be of local rather than of national importance are deposited in approved local offices, of which Doncaster Archives is one. However, the pre-nationalisation archives of local collieries in South Yorkshire are held at Sheffield Archives by long-standing national arrangement.

14. Doncaster Archives holds local public records of several types, including those of courts (coroners, magistrates and county courts) and hospitals. The oldest of these records date from 1533 and they are a vital record of the operation of public bodies, within the Doncaster borough for almost five hundred years. A more detailed explanation of the records held at the Archives which are Public Records can be found at Appendix D.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REASON FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

15. To not approve the Archives Collections Development Policy, Collections Care Plan and Emergency Plan. This would result in an automatic failure of the Accreditation application and convey a message to The National Archives of a lack of support for the Archive service within Doncaster.
16. To approve the Archives Collections Development Policy, Collections Care Plan and Emergency Plan. Although the current state of the Archives building means that a successful Accreditation application is unlikely at this time, The National Archives wishes to engage pro-actively with Places of Deposit such as; Doncaster to improve services to Accreditation standard and the approval of these documents would demonstrate support for the application and for the development of an excellent archives service generally.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

16.

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment 	None
	<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster • More people can live in a good quality, affordable home 	Working to raise standards to achieve Archives Accreditation will improve the care of, and access to, Doncaster's heritage. This will improve people's pride in Doncaster and their wellbeing through an increased sense of place and community.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport • Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage 	
	<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work 	None
	<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	None
	<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	None

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

17. These three documents aim to develop and care for the Doncaster Archives in a competent and professional manner. If the Council chooses not to support and engage with improvements to the Archives (which is the purpose of Accreditation), then there is a risk of significant deterioration of the archives, leading to either costly conservation or destruction and the loss of Doncaster's heritage.
18. As a result of the failure to engage positively with the Accreditation process, which aims to improve standards of governance, care and public accessibility to archives, there is a threat that the public records could be removed from the care of Doncaster Archives (Doncaster Council) by The National Archives, that could lead to a loss of access to their heritage for the people of Doncaster and a significant loss of reputation to the Council.
19. As the Accreditation process is new it is hard to evaluate the risks. The National Archives has no wish to withdraw the public records from Doncaster Archives, but if the Council refused to support the Accreditation process then they would have no choice but to uphold their commitment that all Places of Deposit must be accredited. If the Council engages with the process then we have every indication that The National Archives would provide support to promote the development of the Doncaster Archives, to Accreditation standard within a reasonable time frame.
20. However, it should be noted that to achieve Accreditation this will require significantly improved storage and visitor facilities for the archives, as well as the provision of a large amount of data storage space, for the 'Born Digital' archives; which also include the Council's own records.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials HMP Date 23.10.18]

21. It is important that we have a process for retention of historical records, particularly with our duties under the Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation. These policies support our legal duties.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials OB Date 24/10/2018]

22. There do not appear to be many direct financial implications arising from the majority of the policies recommended for approval by this report. However, within the Collection Care plan, it is proposed that several actions take place to improve the existing Archive facility. It is anticipated that, if they go ahead, the costs of these actions will be low in value and will be met from existing budgets. Any actions with high costs would need to be considered separately and funding identified before proceeding, taking into consideration that the Archive service is likely to transfer to new premises in the near future.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initial BT Date 22/10/2018]

23. There are no obvious apparent HR implications resulting for the requested approval of these associated 3 documents.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initial PW Date 24/10/18]

24. There are many challenges and risks to overcome in relation to digital preservation to ensure that relevant records continue to be accessible in the

face of rapid technology obsolescence. As outlined in the report and appendices, discussions need to take place with ICT and Information Governance, which will help to inform the technology requirements and options to support the implementation of the policy and plans and to mitigate the associated risks. This would require a proposal for consideration and prioritisation by the Technology Governance Board (TGB) which will include the technology implications, resource requirements and costs, which are likely to be significant.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initial KH Date 22.10.18]

25. Building on the relationship between people and place, while demonstrating the public value of our local heritage, could have a positive health, social and economic impact on Doncaster communities and residents. Policy that aims to preserve and enhance our heritage, in addition to improving the accessibility and enjoyment of our heritage resources, such as local archives, can have a positive impact on health and wellbeing. Potential routes to wellbeing using heritage and local history include: a focus on diversity and inclusion, learning and education and community and social engagement. In addition to continuing to care for and develop these archives, we recommend that the record types and groups of people that may be currently underrepresented in our archives have their local history and heritage recorded and celebrated.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials CD Date 19.10.2018]

26. These documents help to provide an improved service to the people of Doncaster by ensuring that their written heritage is cared for. The Collections Development Policy outlines a number of areas in the collections where groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are under-represented and commits the Archives to collecting in those areas to ensure that the archive collection properly represents the people of Doncaster.

CONSULTATION

27. Cllr Nigel Ball and Director of People, Damian Allen.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

28. Appendix A, Collections Development Policy
Appendix B, Collections Care Plan
Appendix C, Emergency Plan - NOT FOR PUBLICATION
Appendix D, Public and presentation records
Appendix E, Archives Accreditation Guidance

REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS

Debbie John-Lewis
Assistant Director, Communities
Telephone: 01302 737213 Email: Debbie.John-Lewis@doncaster.gov.uk

Damian Allen
Director of People (DCS/DASS)