

FOR PUBLICATION

UPDATED COLLECTING AND RATIONALISATION & DISPOSAL POLICIES FOR CHESTERFIELD MUSEUM (L000)

MEETING: 1. EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR LEISURE,
TOURISM & CULTURE
2. CABINET

DATE: 1. 10 JUNE 2014
2. 17 JUNE 2014

REPORT BY: HEAD OF REGENERATION

WARD: ALL

COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY: ALL

KEY DECISION NUMBER 397

1.0 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To update the Acquisitions and Disposals Policy for Chesterfield Museum, in line with Arts Council England Accreditation Standards.

1.2 To develop a procedure for dealing with the disposal of items from Chesterfield Museum's collections, in accordance with good practice.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 To approve the updated Collecting Policy for Chesterfield Museum Service.

2.2 To approve the Rationalisation and Disposal Policy for Chesterfield Museum Service.

2.3 To form a cross-party Museum Collections Committee, chaired by the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism, to consider recommendations for retention or disposal of objects from Chesterfield Museum's collections.

2.4 To delegate the responsibility of disposing of objects from Chesterfield Museum's collections to the Museum Collections Committee, acting on the advice of the curatorial staff.

3.0 **BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Museums' Accreditation Scheme sets nationally agreed standards for museums in the UK. Accredited museums must demonstrate their commitment to managing collections effectively for the enjoyment and benefit of users. Accreditation allows museums to assess their current performance and supports them in planning and developing their services. It also allows a museum to apply for funding grants from the Arts Council England and strengthens applications for funding from other public and private organisations.

3.2 All accredited museums must have an acquisitions and disposal policy, which not only provides the basis for the disposal process but also details the rationale behind the acquisition of objects for the collection. This policy should be reviewed every 5 years. Chesterfield Museum's current Acquisitions and Disposal Policy was last approved in 2008 and now needs to be updated.

3.3 In accordance with modern thinking, the Acquisitions and Disposal Policy is now divided into separate but linked policies – the Collecting Policy and the Rationalisation and Disposal Policy.

3.4 Although there is currently an Acquisitions and Disposal Policy in place, there are no procedures contained within the document on how to dispose of objects from the collection, if they do not fit the acquisition guidelines contained in the Policy. The Museums Association advises that museum collections need to be reviewed and developed in response to the needs of today's society.

3.5 Chesterfield Museum's collections are stored both onsite at the Stephenson Memorial Hall and offsite at 6 Ashgate Road. When the Museum's accreditation was renewed in 2013, reference was made to the need for investment in the storage facilities at Ashgate Road. It is proposed that, as part of Great Place Great Service, this site will be put up for sale and a new store for the collection will be located. This provides an opportunity for the rationalisation of the collections prior to the move.

4.0 **EXISTING COLLECTIONS**

- 4.1 The permanent collection concentrates on the social history of Chesterfield. It aims to provide the local community and visitors with information about the history of Chesterfield through its permanent displays and a programme of temporary exhibitions. There are over 31,000 objects in the permanent collection, including ceramics such as Brampton and Pearson's Potteries, the Robinson's collection, items from schools such as St Helena and Tapton House, the Red House Railway and the Council's weights and measures.
- 4.2 In addition there is a large collection of archaeology consisting of 41 archives relating to excavations, building surveys and archaeological watching briefs. These mainly relate to archaeological work within the Borough of Chesterfield. This collection also consists of individual finds and hoards which were Treasure Trove.
- 4.3 These items are used for the permanent display in the Museum and less than 5% of the collection is on display, which is slightly below the national average. The Museum also organises a programme of temporary exhibitions which utilise other objects from the permanent collection.
- 4.4 There is also an education collection which is secondary to the permanent collection and comprises 8,000 items including original items and replicas. These include duplicates of items within the permanent collection and items which are representative of aspects of social and industrial history but are not necessarily directly connected with the local area. These mainly span the 19th and 20th centuries. Items in this collection are used for loan boxes which go out to schools, and reminiscence boxes which go to care homes. They are also used for handling sessions at the Museum.

5.0 **COLLECTING POLICY**

- 5.1 This document (attached at Appendix 1) outlines Chesterfield Borough Council's policies in acquiring material for its museum collections. The Borough Council recognises that in operating a Museum it acts as a long term guardian of collections in the public domain and is accountable to the public for its actions.
- 5.2 The Policy details both the permanent and education collections, and sets criteria for future collecting. The main focus is on items

that are significant to the history of Chesterfield, but other conditions also apply:

- 5.2.1 Provenance – there must be a clear links to the Borough of Chesterfield for items to be accessioned into the permanent collection.
 - 5.2.2 Uniqueness – the Museum will not usually collect material for the permanent collection which duplicates examples already held.
 - 5.2.3 Storage and Condition – the cost of storage and conservation must be taken into account when acquiring material.
 - 5.2.4 Conflict with the collecting policies of other organisations.
 - 5.2.5 Suitability for education collection – if an item does not meet the criteria for acquisition into the Museum’s permanent collection, the Museum may consider whether it would be suitable for use in the education collection. Consideration will include the object’s use for subjects within the National Curriculum and its use for reminiscence purposes.
 - 5.2.6 Wishes of the donor – the Museum reserves the right to decline acceptance of an object where the wishes of the donor cannot be fulfilled or where the wishes are considered unreasonable.
 - 5.2.7 Display – consideration should be given for the potential for the object to be used in the permanent display, or in a temporary exhibition.
- 5.3 Some aspects of the collection also have specific conditions attached, for example, the Museum is not actively collecting new archaeological material except for significant local finds, but will actively collect objects relating to sporting and leisure activities in Chesterfield, but excluding the collection of trophies.
- 5.4 Limitations on collecting are also identified within the policy. These include:
- 5.4.1 Care of Collections – the Museum will not acquire, unless under exceptional circumstances, material that is not in good condition. Consideration must be given to the ability

of the service to meet the care and conservation costs of all items.

5.4.2 Duplication – the acquisition of material for the permanent museum collection needs to be considered carefully to prevent duplication.

5.4.3 Storage Capacity – the number and size of items that can be accepted is ultimately restricted by the amount of storage capacity.

5.4.4 Use of Collections – the Museum will only acquire items which are capable of being used for display, outreach, research or education.

5.5 One of the significant changes to the Collecting Policy is the emphasis on collecting items from Chesterfield Borough and only collecting objects from North Eastern Derbyshire where they had a significant impact on the history of Chesterfield.

5.6 New archaeological items will not actively be collected unless they are significant finds discovered as part of an official excavation within the Borough, or are important finds by individuals, including items declared Treasure Trove.

5.7 The cost of storage and conservation will now be taken into account when acquiring new material. Where these costs are prohibitive, or where the storage capacity is not available, the Museum may consider declining the gift. This is inline with current best practice.

6.0 **RATIONALISATION & DISPOSAL POLICY**

6.1 Museum collections represent the generosity of past and current donors and are established for the long term. Each generation has responsibility to the next to ensure that they do not become unmanageable and that they remain sustainable. Responsible curatorially-motivated disposal takes place as part of a museum's long-term development of its collections in order to make them sustainable and increase public benefit from those collections.

6.2 The Rationalisation and Disposal Policy (attached at Appendix 2) outlines Chesterfield Borough Council's rationale and procedures in reviewing material in its museum collections and assessing their significance in order to inform decisions about their future care.

- 6.3 It is imperative that collections are used and developed in response to the needs of today's society. Museums must balance the safeguarding and retention of items within their collections with the need to review and develop collections, acquire items and, in some cases, remove them.
- 6.4 The aims of rationalisation are to ensure that the Museum's collections continue to be of high quality and, in accordance with the Collecting Policy, relevant to Chesterfield. Periodic review ensures that the best use is made of the resources available.
- 6.5 The consideration of items for disposal must be guided by the Museum's Collecting Policy. This policy states that Chesterfield Museum aims to acquire material evidence and associated information that reflects the history of Chesterfield.
- 6.6 Prior to disposing of any item, consideration should be given to the outcome of the disposal. There are a range of primary outcomes:
- Improved care for the item.
 - Improved access to the item by the public.
 - Improved context for the item.
 - Continued retention of the item within the public domain.
 - Removal of any hazard posed by an item (e.g. through contamination).
- 6.7 In addition, there are other incidental outcomes to be considered:
- Resources freed up to better care for and utilise other parts of the collection.
 - Creating or optimising space in order to improve care and continued acquisitions.

7.0 **RATIONALISATION PROCESS**

7.1 Items within Chesterfield Museum's collections will be assessed either individually or, where applicable, as a group. They will be assessed against a range of criteria including:

- Exploitability – the potential of objects to be used for outreach, research, educational purposes, tourism and profile raising.
- Display – have objects been on display or have the potential to be on display.
- Historical significance – this is with specific reference to Chesterfield but certain items may have a national or regional significance.
- Provenance – do we know the context, background information behind an object.
- Uniqueness – is the object a rare example, are there exact duplicates or duplicates of type in the collections.
- Ownership – does Chesterfield Borough Council have clear ownership?
- Condition

7.2 A Collections Assessment Matrix has been developed outlining the criteria an item will be judged against and a copy of this matrix is contained in Appendix 2. Items assessed will be given a score from A to D to inform the rationalisation recommendation. An item may be unique and score an A, but cannot be displayed either as part of the permanent collection or in a temporary exhibition and score a D, and may be recommended for rationalisation.

7.3 The initial rationalisation assessment will be carried out by the senior curatorial staff, with reference to the Tourism, Museums & Events Manager.

7.4 A report will be provided for each item or group of items which includes:

- Simple name of the item.
- A brief description – including year and method of acquisition.
- Entry or accession number(s).
- Location of the item within the store.
- Rationalisation matrix scores.
- Statement of significance.
- Recommendations.
- Photographs of the item.

A copy of the Rationalisation Report is contained in Appendix 2.

- 7.5 There is currently no delegated responsibility for disposing of items from the Museum's collections. As stated in the Museum Association's Code of Ethics, the decision to remove an object must be made by the Museum's governing body (in the case of Chesterfield Museum, Chesterfield Borough Council) and not by a member of staff acting alone.
- 7.6 It is suggested that delegated responsibility for disposal of items from the collections should be given to a cross-party Museum Collections Committee of members, which would be chaired by the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism. All decisions made by the Committee would be based on advice from the curatorial staff, and must be documented.
- 7.7 All completed Rationalisation Reports would be submitted to the Committee and the recommendations considered. The final decision on whether to retain or dispose of an object would rest with the Committee. This is in line with other decision making processes within the Council, e.g. Planning Sub-Committee which considers percentage for art decisions. A draft copy of the terms of reference for this Committee is attached at Appendix 3.

8.0 **DISPOSAL**

- 8.1 Once the Committee has agreed that an item should be disposed of, the status of the item and the method of its entry into the collection needs to be taken into account. The information on how the item was acquired is included on the Rationalisation Report. This will affect and influence the method of disposal.

8.1.1 **Loan**

If the item is on loan, the lender must be contacted to discuss its return.

8.1.2 **Purchase**

If the item was acquired with the assistance of external funds, the funding bodies must be contacted to discuss any planned course of action.

8.1.3 **Donation/Bequest**

Establish whether there were any conditions laid down at the time of deposition that may affect any planned disposal.

8.1.4 **Unaccessioned**

If an item has not been accessioned into the collection, or if its method of entry is unknown, the museum must go to reasonable lengths to research the history of the item.

8.1.5 **Legal Considerations**

Review the documentation of the item to ensure that the museum has legal title to remove it, and that there are no conditions attached that might prevent the museum from following this course of action.

8.2 There are a number of options available for disposal of an item but preference should be given to keeping the item in the public domain.

8.2.1 It is recommended, where possible that the item is given as a free gift, or as a transfer, to another accredited museum. This should be considered first as it is most likely that items will remain cared for and accessible to the public.

8.2.2 If no accredited museum will accept the item, it could be given as a free gift or transfer to another institution or organisation within the public domain. In this case, consideration should be given to whether the recipient can provide adequate care and opportunities for access to the item.

8.2.3 If it proves impossible to keep an item in the public domain, the museum may consider returning the item to the donor. This may be the preferred course of action where there are extenuating circumstances such as conditions laid down on the donation, or where an item has personal significance to the donor, and is of a low cultural value or may be transferred out of the area.

8.2.4 Although there is a preference and tradition of free gift or transfer between museums, consideration should be given to selling an item to other museums. This may be the preferred option if the museum purchased the item with its own funds or has spent a significant amount of money on conserving it. Any money raised must be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the museum's collections.

8.2.5 If the options above are unsuccessful, the object could be transferred outside the public domain. The item should first be advertised to museums on the Museums Associations

'Find an Object' web listing service. There may, however, be circumstances where an object can be transferred to individuals or bodies outside the public domain, such as enthusiasts or specialist groups.

8.2.6 Consideration can also be given to sale of the item outside the public domain. As in 8.2.4 above, any money raised should be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections.

8.2.7 If a new location cannot be found for the item, it may be possible to recycle the item through sale as scrap or as a gift to charity.

8.2.8 If the item poses a risk to the health and safety of individuals or the collection, it can be destroyed. The museum may have to seek expert help to destroy an item safely (e.g. if an item contains asbestos).

9.0 **CONSULTATION**

9.1 Consultation has taken place with the Museums Association through their Collections Development Programme. An officer has visited Chesterfield Museum and offered advice on rationalisation in line with Arts Council England's Accreditation Standards. Support has been offered and this will be a great help in moving the project forward.

10.0 **LEGAL IMPLICATONS**

10.1 There may be legal reasons that prevent the disposal of an item. Although these mainly apply to national museums or museums that are constituted as charities, they also include conditions attached to a donation or bequest.

10.2 Legal restrictions will be considered when any item is selected for disposal.

11.0 **FINANCES**

11.1 It should be noted that it is unethical to dispose of an item for financial gain, or to cover a budget shortfall.

11.2 The rationalisation project will require a significant contribution of staff time. Additional financial resources may be required for:

- Occasional employment of specialists to provide context/background on an object's historical significance where it falls outside the knowledge of the curatorial staff, for which funding could be sourced from the existing Museum budget.
- To bring an alternative property up to standard as an offsite store for the Museum collections.

11.3 The Museums Service is working with Great Place, Great Service to find a new offsite store. A request for income from the proposed sale of the Ashgate Road site will be made in order to improve any property selected to the necessary standard. At the time of writing this report, an alternative site has not yet been identified and no costs can, therefore, be estimated.

12.0 **RISK MANAGEMENT**

Description of Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating Action	Resultant Likelihood	Resultant Impact
Rationalisation not supported by local people	M	H	Consultation event to take place to explain process and benefits	L	L
Suitable alternative storage not available for collections	M	H	Investment in council owned property from proposed sale of 6 Ashgate Road to bring Council owned property up to standard	L	L
Unethical disposal of items	M	H	Use of disposal toolkit	L	L

13.0 **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)**

13.1 A preliminary EIA has been undertaken for both the Collecting Policy and Rationalisation and Disposal Policy. In developing permanent collections, Chesterfield Museum Service aims to acquire material that reflects the history and identity of Chesterfield and the diversity of its local communities.

13.2 No negative impacts are anticipated as a result of implementing these policies. The promotion of use of items for reminiscence groups within Chesterfield is anticipated to have a positive impact on older people, and as the Museum has little material from ethnic minority groups in Chesterfield, the Collecting Policy places importance on considering acquiring material from these groups.

14.0 **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED**

14.1 The Council could decide not to rationalise Chesterfield Museum & Art Gallery's collections, but this could put the existing collections at risk as resources may not be available to care and conserve the objects to the required standard.

15.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

15.1 To approve the updated Collecting Policy for Chesterfield Museum Service.

15.2 To approve the Rationalisation and Disposal Policy for Chesterfield Museum Service.

15.3 To form a cross-party Museum Collections Committee, chaired by the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism, to consider recommendations for retention or disposal of objects from Chesterfield Museum's collections.

15.4 To delegate the responsibility of disposing of objects from Chesterfield Museum's collections to the Museum Collections Committee, acting on the advice of the curatorial staff.

16.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

16.1 There is currently not delegated responsibility for disposal of items in the Museum collections. As disposal is a necessary part of any collections review, it is important that a delegated authority is appointed.

16.2 Rationalising Chesterfield Museum's collections will allow better care and conservation of objects retained, as well as more opportunities to display retained items and better access for people wanting to use the collections for research, providing a better service.

You can get more information about this report from Alyson Barnes (01246 345775).

Officer recommendation supported/not supported/modified as below or Executive Member's recommendation/comments if no officer recommendation.

A Serjeant

Signed

Executive Member

Date 10.06.14

Consultee Executive Member/Support Member comments (if applicable)/declaration of interests

COLLECTING POLICY
Chesterfield Borough Council
Museum Service

April 2014



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document outlines Chesterfield Borough Council's policies in acquiring material for its museum collections. The Borough Council recognises that in operating a Museum it acts as a long term guardian of collections in the public domain and is accountable to the public for its actions.

2.0 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of Chesterfield Museum Service is:

- To preserve, interpret, develop and manage the Council's museum collection
- To operate Chesterfield Museum and the Revolution House
- To promote interest in the history of Chesterfield
- To provide other services appropriate to a museum

for the education and enjoyment of the people of Chesterfield and society at large.

2.2 Aim – Permanent Collection

In developing permanent collections, Chesterfield Museum Service aims to acquire material evidence and associated information that reflects the history and identity of Chesterfield and the diversity of its local communities.

2.3 Aim – Education Handling Collection

In acquiring an education handling collection, Chesterfield Museum Service aims to provide material which can be loaned for use in schools and with reminiscence groups within Chesterfield or used for handling and educational purposes within the museum itself.

3.0 EXISTING COLLECTIONS – PERMANENT COLLECTION

3.1 Archaeology

- Finds from North Derbyshire Archaeological Trust undertaken in Chesterfield town centre during the 1970s.
- Finds from excavations by Harry Monet-Lane in Chesterfield and Derbyshire including archive notes.
- Finds from excavations by North Derbyshire Archaeological Trust from Brackenfield.
- Finds and archive material from archaeological field surveys and assessments carried out in advance of development or open casting in the Chesterfield Borough.
- Archives from excavations at Staveley Hall organised by Staveley Local History Society
- Archive relating to discovery of medieval priest's grave at Spital
- The Malvern Road hoard of Roman coins
- The Morton Hoard of silver denarii
- Hoard of 3rd and 4th century Roman coins found at Grassmoor
- The Clay Cross Hoard of Bronze Age palstaves
- Individual finds found by metal detectorists and acquired under the Treasure Act including a Viking silver ingot and 17th century silver gilt plaque

3.2 **Social & Industrial History – Medieval to early 19th Century**

- Late 14th century builder's windlass used in the construction of Chesterfield Parish Church
- Trade tokens from the 17th & 19th centuries issued by local businesses
- Banner made to celebrate the centenary of the Revolution of 1688 showing the Revolution House
- Shoe buckles made in Bolsover in the 18th century
- Race cards for Chesterfield Races in the late 18th century
- 17th and 18th century domestic items – kitchen utensils and tureen
- Straw work boxes, silk quilt and other material associated with Napoleonic prisoners of war held on parole in Chesterfield
- Cannonballs and small fire grate attributed to Smith's Foundry, Wheatbridge

3.3 **Social & Industrial History – Mid 19th to 21st centuries**

It is in this area that the collections have expanded most rapidly since the opening of Chesterfield Museum. The increased volume of material available for this period reflects the expansion of the town of Chesterfield itself, both in terms of industry and population, and national trends towards mass production and growing affluence.

3.3.1 **Costume & textiles**

- Ritual clothing – christening gowns, wedding dresses, mourning wear, Whit Walk dresses, 'Sunday Best' clothes, Court presentation costume, Deputy Lord Lieutenant's costume, Mayoral robes
- Everyday clothing – underwear, working clothes including footwear, stockings, hats, accessories, personal care & grooming items
- Uniform – Second World War armed services, Home Front uniforms
- Worked textiles - needlework samplers and embroidered items for the home
- Processional banners – Derbyshire Miners Federations and Sunday Schools, banner from the Polish Ex-Combatants Association

3.3.2 **Home Life and Leisure**

- Laundry equipment, kitchen and cleaning equipment, items of furniture including tin baths, child's pram, small selection of toys, two harmoniums, a harp, gramophone, 1930s cinema projector and film stores
- The Roberts Collection of camera and photographic equipment
- The North Midland Railway and Payton Model Engineering Collection
- Items relating to Chesterfield Football Club
- Material relating to clubs and societies from the Chesterfield area, including badges and ephemera
- Collection of World War II 'home front' objects

3.3.3 **Ephemera and Photographs**

- The Handford Collection of documents, books, maps and photographs relating to the history of Old Whittington.
- The Goodlad Collection of ephemera relating to Chesterfield businesses, leisure activities and events.
- Original photographs and postcards of Chesterfield and North Eastern Derbyshire places, scenes and industrial sites including those taken by Chesterfield photographers and studios
- Chesterfield banknotes

- Photographs taken by Borough Council departments usually in advance of redevelopment
- Photographs of Chesterfield Mayors
- Borough extension maps
- Daguerrotype of Charles Markham
- Glass plate negatives showing scenes of Chesterfield and Chesterfield industries
- Programmes and photographs from the Civic Theatre (later the Pomegranate)

3.3.4 **Agriculture**

A small number of items of agricultural equipment from farms around Chesterfield

3.3.5 **Retail and Commercial**

- Equipment and promotional items from Chesterfield shops, often bearing the name of the business (e.g. coat hangers, invoice holders). This includes related ephemera
- Shop fittings from Mr English's grocery shop
- Equipment and stock from the Hanson saddlery business
- Stock from Stanley's drapery shop, North Wingfield
- Small printing press from Chesterfield printer, Thomas Brayshaw
- Dentist's equipment
- Clogger's bench and tools
- Comptometers

3.3.6 **Industry**

- Coal mining equipment (small scale) including emergency wheel from Williamthorpe Colliery, coal tub, miner's lamps, chisels, shovels, tallies, safety equipment
- Stationary steam engines and industrial blacksmith's workshop from Markham Engineering and models of gyratory crusher made at Sheepbridge Engineering
- Wagon plates from Chesterfield wagon makers
- Railway material connected with local lines, stations and sheds
- Equipment and moulds from Whittington Moor and Brampton potteries
- Cotton reels and equipment from Manlove's Mill, Holymoorside
- Material from Dema Glass, Chesterfield Cylinders, Sheepbridge Stokes, Bryan Donkin, Clay Cross Company (including Biwaters), Staveley Company all collected on closure of these industries in the late 1990s and early 2000s
- Memorabilia relating to George Stephenson and family
- Products and material relating to Robinson and Sons
- Collection of mineral water and beer bottles from Chesterfield, Brimington and Staveley mineral water manufacturers and Chesterfield breweries
- Barrel making tools used at Brampton Brewery

3.3.7 **Services**

- Material relating to local schools, particularly Tapton House and St Helena
- Fire Brigade hose cart
- Police service items including typewriter, whistles and notebooks

- Militaria items relating to local regiments
- Material relating to bus transport in Chesterfield

3.3.8 Civic and Commemorative

- Commemorative items including the Eastwood casket, silver trowels etc relating to Chesterfield Borough Council
- Commemorative material from Chesterfield's twin towns and other 'Chesterfields' around the world
- Standard measures
- Commemorative publications and souvenirs of local and national events
- Mementos of important events
- A collection of 'crested ware' bearing the Chesterfield Borough seal or coat of arms.
- Commemorative items relating to the Revolution House and the Centenary, Bi-centenary and Tercentenary
- A collection of sporting, school and civic trophies

3.4 Fine Art

- The Syddall Collection – oils, pastels and pencil sketches by Joseph Syddall (1864-1942) from Old Whittington
- Oil portraits of local dignitaries and industrialists
- Watercolours of churches in the Scarsdale Hundred by Samuel Hieronymous Grimm (1733-1794)
- Oil paintings by David Gilchik (1892-1974) commissioned by the Staveley Company in the 1940s.
- Various pictures in different media of local scenes or by locally based artists
- Examples of the work of Phyllis Hanson, including documentary pictures illustrating the Chesterfield scene in the 1970s and 80s.

3.5 Decorative Art

- 19th and 20th century saltglaze and other stoneware made in Brampton and at Whittington Moor. The 20th century pieces mainly relate to Pearson & Co.
- The Gordon Collection – 1950s studio pottery made by William Gordon at Brampton and Old Whittington. Also includes pottery making equipment and ceramics (including tiles), sketchbooks and drawings from Gordon's later production
- The Eastwood bequest – fine china including Royal Worcester and Crown Derby
- Early 19th century cut lead crystal glass made by the Dixon factory, Whittington
- 20th century glass tableware made in Chesterfield by Dema Glass
- Stained glass windows from Staveley Works and the Pomegranate Theatre
- 17th, 18th and 19th century furniture, some of local provenance, displayed at Revolution House

3.6 **Geology**

- The Robinson Collection – a representative collection of mineral samples both local and non-local formed by an amateur geologist
- Various fossils some of which collected locally from coal seams

3.7 **Natural History**

- Cinnamon starling in case
- One of the last canaries to be used at Markham Colliery

4.0 **EXISTING COLLECTIONS – EDUCATION HANDLING COLLECTION**

The education collection is a secondary collection comprising 8,000 items which includes original items and replicas. These include duplicates of items within the permanent collection and items which are representative of aspects of social and industrial history but are not necessarily directly connected with the local area. These mainly span the 19th and 20th centuries.

4.1 **Social and Industrial History Items (original material)**

- Laundry equipment, domestic items including kitchen equipment, cleaning equipment, lighting and home furnishings
- Bottles and various forms of packaging
- Items related to transport including bus conductor's equipment
- Material relating to World War One (this has been collected specifically for a loan box on the Great War)
- Material relating to World War Two (mostly the Home Front) including gas masks, stirrup pumps, ARP items and rationing
- Costume – underwear, hats, uniforms, Victorian day dress, clothing accessories, Indian costume and miscellaneous items of ladies' wear
- Coins and money – pre-decimal Victorian and 20th century coins, £1 notes, banknotes relating to hyperinflation in post-WWI Germany
- Mining equipment including protective equipment and tallies
- Material relating to other 'Chesterfields' around the world
- Material relating to leisure activities
- Some toys and games
- Rug making and sewing equipment
- Tools
- Clay pipes
- Cameras
- Records including gramophone
- Commemorative items including Royal events

4.2 **Ephemera and photographs**

- Copies and laminated scans of images showing Chesterfield or local industries
- Various glass slides
- A large range of ephemera including theatre programmes, knitting patterns, magazines, newspapers, World War Two booklets, cookery pamphlets and greetings cards

4.3 Replicas

- **Roman material** – pottery, wax tablets, coins, strigils, tesserae, knucklebones, glass, costume (Roman boy, woman and Romano-British lady), child-size soldier's armour including helmet, shield, javelin and sword
- **Viking material** – pottery, jewellery, coins, bone/horn cup, weighing scales, costume, bone needles, runes
- **Medieval material** – pottery, pewter trencher, lighting, distaff, leather purses, arrowheads and arrow shafts, pilgrim badges, fabric, costume (both adult and child sizes)
- **Tudor material** – pottery, pewter plates & flagon, wooden trenchers, leather tankards, games, coins, horn books, pomander, scent bottle, astrolabe, horn & pewter spoons, rushnips, costume
- **World War Two** – costume including aprons, balaclavas, cardigans
- **Food** – a range of replica food items

5.0 CRITERIA FOR FUTURE COLLECTING

When acquiring items for the Museum collections, consideration will be given to the following:

5.1 Historical Significance to Chesterfield

The Museum will acquire items from or associated with the Borough of Chesterfield. The history of the regions of North East Derbyshire and Bolsover are interlinked in many ways with the history of Chesterfield. Although items from these regions will not be actively collected, consideration will be given to the acquisition of objects if they reflect an aspect of Chesterfield's history, had a direct impact on the town and its people, and influenced its development, or are regionally significant.

5.2 Provenance

There must be a clear link to the Borough of Chesterfield or its development for items to be accessioned into the permanent collection.

5.3 Uniqueness

The Museum will not usually collect material for the permanent collection which duplicates examples already held unless it is an integral part of a larger collection. Special consideration will be given to rare or unique examples.

5.4 Storage and Condition

The cost of storage and conservation must be taken into account when acquiring material. Where these costs are prohibitive, or where storage capacity is not available, the Museum may consider declining the gift.

5.5 Conflict with the collecting policies of other organisations

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.

5.6 Suitability for education collection

If an item does not meet the criteria for acquisition into the Museum's permanent collection, the Museum may consider whether it would be suitable for use in the education collection. Consideration will include the object's use for subjects within the National Curriculum and its use for outreach purposes. Objects accepted into the Education Collection will not necessarily have specific reference to Chesterfield unless a duplicate.

For donated items suitable for the Education Collection, the Museum will make it clear to the donor that these items may be either 'used up' or damaged over time and will not have the same standards of preservation applied to them as the permanent collections.

5.7 Wishes of the donor

The Museum will consider the wishes of the donor when acquiring objects. The Museum reserves the right to decline acceptance of an object where the wishes of the donor cannot be fulfilled or where the wishes are considered unreasonable.

The Museum cannot guarantee an object's immediate or permanent display.

5.8 Display

Consideration should be given for the potential for the object to be used in the permanent display, or in a temporary exhibition. The cost of including an object into the permanent display would also be a consideration.

6.0 SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Archaeology

It is Chesterfield Museum's policy not to actively collect new archaeological material. Exceptions to this would either be significant local finds with their associated archives discovered as part of an official excavation within the Borough of Chesterfield, or important archaeological finds by individuals including items declared Treasure Trove.

6.2 Social and Industrial History – Medieval to early 19th century

The collections remain very thin in this area and opportunities to obtain material are few. Where there is a strong connection to Chesterfield, opportunities to develop this collection will be explored.

6.3 Social and Industrial History – Mid 19th to 21st centuries

6.3.1 Costume and Textiles

The Museum does not aspire to be a museum of costume. Consideration should only be given to costume where there is clear provenance to Chesterfield, where information is available about the wearer and where the items reflect the social and industrial history of the town.

Textile and embroidery items will only be acquired if there is a clear connection to Chesterfield and there is significant local information about the item.

Union and Sunday School banners are an important part of Chesterfield's heritage but, because of the high costs of restoration and care of these items, they will be considered on an individual basis in consultation with other authorities and museums having an interest in this material.

6.3.2 Home, Domestic Life & Leisure

Collections are strong in the area of home and domestic life and the Museum will not place emphasis on acquiring further material except where there is a link to other areas of collecting, for example domestic

items which have a good provenance to a Chesterfield manufacturer or the item fills a gap in the collection.

Purchase at a Chesterfield shop or use in a Chesterfield home will not be sufficient reason for acceptance, except where there is an important story attached to the object.

The Museum does not have a wide range of items relating to sporting or leisure activities in the town but does not wish to acquire more trophies, already having a representative collection. The Museum will acquire those items which have a particular story behind them or are related to a significant person or event.

6.3.3 Ephemera and Photographs

Ephemera, such as tax returns etc, which is general in nature and not reflecting life in Chesterfield will not be collected.

Material related to Chesterfield businesses, industries and organisations will be collected only when it does not duplicate material already in the collection except where it is notably different to similar examples.

The Museum will not generally collect archival documents (wills etc) except where they provide supporting evidence for other areas of the collection, or are integral to a larger group, or form part of the historical records of the Borough. These items, if offered, will be referred to the appropriate Record Office or Archive.

6.3.4 Agriculture

The aim is to represent agriculture and its impact on Chesterfield Borough but not to provide a comprehensive collection.

6.3.5 Industry

Where it is known that local industries are about to close, the Museum will consider collecting representative material from the company.

Railway and mining operations are an important part of Chesterfield's industrial history and identity. Objects, however, will only be acquired where there is a clear connection to the area.

Items connected to George Stephenson's life in Chesterfield will be collected where a clear provenance can be established.

6.3.6 Civic and Commemorative

The Museum will not collect items relating to royal and national events. The collecting of commemorative material will be limited to locally produced items and events. The Museum will continue to collect material connected with Chesterfield Borough Council and its predecessor authorities.

6.3.7 Material from Equality Groups

As the Museum has very little material from ethnic minority groups in Chesterfield, consideration will be given to acquiring material from these groups.

6.4 **Fine Art**

Collecting will be limited to works by professional artists originating in or working in Chesterfield, works by other artists reflecting local themes and artworks with a strong connection to the local area.

In addition to professional artists, Chesterfield like any other community has a large number of amateur artists. The quality and quantity of amateur production varies greatly and discretion will be exercised in acquiring this type of work.

6.5 **Decorative Art**

6.5.1 **Local ceramics**

Because of the nature of locally produced pottery, few decorative pieces are true duplicates, but many are similar in shape and decoration. A piece similar to those already in the collection will **not** be acquired unless:

- It is marked or has a well established provenance where the previously collected piece does not.
- It has an interesting story which illuminates social or industrial history or connects it with a local person.
- It forms part of a larger group of items, the integrity of which would be damaged if it were not acquired.

6.5.2 **Glass**

18th and 19th century glass will only be collected where they have clear provenance attributing them to the Whittington Glass Factory. The Museum already has a representative collection of 20th century drinking glasses produced at Dema, Chesterfield. Consideration will, however, be given to acquiring objects from the earlier production of the factory and other products and lines.

6.5.3 **Furniture**

The Council's collection of 17th century and later country furniture was formed to help interpret the Revolution House. Further pieces will only be acquired where there is clear provenance connecting the item to Chesterfield.

Other items of furniture will be considered for collection if they have a strong connection to a significant local person or organisation, or if an item was a significant piece that was made in Chesterfield.

6.6 **Geology**

Chesterfield Museum will not collect geological specimens except where they might illustrate another area of collecting such as social or industrial history.

6.7 **Natural History**

Chesterfield Museum will not collect natural history specimens except where they might illustrate another area of collecting such as social history.

6.8 **Education Collection**

The Museum will not add to its collection of material used for educational and handling purposes except for the replacement of items, to reflect changes in the school curriculum, or if items are required for the development of the loans or outreach service.

7.0 **LIMITATIONS ON COLLECTING**

7.1 **Care of Collections**

The Museum recognises its responsibility for the care and documentation of the collection and all care implications will be considered prior to acquisition.

The Museum will not acquire, unless under exceptional circumstances, material that is not in good condition. Consideration must be given to the ability of the service to meet the care and conservation costs of all items.

The Museum will also take into account the level of staffing required to care for and document the items. This is particularly applicable to donations involving a large number of items.

7.2 **Duplication**

The acquisition of material for the permanent museum collection needs to be considered carefully to prevent duplication, particularly with regard to the social history collection from the 19th century onwards.

In cases where objects are not exact duplicates yet are similar in many ways to the material already held, these will only be collected if:

- They form part of a larger group, the integrity of which would be damaged if the object were not collected.
- They have a particularly interesting story to tell about a local person, place or event.

7.3 **Storage Capacity**

The number and size of items that can be accepted is ultimately restricted by the amount of storage capacity. Heavy industry, particularly engineering, is an important element of Chesterfield's heritage. However, when large objects are offered to the Museum, the resources needed to provide appropriate long-term storage will need to be carefully considered.

7.4 **Use of Collections**

The Museum will only acquire items which are capable of being used for display, outreach, research or education.

8.0 COLLECTING POLICIES OF OTHER MUSEUMS

8.1 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 specialisms, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources. Consideration will also be given to which organisation is best able to make individual items or collections accessible to the public.

8.2 **Specific reference is made to the following museums and archives:**

- Sheffield Museums Trust,
- Buxton Museum & Art Gallery,
- Derby City Museums,
- Sherwood Foresters Museum,
- Derbyshire Records Office
- Derbyshire County Council Library Service

9.0 POLICY REVIEW PROCEDURE

The Collecting Policy will be published and reviewed at least once every five years. The date when the policy is next due for review is April 2019.

The Arts Council will be notified of any changes to the Collecting Policy and the implications of any such changes for the future of existing collections.

10.0 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 curators and governing body of the Museum itself, having regard to the interests of other museums.

11.0 ACQUISITION PROCEDURES

11.1 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.

11.2 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).

11.3 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.

11.4 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.

11.5 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.

11.6 In England, Northern Ireland and Wales 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.

11.7 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the museum is either:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin; or
- 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; or
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin; or
- 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.
- The museum does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

12.0 SPOILIATION

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.

13.0 REPATRIATION AND RESTITUTION OF OBJECTS

13.1 The museum’s governing body, acting on the advice of the Museum’s professional staff, 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.

13.2 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”.

14.0 MANAGEMENT OF ARCHIVES

- 14.1 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 (3rd ed., 2002).

15.0 DISPOSAL PROCEDURES

- 15.1 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 that the disposal of any items from the collections will be in accordance with the Rationalisation and Disposal Policy.

15.2 Decision Making Process

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, decisions to rationalise the collections and dispose of items will be based on an assessment report and associated recommendations, completed by the curatorial staff. This will be referred to the Museum Collections Committee, representing Chesterfield Borough Council as the governing body of the Museum, for endorsement or veto. This Committee will consist of Councillors from all parties. After discussion, the Committee may decide on an alternative course of action. The Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism will chair this Committee.

Disposal will not be considered on purely financial grounds and will be in accordance with the Museum's Rationalisation and Disposal Policy.

15.3 Options for Disposal

There are a number of options available for disposal of an item but preference should be given to keeping the item in the public domain.

- 15.3.1 It is recommended, where possible that the item is given as a free gift, or as a transfer, to another accredited museum. This should be considered first as it is most likely that items will remain cared for and accessible to the public.
- 15.3.2 If no accredited museum will accept the item, it could be given as a free gift or transfer to another institution or organisations within the public domain. In this case, consideration should be given to whether the recipient can provide adequate care and opportunities for access to the item.
- 15.3.3 If it proves impossible to keep an item in the public domain, the museum may consider returning the item to the donor. This may be the preferred course of action where there are extenuating circumstances such as conditions laid down on the donation or where an item has personal significance to the donor, is of a low cultural value or the likelihood that the item will be transferred out of the area.
- 15.3.4 Although there is a preference and tradition of free gift or transfer between museums, consideration should be given to sell an item to other museums. This may be the preferred option if the museum purchased the item with its own funds or has spent a significant amount of money on conserving it.

Any money raised must be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the museum's collections.

15.3.5 If the options above are unsuccessful, the object could be transferred outside the public domain. The item should first be advertised to museums on the Museum Associations 'Find an Object' web listing service. There may, however, be circumstances where an object can be transferred to individuals or bodies outside the public domain, such as enthusiasts or specialist groups.

15.3.6 Consideration can also be given to sale of the item outside the public domain. Any money raised should be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections.

15.3.7 If a new location cannot be found for the item, it may be possible to recycle the item through sale as scrap or as a gift to charity.

15.3.8 If the item poses as risk to the health and safety of individuals or the collection, it can be destroyed. The museum may have to seek expert help to destroy and item safely (e.g. if an item contains asbestos).

15.4 Documenting Disposal

It is important that all aspects of the disposal process are documented, and this should be done to SPECTRUM standards. Any records should include:

- Reason for disposal
- Desired outcome
- Opinion and advice considered
- Method of disposal
- Conclusion of process
- Any conditions attached
- Information relating to the item and photographs
- Documentation relating to the transfer of title
- Note of any new location

15.5 Communicating the Process

It is important to keep the public informed of plans relating to the disposal of items through the press and media. An open approach that explains the context and potential benefit of the planned course of action will be adopted.

On behalf of Chesterfield Borough Council, under the powers delegated to me as Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism under the Council's Constitution, I approve the Chesterfield Museum Service Collecting Policy as set out in this document.

Councillor Amanda Serjeant
Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism

Signed.....Date.....

RATIONALISATION & DISPOSAL POLICY

Chesterfield Borough Council

Museum Service

April 2014



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document outlines Chesterfield Borough Council's policies and procedures in reviewing material in its museum collections and assessing their significance in order to inform decisions about their future care.

The Borough Council recognises that in operating a museum it acts as a long term guardian of collections however, as part of this process it may be necessary to rationalise or dispose items from the collection. Disposal of these objects allows the museum to focus its resources on relevant and significant collections in terms of access, interpretation and storage

Any disposal is conducted under the guidelines within this policy and by the Museums Association's Code of Ethics (see Appendix 1).

2.0 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of Chesterfield Museum Service is:

- To preserve, interpret, develop and manage the Council's museum collection
- To operate Chesterfield Museum and the Revolution House
- To promote interest in the history of Chesterfield

for the education and enjoyment of the people of Chesterfield and visitors to the town.

2.1 Aim – Permanent Collection

In developing permanent collections, Chesterfield Museum Service aims to acquire material evidence and associated information that reflects the history and identity of Chesterfield and the diversity of its local communities.

2.2 Aim – Education Handling Collection

In acquiring an education handling collection, Chesterfield Museum Service aims to provide material which can be loaned for use in schools and with reminiscence groups within Chesterfield, or used for handling and educational purposes within the Museum itself.

3.0 THE COLLECTIONS

3.1 Permanent Collection

3.1.1 Social and Industrial History

This consists of approximately 31,000 items made up of objects directly relating to the history of Chesterfield Borough. Several groups within this collection, such as the Brampton pottery and the Bolsover Buckle, are of regional importance.

3.1.2 **Archaeology**

This consists of 41 archives relating to excavations, building surveys and archaeological watching briefs. Not all archives contain finds. They mainly relate to archaeological work within the Borough of Chesterfield. The archaeology in the collection also consists of individual finds and hoards which were Treasure Trove.

3.2 **Education Collection**

The education collection is a secondary collection comprising 8,000 items which includes original items and replicas. These include duplicates of items within the permanent collection and items which are representative of aspects of social and industrial history but are not necessarily directly connected with the local area. These mainly span the 19th and 20th centuries.

4.0 **RATIONALISATION**

4.1 **Introduction**

Collections are established for the long term and each generation has responsibility to the next to ensure they do not become unmanageable or a burden and that they remain sustainable.

Equally it is imperative that collections are used and developed in response to the needs of today's society. Museums must balance the safeguarding and retention of items within their collections with the need to review and develop collections, acquire items and, in some cases, remove them.

Museum collections should be developed so that they provide the best care and opportunities for use and engagement. Curatorially motivated rationalisation and disposal is an integral part of responsible collections management and will ensure that museums are fit for future generations.

4.2 **Definition**

The review and assessment of the museum collection to improve its access and care and ensure that objects within the collection meet the aims of the Collecting Policy.

Rationalisation does not necessarily mean disposal; there are many ways that an object which no longer fulfils the criteria for acquisition can continue to be used for the benefit of the residents of the Borough and remain within the public domain, while no longer being considered part of the core collection of the Museum.

4.3 **Aims of Rationalisation**

The aims of rationalisation are to ensure that the museum collections continue to be of high quality and, in accordance with the Collecting Policy, are relevant to Chesterfield. Periodic review has the benefit of ensuring that best use is made of the resources available.

The Museum Association's Disposal Digest states:

Outcomes of disposal should demonstrate how the public benefit derived from museum collections will increase as a result; through improved care, access and context for the item, and its continued retention in the public domain. Incidental outcomes, such as optimising storage space or freeing resources, should not be the main motivation to dispose.

Rationalisation will be carried out in accordance with Museums Association Disposal Toolkit guidelines.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Identification of material

Material identified as being in one or more of the following categories will be considered for rationalisation:

- Does not fall within the current Collecting Policy.
- Unethically acquired material.
- Loan material no longer required for display.
- Does not provide important information about Chesterfield and its history.
- Has no reasonable expectation of being useful for display or research.
- Is unprovenanced (i.e. has no background information to provide a context).
- Is not in good condition.
- Has deteriorated beyond any useful purpose (e.g. through decay or infestation. This might be a textile item that has rotted or a natural history specimen that has an infestation).
- Poses a threat to other objects or people (e.g. by contamination. This might include WW2 gas masks with degraded asbestos filters or radioactive geological specimens/watch and compass faces).
- Is an unnecessary duplicate.
- Where there is no reasonable expectation that Chesterfield Museum will be able to provide suitable levels of curation or collections care.
- Would fit better into another museum's collection.
- May be more appropriate to an archive e.g. Local Studies Library or the Derbyshire Records Office, Matlock.

Meeting one of the above criteria does not automatically condemn any object. Each object will be considered on its merits. There may well be good reasons why objects that fall into one or more of the above categories should be kept, but they will be critically examined and justified.

5.2 Assessment Criteria

Objects and groups of objects will be assessed using the following criteria:

- **Exploitability** – the potential of objects to be used for outreach, research, educational purposes, tourism, profile raising.
- **Display** – have objects been on display or have the potential to be displayed?
- **Historical significance** – this is with specific reference to Chesterfield but certain items may have a national or regional significance.

- **Provenance** – do we know the context/background information behind an object?
- **Uniqueness** – is the object a rare example, are there exact duplicates or duplicates of type in the collection?
- **Ownership** – does Chesterfield Borough Council have clear ownership?
- **Condition**

Each group will be given a grade for each criterion, and the combination will be used to assess whether the group, or objects within it, are candidates for retention within the museum collections, or rationalisation.

See Appendix 2 for Assessment Matrix

5.3 Consultation

As part of the rationalisation process, advice can be sought from the Arts Council and in particular, the person responsible for the Collections Development Programme.

The views of those who have a vested interest in the collections should also be sought. These include users of the Museum, donors, local history societies, etc.

5.4 Recording and Outcomes of Assessment

The process, including scores, will be recorded using an assessment report pro forma. This will include a brief description of the object or group of objects, entry or accession numbers, a location, matrix scores, photographs, a statement of significance and recommendations for the future of the object(s) based on the assessment.

Assessments will be carried out by the curatorial staff with reference to the Tourism, Museums and Events Manager.

Each object will be assessed on its own merits. Low scoring does not automatically condemn an item. There may be good reasons why an item should be retained.

As part of this process, the curatorial staff will seek specialist advice if necessary and consider the views of donors or lenders, where appropriate.

See Appendix 3 for Assessment Report pro forma

5.5 Decision Making Process

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, all assessment reports prepared by the curatorial staff, and their associated recommendations will be referred to the Museum Collections Committee, representing Chesterfield Borough Council as the governing body of the Museum, for endorsement or veto. This Committee will consist of Councillors from all parties. After discussion, the Committee may decide on an alternative course of action. The Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism will chair the Committee.

6.0 DISPOSAL

If the decision has been taken to dispose of items from the museum collections, the Museum will follow the Museum Association's Code of Ethics and Disposal Toolkit procedures.

There is no specific legislation applicable to Chesterfield Museum to prevent them disposing of an item, but there may be legal restrictions from conditions attached to donations or bequeaths. If there is any doubt about the legal implications, appropriate advice would be sought.

The disposal process will be carried out openly and with transparency.

6.1 Considerations on Disposal

Once an object has been selected for disposal, the status of the item and the method of its entry into the collection needs to be investigated. This could affect any course of action and influence the method of disposal.

6.1.1 Loan

If the item is on loan, the lender must be contacted to discuss its return.

6.1.2 Purchase

If the item was acquired with the assistance of external funds, the funding bodies must be contacted to discuss any planned course of action.

6.1.3 Donation/Bequest

Establish whether there were any conditions laid down at the time of deposition that may affect any planned disposal.

6.1.4 Unaccessioned

If an item has not been accessioned into the collection, or if its method of entry is unknown, the museum must go to reasonable lengths to research the history of the item.

6.1.5 Legal Consideration

Review the documentation of the item to ensure that the museum has legal title to remove it, and that there are no conditions attached that might prevent the museum from following this course of action.

6.1.6 Grant Funded

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.

6.2 Disposal Process

The Museum must ensure that, during the process, all legal responsibilities are carried out; wishes of the donors are respected; the views of the Museum's

governing body are taken into account; public confidence in the Museum's position as trustees of the Borough's heritage is not compromised.

Whichever method of disposal is selected, the following steps will be taken:

- Identify accredited museums with suitable collections and approach directly.
- If no museums identified, inform the museum sector and other relevant groups of availability of items.
- Ensure transparency and communicate the process beyond the Museum.
- Ensure transfer of legal title to any recipient and any appropriate transfer of intellectual property rights.
- Document the process.

6.3 There are a number of options available for disposal of an item but preference should be given to keeping the item in the public domain.

6.3.1 It is recommended, where possible that the item is given as a free gift, or as a transfer, to another accredited museum. This should be considered first as it is most likely that items will remain cared for and accessible to the public.

6.3.2 If no accredited museum will accept the item, it could be given as a free gift or transfer to another institution or organisations within the public domain. In this case, consideration should be given to whether the recipient can provide adequate care and opportunities for access to the item.

6.3.3 If it proves impossible to keep an item in the public domain, the museum may consider returning the item to the donor. This may be the preferred course of action where there are extenuating circumstances such as conditions laid down on the donation or where an item has personal significance to the donor, is of a low cultural value or the likelihood that the item will be transferred out of the area.

6.3.4 Although there is a preference and tradition of free gift or transfer between museums, consideration should be given to sell an item to other museums. This may be the preferred option if the museum purchased the item with its own funds or has spent a significant amount of money on conserving it. Any money raised must be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the museum's collections.

6.3.5 If the options above are unsuccessful, the object could be transferred outside the public domain. The item should first be advertised to museums on the Museum Associations 'Find an Object' web listing service. There may, however, be circumstances where an object can be transferred to individuals or bodies outside the public domain, such as enthusiasts or specialist groups.

6.3.6 Consideration can also be given to sale of the item outside the public domain. Any money raised should be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections.

6.3.7 If a new location cannot be found for the item, it may be possible to recycle the item through sale as scrap or as a gift to charity.

6.3.8 If the item poses as risk to the health and safety of individuals or the collection, it can be destroyed. The museum may have to seek expert help to destroy and item safely (e.g. if an item contains asbestos).

7.0 **Recording the Process**

7.1 It is important that all aspects of the disposal process are documented, and this should be done to SPECTRUM standards. Any records should include:

- Reason for disposal
- Desired outcome
- Opinion and advice considered
- Method of disposal
- Conclusion of process
- Any conditions attached
- Information relating to the item and photographs
- Documentation relating to the transfer of title
- Note of any new location

8.0 **Communicating the Process**

It is important to keep the public informed of plans relating to the disposal of items through the press and media. An open approach that explains the context and potential benefit of the planned course of action will be adopted.

Extract from the Museum Associations Code of Ethics

Guiding principles on disposal.

Collections are a tangible link between the past, present and future. Museums balance the interests of different generations by safeguarding collections, which may include buildings and sites.

Museums develop and implement a collections development policy in order to ensure appropriate standards of care and security for all items entrusted to them, either permanently or on loan.

Museums meet their responsibility to future generations by ensuring that collections are well managed and sustainable. There is a strong presumption in favour of the retention of items within the public domain. Sometimes transfer within the public domain, or another form of disposal, can improve access to, or the use, care or context of, items or collections. Responsible, curatorially-motivated disposal takes place as part of a museum's long-term collections development policy, in order to increase public benefit derived from museum collections.

In accordance with the Museums Associations Code of Ethics, a museum undertaking rationalisation must:

- 1 Recognise that formal title to and guardianship of the collections is vested in the governing body, which must satisfy itself that decisions to dispose are informed by the highest standards of expertise and take into account all legal and other attendant circumstances.
- 2 Demonstrate clearly how the long-term local and general public interest is served in circumstances in which disposal may be appropriate and ensure that public trust in museums is upheld.
- 3 Give priority to transferring items, preferably by gift, to Accredited museums. Consider donating items to other public institutions if it is not possible for another museum to accept them. To maintain public confidence in museums, wherever possible do not transfer items out of the public domain. (This paragraph excludes material that is being disposed of because it is damaged beyond use, dangerous, or is being returned to its place of origin or rightful owner.)
- 4 Base decisions to dispose on clear, published criteria as part of the institution's long-term collections development policy, approved by the governing body. Ensure transparency and carry out any disposal openly, according to unambiguous, generally accepted procedures. Manage the process with care and sensitivity to public perceptions.
- 5 Seek the views of stakeholders (such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum) who have a vested interest in a proposed disposal. In some cases consent from the donor may be a legal requirement. Where appropriate seek the views of colleagues and sector bodies.
- 6 Refuse to undertake disposal principally for financial reasons, except in exceptional circumstances as defined in paragraph 7. Financially motivated

disposal risks damaging public confidence in museums and the principle that collections should not normally be regarded as financially-negotiable assets.

- 7 Consider financially motivated disposal only in exceptional circumstances and when it can be demonstrated that:
 - It will significantly improve the long-term public benefit derived from the remaining collection.
 - It is not to generate short-term revenue (for example to meet a budget deficit).
 - It is as a last resort after other sources of funding have been thoroughly explored.
 - Extensive prior consultation with sector bodies has been undertaken.
 - The item under consideration lies outside the museum's established core collection as defined in the collections development policy.
- 8 Ring-fence* any money raised as a result of disposal through sale, if this exceptional circumstance arises, solely and directly for the benefit of the museum's collection. Money raised must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection. If in doubt about the proposed use of such restricted funds consult sector bodies.
- 9 Openly communicate and document all disposals and the basis on which decisions to dispose were made.
- 10 Apply any money received in compensation for the loss, damage or destruction of objects in the collection solely and directly for the benefit of the museum's collection.
- 11 Respond to requests for return of human remains, and other culturally sensitive material with understanding and respect for communities of origin.

★ *In the case of some Local Authority museums, ring-fencing the money may not be possible. In such cases, the use of the proceeds should be clearly articulated and money allocated accordingly in a way that is compatible with Accreditation and the MA Code of Ethics.*

Collection Assessment Matrix

	Exploitability (current and potential)	Display	Historical Significance	Provenance	Uniqueness	Ownership	Condition
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly used for research, enquiries and outreach Regularly used for learning activities, reminiscence, profile raising and creative activities 	Currently or very regularly displayed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link to specific local event, company, theme or custom Link to an important national event 	Specifically linked to a local person or event	Unique <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only known example Only one in collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear CBC ownership with full documentation Documented loan with clear time line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stable material Good condition No conservation problems
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has been used in the last 5 years for research, enquiries and outreach Has been used in the last 5 years for learning activities, reminiscence, profile raising and creative activities 	Displayed in the last 5 years	Has an iconic link to a locally significant working or domestic life activity.	Generally linked to groups or companies	Rare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few survivors Only one in collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear CBC ownership but implicit full documentation Documented loan that is regularly renewed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stable material Minor cleaning, stable and not at risk
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has good potential to be used for research, enquiries and outreach Has good potential to be used for learning activities, reminiscence, profile raising and creative activities 	Not currently or recently displayed but capable of being displayed with minimal attention	Has an integral link to our social life and stories within the town	Links to general cultural themes and communities within Chesterfield	Rarity uncertain Only one in collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear CBC ownership but no documentation – incorporated into organisation over time Documented indefinite loan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stable material but needs monitoring Some risk, some restoration or repair needed

	Exploitability (current and potential)	Display	Historical Significance	Provenance	Uniqueness	Ownership	Condition
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlikely to be used for research, enquiries and outreach • Unlikely to be used for learning activities, reminiscence, profile raising and creative activities 	Limited relevance to display	Loosely linked to Chesterfield's history	Loosely connected or supporting events and activities within the community of Chesterfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mass produced but not widely collected • Only one in collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain ownership details • Part documentation – loan or gift status unestablished 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unstable material • High risk, immediate action required • Specialist conservation required
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has no potential to be used for research, enquiries and outreach • Has no potential to be used for learning activities, reminiscence, profile raising and creative activities • Inaccessible, clear safety risks 	Very unlikely to be displayed	Item of general social or industrial history or with specific links elsewhere	No knowledge of origin	Exact duplicate or type duplicate in collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status in collection unknown e.g. found in store • Caretaker role only – stored on behalf of other organisation or Council department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very unstable material • Beyond repair • Poses immediate risk to other items

Rationalisation Report: No

Simple name or collection:					
Brief Description: Year acquired: 2001 How acquired: donation by member of public					
Entry or Accession Number(s).		Location:			
Rationalisation matrix scores					
Exploitability		Provenance		Condition	
Display		Uniqueness			
Historical Significance		Ownership			
Statement of Significance:					
Recommendations:					

Photograph(s)

**Draft Terms of Reference
Museum Collections Committee**

1.0 Name of the Committee

1.1 Museum Collections Committee

2.0 Purpose of the Committee

2.1 To make the decision on whether or not to dispose of items from Chesterfield Museum's collections, based on object assessments made by the Museum's curatorial staff, in line with the Museum's Rationalisation and Disposal Policy.

3.0 Aims

3.1 To ensure that the museum collections continue to be of high quality and, in accordance with the Collecting Policy, are relevant to Chesterfield.

3.2 To retain objects in the public domain if at all possible.

3.3 To improve the care and conservation of the collections.

3.4 To improve access to the items by the public.

4.0 Objectives

4.1 To ensure that all items in the Museum's collections are in accordance with the Museum's Collecting Policy.

5.0 Membership

5.1 The members of this cross-party Committee include:-

Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism
Others to be agreed

6.0 Meetings

6.1 The Museum Collections Committee meetings will be determined by the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism

7.0 Chair and Roles of the Committee

7.1 The Chair is the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism.

7.2 The Vice Chair is to be agreed.

7.3 The assessment reports will be produced by the Museum's curatorial staff.

7.4 All decisions will be recorded by a senior member of staff.

8.0 Amendments to the Terms of Reference

8.1 Any proposal to alter the Terms of Reference must be submitted to the Chair in writing at least 10 days prior to the next network meeting. A decision on the proposed amendment will be made at the next meeting.

Name

Signature

Chair:

Vice Chair: