

Decision by Portfolio Holder



Report reference: WCP-001-2022/23

Date of report: 26-July-2022

**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Wellbeing & Community Partnerships – Councillor A Patel
Author: Francesca Pellegrino (Ext 4996) Democratic Services: J Leither
Subject: Epping Forest District Museum Rationalisation Disposal Decision Six
Decision:

To approve the attached list of items (agreed by the Rationalisation Steering Committee) for reallocation from the Epping Forest District Museum Collection following the Museums Association's Code of Ethics and Disposals guidance.

ADVISORY NOTICE: <i>A Portfolio Holder may not take a decision on a matter on which he/she has declared a Pecuniary interest. A Portfolio Holder with a non-pecuniary interest must declare that interest when exercising delegated powers.</i>	
I have read and approve/ do not approve (delete as appropriate) the above decision:	
Comments/further action required: None	
Signed: Councillor A Patel	Date: 3 rd August 2022
<i>Non-pecuniary interest declared by Portfolio Holder/ conflict of non-pecuniary interest declared by any other consulted Cabinet Member:</i> None	<i>Dispensation granted by Standards Committee:</i> Yes/No or n/a
Office use only: Call-in period begins: 4 th August 2022	Expiry of Call-in period: 11 th August 2022

**After completion, one copy of this pro forma should be returned to
Democratic Services IMMEDIATELY**

Reason for decision:

Collection Rationalisation is taking place as part of a review of the collections held by Epping Forest District Museum which is an appropriate and necessary process. The decision to remove an item/items from the collection needs to be taken by the Portfolio Holder under delegated authority.

Options considered and rejected:

Options include to retain all items currently held in the collections as current, or to approve the reallocation of the items as per the recommendation in the attached report.

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Background Report:

Epping Forest District Museum's (EFDM) collections cover the breadth of local community history. Over the years, an unclear collecting policy combined with sub-standard documentation has led to much collecting of material, some of which is either not relevant or suitable for the museum and its audiences. The collection now totals over 100,000 objects throughout 4 storage locations.

Like many museums, the collections have begun to exceed the space available for storage and this presents a risk to their future care, management and access. The main stores which are on site benefitted from a major lottery funded capital redevelopment in 2016. Improvements included an environmentally controlled store and a 'public viewing' store. Whilst this is a major improvement, the redevelopment project did not address the collection documentation problems or the growing collections here and in the off-site storage. All are now at full capacity. In addition, the three off-site stores do not provide a sound environment for the collections held there. Some of the objects are stored very high up on shelves, boxes are collapsing, and there are objects obstructing the aisles, making it increasingly difficult for staff and volunteers to access them properly. This full capacity means that there is no expansion space to allow for filling of gaps in the collection which are highlighted in the Collections Development Policy.

Collections have now grown without due diligence in documentation procedure, resulting in a lack of knowledge of what the collection contains. Without this knowledge, it is impossible to provide a full or accurate public service.

A lot of items that were acquired fall outside of the museum's collecting policy, there are also duplicate items some of which may not have any local stories or provenance linked to them.

The team recognises the importance of addressing this pressing issue now by embarking upon a realistic rationalisation project across its collections in order to remain relevant to their audiences and for their collections to engage and inspire generations in our community.

The team undertaking this work are following the Museum Association guidelines which includes a code of ethics for the appropriate methods to address these decisions.

The sixth group of items located on site at the museum has been assessed and considered and the attached list is the items which the team have determined do not fit within the collecting policy of the museum.

This list has been discussed at the Rationalisation Steering Committee and the group, comprising of staff, volunteers, councillors and specialists, has agreed these items for reallocation outside of the collection.

The items listed here, once approved, will go on to follow the Museum Association guidelines which ensures the priority is to keep these items in the public domain by reallocation to other museums or community groups as the priority.

Resource Implications: Within existing budget and staff resourcing.

Legal and Governance Implications: The Museum Association guidelines and Code of Ethics provide the industry standard for ensuring this project complies with procedures.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

Through this project the resource and environmental impacts of managing collections across 4 different locations will be improved. Once complete the product will ensure safer access to

collections for staff and the public. The project will also see a number of local groups and the community to benefit. Not only through better access to the collection itself but objects that are not reallocated to other museums will be offered to the community and local groups to support their work and projects.

Consultation Undertaken:

A strict scoring process has been followed under the guidelines that are produced by the Museum Association. The list of items has been reviewed by a steering committee who have agreed the proposed decision. The Steering Committee consists of staff members who are not undertaking the project itself, Councillor Mary Sartin, a freelance museum consultant and where appropriate subject specialists, volunteers and community groups. Where appropriate, the person or persons who donated the items has been contacted and the Waltham Abbey Historical Society which provided a number of items for the collection has also been consulted. If the recommendation is approved – following Museum Association guidelines the items will first be offered to other accredited museums then follow the process of reallocation which includes a number of steps to ensure the items stay in the public domain.

Background Papers: N/A

Impact Assessments:

N/A

Risk Management:

This project has been assessed as one of the council's high priority projects and a risk assessment has been undertaken. The key risks which have been assessed are:

- Not following the Museum Association guidelines for correct procedures for Rationalisation. This could lead to reputational damage; and
- Not undertaking proper consultation – this could also risk reputational damage.

These two risks have been properly assessed and all plans and guidelines for this project ensure that the risk has been mitigated. The project team are following a guided process to ensure the two risks above have been accounted for.

Equality Analysis:

The Equality Act 2010 requires that the Public Sector Equality Duty is actively applied in decision-making. This means that the equality information provided to accompany this report is essential reading for all members involved in the consideration of this report. The equality information is provided as an appendix to the report.

Key Decision Reference (Y/N): N

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Equality analysis report

Use this report template to record your equality analysis. This report is a written record that demonstrates that you have shown *due regard* to the need to **eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity** and **foster good relations** with respect to the personal characteristics protected by equality law. Due regard must be paid at formative stages of policy or service development, changes, or withdrawal.

To assist you in completing this report, please ensure you read the guidance notes in the Equality Analysis Toolkit and refer to the following Factsheets:

- Factsheet 1: Equality Profile of the Epping Forest District
- Factsheet 2: Sources of information about equality protected characteristics
- Factsheet 3: Glossary of equality related terms
- Factsheet 4: Common misunderstandings about the Equality Duty
- Factsheet 5: Frequently asked questions
- Factsheet 6: Reporting equality analysis to a committee or other decision making body

If you require further help, please contact the Performance Improvement Unit.

Step 1. About the policy, service change or withdrawal

Name of the policy, service or project: <i>be specific</i>	Epping Forest District Museum Rationalisation Project
Revised / new / withdrawal:	new
Intended aims / outcomes/ changes:	To rationalisation the Epping Forest District Museum Collection
Relationship with other policies / projects:	N/A
Name of senior manager for the policy / project:	Jennifer Gould
Name of policy / project manager:	Francesca Pellegrino

Step 2. Decide if the policy, service change or withdrawal is equality relevant

<p>Does the policy / project / service process involve, or have consequences for employees or other people? If yes, please state who will be affected. If yes, then the policy / project is equality relevant.</p> <p>If no, state your reasons for this decision. Go to step 7.</p> <p><i>The majority of Council policies and projects are equality relevant because they affect employees or our communities in some way.</i></p>	<p>If yes, state which protected groups:</p>
	<p>If no, state reasons for your decision:</p> <p>The project does not affect employees or people as it focuses on the objects stored in the museum collections and how they are cared for and managed – there is no impact on any individuals by the decisions made.</p>

Step 3. Gather evidence to inform the equality analysis

What evidence have you gathered to help you understand the impact of your policy or service change or withdrawal on people? What does your evidence say about the people with the protected characteristics? If there is no evidence available for any of the characteristics, please explain why this is the case, and your plans to obtain relevant evidence. Please refer to Factsheet 2 '*Sources of evidence for the protected characteristics*'.

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Evidence (name of research, report, guidance, data source etc)</i>	<i>What does this evidence tell you about people with the protected characteristics?</i>
Age		
Dependents / caring responsibilities		
Disability		
Gender reassignment		
Marriage and civil partnership		
Pregnancy and maternity		
Race / ethnicity		
Religion or belief		
Sex		
Sexual orientation		

Steps 4 & 5 Analyse the activity, policy or change (*The duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination*)

Based on the evidence you have analysed, describe any actual or likely adverse impacts that may arise as a result of the policy decision. Where actual or likely adverse impacts have been identified, you should also state what actions will be taken to mitigate that negative impact, ie what can the Council do to minimise the negative consequences of its decision or action.

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Actual or likely adverse impacts identified</i>	<i>Actions that are already or will be taken to reduce the negative effects identified</i>
Age		
Dependents / caring responsibilities		
Disability		
Gender reassignment		
Marriage and civil partnership		
Pregnancy and maternity		
Race / ethnicity		
Religion or belief		
Sex		

Sexual orientation		
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Step 6.

The duty to advance equality of opportunity

Can the policy, service or project help to advance equality of opportunity in any way? If yes, provide details. If no, provide reasons. *(Note: not relevant to marriage and civil partnership)*

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Ways that this policy, service or project can advance equality of opportunity</i>	<i>Why this policy, service or project cannot help to advance equality of opportunity:</i>
Age		
Dependents / caring responsibilities		
Disability		
Gender reassignment		
Pregnancy and maternity		
Race / ethnicity		
Religion or belief		
Sex		
Sexual orientation		

The duty to foster good relations

Can the policy, service or project help to foster good relations in any way? If yes, provide details. If no, provide reasons. *(Note: not relevant to marriage and civil partnership)*

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>How this policy, service or project can foster good relations:</i>	<i>Why this policy, service or project cannot help to foster good relations:</i>
Age		
Dependents / caring responsibilities		
Disability		
Gender reassignment		
Pregnancy and maternity		
Race / ethnicity		
Religion or belief		
Sex		
Sexual orientation		

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Step 7. Documentation and Authorisation

Summary of actions to be taken as a result of this analysis (add additional rows as required):	Name and job title of responsible officer	How and when progress against this action will be reported
1. Once approved the objects will be rationalised following the Museum Association Guidelines	Esther Green (Rationalisation Project Officer) Ian Channell (Collections Manager) Francesca Pellegrino (Heritage and Venues Team Manager)	The project will report quarterly as part of the council's performance procedures.
2.		
3.		

Name and job title of officer completing this analysis:	Francesca Pellegrino, Team Manager for Heritage and Venues
Date of completion:	26/07/22
Name & job title of responsible officer: (If you have any doubts about the completeness or sufficiency of this equality analysis, advice and support are available from the Performance Improvement Unit)	Jennifer Gould
Date of authorisation:	
Date signed copy and electronic copy forwarded to PIU equality@eppingforestdc.gov.uk	

Step 8. Report your equality analysis to decision makers:

Your findings from this analysis (and any previous analysis) must be made available to a decision making body when it is considering the relevant service or policy. Therefore you must:

- reflect the findings from this analysis in a 'Due Regard Record' (template available), and attach it as an appendix to your report. The Record can be updated as your policy or service changes develop, and it exists as a log of evidence of due regard;
- Include this equality information in your verbal report to agenda planning groups or directly to portfolio holders and other decision making groups.

Your summary of equality analysis must include the following information:

- if this policy, service change or withdrawal is relevant to equality, and if not, why not;

- the evidence base (information / data / research / feedback / consultation) you used to help you understand the impact of what you are doing or are proposing to do on people with protected characteristics;
- what the evidence base (information / data / research / feedback / consultation) told you about people with protected characteristics;
- what you found when you used that evidence base to assess the impact on people with the protected characteristics;
- whether or not your policy or service changes could help to advance quality of opportunity for people with any of the protected characteristics;
- whether or not your policy or service changes could help to foster good relations between communities.