Item 2

25th January 2024

Glasgow City Council

City Administration Committee

Report by Bailie Annette Christie, City Convener for Culture, Sport and International Relations

Contact: Duncan Dornan Ext: 75900

GLASGOW LIFE MUSEUMS - COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this paper is to:

- seek approval of Glasgow Life Museums Collections Development Policy 2024-2029 and note the requirements of the Museums Association Code of Ethics
- advise which matters are escalated to council committee for approval
- outline the principle and process for a review of collecting priorities
- advise the committee of the need for an updated Documentation Policy and an updated Conservation Policy

Recommendations:

Having considered the report and reviewed the Collections Development Policy, committee is asked to:

- Approve the Collections Development Policy 2024–2029
- Note where decisions lie in relation to core collection transactions and approve the means of escalation required for certain Loans-Out
- Approve the principles and process for a review of collecting priorities
- Require that a Documentation Policy and a Conservation Policy are drafted and approved by the Head of Museums and Collections

Ward No(s): Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐ consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

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1.1 Background

Culture and Sport Glasgow which operates under the name Glasgow Life manages services for Glasgow City Council under the terms of a series of service level agreements, which includes the running of the city's museums.

The museum collections are owned by the Glasgow City Council with the Council being the 'Governing Body' in respect of the management and use of the collections. The governance and management arrangements for the collections are set out in the Collections Agreement entered into between the Council and Glasgow Life on 30 March 2007.

1.2 Obligations: Museums Accreditation

Under the Collections Agreement, Glasgow Life is obliged to maintain Accredited Museum status. This is a UK Government museums sector standard which requires both the Governing Body and museum to meet certain standards in respect of: governance and fiscal arrangements; operational capacity; collections care and management; collections use; and visitor services in respect of their collections.

Full Accreditation provides sector reassurance to third party agencies in the heritage sector and the Council's insurers. It also enables Glasgow Life Museums to access grant funding towards capital projects and collections acquisitions as well as affecting Glasgow Life Museums VAT33a status in terms of grants received from Departure of Culture Media and Sport.

To provide ongoing reassurance that the required standards are being met, applications to renew accredited status are made every 5years, and initiate service review of key documents. The approval of the Governing Body is required for a key policy, the Collections Development Policy.

The application renewal for the Burrell Collection is due for submission in late January 2024 with the city's other museums due for renewal in 2025.

A mandatory component of this accredited status is an up-to-date Collections Development Policy (formerly known as an Acquisitions and Disposal Policy) without which a museum cannot become 'fully accredited'.

To ensure the Collections Development Policy aligns with current sector and legal requirements it requires to be reviewed, and updated, if necessary, every five years.

1.3 The Collections Development Policy

The committee, as Governing Body, is asked to review and approve the Collections Development Policy as appended as **Appendix 1.**

All museums within the UK require a collections development policy. It defines how and what the museum collects, rationalises and disposes of and describes the relationship between the governing body and the museum. The policy defines a delegated scheme for eight core collections transactions and the reporting structures for necessary escalations between Glasgow Life and the Council.

The majority of the text within the policy is provided by the Arts Council England (the government body responsible for the management of the Accreditation Scheme) and is mandatory. It is intended to ensure that all UK museums uphold:

- current legal requirements
- ethical and best sectoral practice regarding:
    - Acquisitions
    - Human Remains
    - Biological and geological material
    - Archaeological material
    - Spoliation
    - Repatriation and Restitution
    - Disposals

The Accreditation Scheme advocates the Museum Association's Code of Ethics and in approving the Collections Development Policy there is acknowledgement that Glasgow Life Museums will continue to follow this Code of Ethics **(Appendix 2).**

Glasgow Life's policy includes statements of practice for the following:

- Borrowing and Lending of artefacts
- Sampling and Analysis
- Preservation of audio and visual recording

This is to ensure that all the requirements regarding collection transactions are understood by both the Council and Glasgow Life and are described in one document. This also ensures that agreements with third parties in relation to the execution of any of these transactions clearly cites the relationship that Glasgow Life has with the Council in these matters, who is responsible for delivery and administration, and who are the necessary signatories.

1.4 Core collections transactions

The Collections Development Policy outlines eight core collections transactions and the decision-making process associated with each of them. The eight types of transactions are:

1. Repatriation and Restitution
2. Spoliation
3. Disposal
4. Acquisitions
5. Borrowing /Loans In
6. Lending/ Loans Out
7. Sampling and Analysis
8. Preservation of audio and visual materials

1.4.1 Transactions 1 to 3: permanent transfer of assets out of the civic collections

Council approval is required to remove assets from the civic collections. This is because the collections are the property of the Council and only the owner can approve the permanent transfer of an asset out of the museum and library collections.

The escalation route for items 1 – 3 is covered under the Terms of Reference for the Working Group for Repatriation, Restitution and Spoliation and Disposal, chaired by City Convener for Culture, Sport and International Relations.

Glasgow Life Museums reports to this Working Group and makes recommendations for its consideration which are then referred to Council committee for review and approval.

1.4.2 Transaction 4: Acquiring items for the museum collection

The Collections Agreement sets out the terms for acquiring objects and allows the Head of Museums and Collections, as the senior museums professional within Glasgow Life, to acquire objects to enhance the city's collections on behalf of the Council. The requirements and processes set out in the Collections Agreement are supported by the Collections Development Policy (Appendix 1: Collecting Policy).

1.4.3 Transaction 5: Borrowing items (Loans-In)

The current policy allows the Head of Museums and Collections, as the senior museum professional, to borrow items on behalf of the Council from third party individuals and institutions for temporary display or research within Glasgow Life Museum venues. The processes that support Loans-In ensure the necessary lending agreements and insurance are effected and that assets from outside the UK comply with necessary HMRC regulations.

The Burrell Trustees require notification about Loans-In to the Burrell Collection prior to agreement to borrow items for display in this museum.

1.4.4 Transaction 6: Lending items (Loans Out)

The current policy allows for the Head of Museums and Collection to lend items on behalf of the Council to other institutions that meet the necessary contractual terms and insurance requirements.
Requests to lend assets from the Burrell Collection to other institutions also require approval from the Burrell Trustees.

The following circumstances require escalation to the Council for consideration and authorization, and it is proposed that they are escalated to this committee.

- Requests to borrow the painting by Salvador Dali, "Christ of St John on the Cross".
- A Loan Out that is comprised of a significant number of high value assets, for example a touring exhibition.
- A loan out to an institution that is not an Accredited Museum or gallery.

1.4.5 Transaction 7: Sampling and Analysis

It is proposed that Sampling and Analysis is added to the list of core transactions and that permission is given for the Head of Museum and Collections to authorize, on behalf of the Council, sampling and analysis of collection items to support research.

1.4.6 Transaction 8: Preservation of audio and visual materials

It is proposed that permission is granted for the Head of Museum and Collections to authorize, on behalf of the Council, the transfer of recordings from formats at risk of degradation to more stable formats. In doing so the Council accepts that the original format may be at risk of loss or damaged during the process, however the recording itself will be preserved.

1.5 Ongoing development of the Collecting Policy

Appendix 1 (Collecting Policy) of the Collections Development Policy defines the scope of the collection and areas for future collecting.

The City's civic principles, strategic aspirations and its changing demographic continue to inform the development of the civic collections. Glasgow Life Museums intends to review collecting practices and priorities on an ongoing basis.

To enable this Glasgow Life Museums will, following consultation with internal and external stakeholders, develop criteria through which collecting practice will be reviewed. This will incorporate service priorities relating to equalities, sustainability, biodiversity, and anti-racism.

1.6 Supporting documents

The Collections Development Policy is informed by, and in part delivered through, two documents: the 'Collections Documentation Policy and Plan' and the 'Collection Care and Conversation Policy'.

These two operational documents outline the processes and activities in relation to collection documentation, collection care and conservation. They provide more detailed information and act as guides to museum staff in relation to considered documentation and care of the collection.

As documents to guide the museum team, it is recommended that approval is delegated to the Head of Museums and Collections, as the senior museums professional within Glasgow Life.

2 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial:	None
Legal:	None
Personnel:	None
Procurement:	None
Council Strategic Plan:	Grand Challenge 1, Mission 4: Support Glasgow to be a city that is active and culturally vibrant. Grand Challenge 3 Mission 2: Become a net zero carbon city by 2030.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.	Grand Challenge 1, Mission 4: Support Glasgow to be a city that is active and culturally vibrant. The aim is to create a policy that involves and is reflected of the city's population.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?	No new direct impacts
Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.	n/a

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:	Grand Challenge 3 Mission 2: Become a net zero carbon city by 2030. We want to ensure that the Collecting Policy thematically address the climate emergency, loss in biodiversity, and innovations responding to these challenges.
What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?	See above
Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?	See above

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:	No

3 Recommendations

Having considered the report and reviewed the Collections Development Policy, committee is asked to:

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