

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities held at
1.00 pm on Tuesday, 27 February 2024

Present:

Members: Councillor D Welsh (Chair)
 Councillor S Agboola (Deputy Cabinet Member)
 Councillor R Bailey (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Employees (by Service Area):

Business, Investment and M Lynch, D Nuttall
Culture:

Law and Governance: U Patel

In Attendance: M Nugent, Director Herbert Art Gallery

Apologies: Councillor M Lapsa

Public Business

6. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

7. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

8. Request by Culture Coventry Trust to Dispose of Collection Items, in Line with Relevant Policies and Accreditation Standards

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Business Investment and Culture which outlined a request by Culture Coventry Trust to dispose of collection items, in line with relevant policies and accreditation standards.

Large municipal organisations such as Coventry City Council collect a wide range of historical and artistic artefacts over time, through a combination of statutory archiving, donations and gifts, bequests, loans, commissions and purchases. In Coventry, a significant proportion of these items were on loan, entrusted to the care of Culture Coventry Trust by way of a Funding and Management Agreement entered into with the Council (the “Agreement”) and principally housed in Coventry Transport Museum, the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, and in ancillary stores. For one or more reasons, including the proactive management of collections in accordance with the requirements of Accreditation, the museum would periodically review such arrangements and propose to dispose of certain items from the collections in its care.

It is a requirement of the national Arts Council England (ACE) scheme for granting Accredited status to museums that participating local authorities and museums have a collections and development policy for their collections. With respects to disposals, the Coventry Culture Trust Collections Development Policy 2019-2024 sets out the principles that would provide the governing bodies (including the City Council) and the workforce of the city's museums with a framework for the responsible and ethical disposal of collections. It provided clear procedures and decision-making processes common to Accredited Museums to demonstrate the public benefit in their approach to collections development. It also provided a basis for open and transparent decision making and an informed dialogue between governing bodies, donors, funding bodies and other stakeholders.

In line with the procedures set out in the Culture Coventry Trust Collections Development Policy, approval was sought from the City Council for the disposal of the 365 identified collections items set out in the report, (this figure comprising individual items and small collections), as requested by Culture Coventry.

Members sought and were provided with further information with regard to the disposal policy especially in relation to whether other museums within the city were asked if they were interested in any of the items. It was felt that the prototype jaguar had a significant part to play in Coventry with the city being the home of Jaguar Cars. It was reported that there were suitable models within the collection and that as there was a finite amount of space, it was not possible to keep every prototype.

The Cabinet Member having considered the content of the report and the recommendations, acknowledged that there was a prescribed process to be followed in terms of disposal, however, he commented that where possible, items should be returned to where they belong, for example, the school books should be returned to the school.

RESOLVED that, the Cabinet Member:

- 1. Approves the request by Coventry Culture Trust to dispose of 365 identified collections items, in line with relevant policies and accreditation standards.**
- 2. Approves that the proceeds received from any commercial sales of disposed items be held in reserves by Culture Coventry Trust, pending re-investment into further acquisitions for the museum collections or in exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of existing collections, in accordance with the Trust's Collections Development Policy 2019-2024.**
- 3. Delegates authority to the Director of Business, Investment and Culture or his nominee, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to oversee the appropriate disposal of collection items by Culture Coventry Trust according to accreditation standards and guidelines following disposal approval.**

9. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

10. **Any other item of public business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved**

There were no other items of business.

(Meeting closed at 1.30 pm)