

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leisure Arts and Communities Committee - 22 October 2007

REPORT ON: Art Galleries and Museums Exhibition Policy

REPORT BY: Director of Leisure and Communities

REPORT NO: 524-2007

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Committee approval for the adoption of the document entitled "Art Galleries and Museums Exhibition Policy".

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the contents of the Art Galleries and Museums Exhibition Policy (see Appendix 1) to operate within the Leisure and Communities Department.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

5.0 MAIN TEXT

- 5.1 Temporary exhibitions and long term displays are the main point of contact between the Museum service and its audiences, and the quality of our exhibitions has a direct impact on the quality of the visitor's experience. The focus of exhibitions will be entertainment, engagement, education and accessibility to a wide range of audiences.
- 5.2 The temporary exhibition programme will be essential in triggering first visits and encouraging repeat visits. The Museum will plan an exciting and innovative temporary exhibition programme which will strengthen and increase the core visitor group, but which will also strategically underpin outreach and audience development initiatives.
- 5.3 A rolling programme of refurbishment of long term displays will be instituted.
- 5.4 There will always be more exhibition proposals than can be accommodated. All proposals will be assessed strategically against current criteria and decisions made on this basis. If other venues are more appropriate, these will be suggested. The Service will ensure that they are involved in developing strategic partnerships that identify and improve the number and quality of exhibition spaces within the City.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance) and Head of Finance have been consulted on this report and are in agreement with its contents.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

**STEWART MURDOCH
DIRECTOR OF LEISURE AND COMMUNITIES
27 SEPTEMBER 2007**

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL - LEISURE AND COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT

Art Galleries and Museums Exhibition Policy

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Mission Statement

Dundee Art Galleries and Museums mission is defined as: "Caring for and sharing Dundee's unique heritage".

1.2 The Exhibition Policy covers all the exhibition and display activities across Dundee City Council's Art Galleries and Museums Service. This includes:

- McManus Galleries and Museum
- McManus Collections Unit
- Broughty Castle Museum
- Mills Observatory
- Camperdown House
- The Old Steeple

1.3 The Exhibition Policy should be read in conjunction with the Leisure and Communities Department's current Service Plan and other plans and policies.

1.4 The Exhibition Policy is written in consultation with representatives from all areas of the Museum Service.

1.5 The Exhibition Policy will be subject to periodic revision, and will be reviewed after no more than four years.

1.6 The Exhibition Policy is a public document available to all stakeholders, Museum visitors and non-visitors.

1.7 Terminology

1.7.1 *Exhibition:* This is used to cover all exhibitions and displays supported by the Art Galleries and Museums service.

1.7.2 *Temporary exhibition:* This is used to cover all exhibitions and displays which have a short term lifespan, either in the McManus' main temporary exhibition space - "Here and Now" - or any other public area across Dundee Art Galleries and Museums.

1.7.3 *Long term displays:* This is used to cover all exhibitions and displays which have a long term lifespan, whose main purpose is to explore themes using items from the City's permanent collections, and which are housed in the main galleries.

2 POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 Temporary exhibitions and long term displays are the main point of contact between the Museum service and its audiences, and the quality of our exhibitions has a direct impact on the quality of the visitor's experience. We will plan exhibitions with the visitor in mind: to entertain, engage and educate, and to be accessible to a wide range of audiences.

- 2.2 The temporary exhibition programme aims to trigger first visits and encourage repeat visits. Therefore the Museum will plan an exciting and innovative temporary exhibition programme which will strengthen and increase our core visitor group, but which will also strategically underpin outreach and audience development initiatives.
- 2.3 We will institute a rolling programme of refurbishment of our long term displays.
- 2.4 As there will always be more exhibition proposals than we can accommodate all proposals will be assessed strategically against current criteria and decisions made on this basis. If other venues are more appropriate, these will be suggested. The Service will ensure that they are involved in developing strategic partnerships that identify and improve the number and quality of exhibition spaces within the City.

3 OBJECTIVES

3.1 Temporary Exhibition Programme

Art Galleries and Museums will:

- 3.1.1 Follow a fair procedure for the selection and programming of temporary exhibition proposals through the Art Galleries and Museums Programme Planning Group.
- 3.1.2 Plan a programme of temporary exhibitions to be shown in the primary temporary exhibition space - "Here and Now" - and secondary exhibition spaces - "the Twentieth Century Gallery". Note that during the redevelopment of the McManus Galleries and Museum, temporary exhibitions and changing displays across the Service will be kept to a minimum.
- 3.1.3 Mount appropriate exhibitions in any of the Departments' public buildings.
- 3.1.4 Plan a temporary exhibition programme which is a combination of in-house and touring exhibitions.
- 3.1.5 Plan a temporary exhibition programme which, as far as possible, responds to:
- seasonal events and public holidays of all cultures and religions
 - city-wide initiatives and festivals
 - national and international festivals and events
 - seasonal fluctuations in audience composition
- 3.1.6 Use the temporary exhibition programme to form partnerships with other organisations and institutions, through loans, consultation, tours and joint projects.
- 3.1.7 Use the temporary exhibition programme to increase access to the Museum's collections by programming exhibitions of material not included in the long term displays.
- 3.1.8 Continue our commitment to free admission to all exhibitions and displays.

3.2 Long Term Displays Refurbishment Programme

Art Galleries and Museums will:

- 3.2.1 Follow a fair procedure for the selection and programming of permanent collection refurbishment proposals through the Art Galleries and Museums Programme Planning Group.
- 3.2.2 Plan a rolling programme of refurbishment of the long term displays, dependant on resources.
- 3.2.3 Plan a programme of essential maintenance of the existing long term displays.
- 3.2.4 Plan a regular programme of small scale exhibitions, projects and interventions within the existing long term displays.
- 3.2.5 Monitor the effectiveness of new permanent displays.
- 3.2.6 Ensure that appropriate conservation expertise is available to advise on the development, presentation and protection of the long-term displays.

3.3 Exhibition Content

Art Galleries and Museums will:

- 3.3.1 Aim for the highest quality in all aspects of exhibition making in content, design, interpretation and presentation, supported by high quality outreach programmes.
- 3.3.2 Ensure that all displays have adequate supporting information and that this interpretation, and all information related to exhibitions, is of a high standard.
- 3.3.3 Adhere to the published standards of best practice in relation to the selection, handling and display of all objects and specimens (such as the guidance produced by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council).
- 3.3.4 Maintain editorial control of all text written by external consultants or curators for in-house exhibitions.
- 3.3.5 Promote exhibitions which take original, genuine objects and specimens as their starting point.
- 3.3.6 Use exhibitions to highlight contemporary issues, and to promote debate.
- 3.3.7 Promote links between the content of temporary exhibitions and permanent collections displays ensuring access to the City's outstanding reserve collections.
- 3.3.8 Use temporary exhibitions to explore topics not covered by the long term displays.
- 3.3.9 Programme exhibitions drawn from the following categories:
 - Contemporary Visual Art
 - Contemporary Craft

In both areas we will generate or commission exhibitions from arts practitioners as a way of supporting their development. These will normally be group or thematic shows held in the temporary exhibition gallery or one-off projects held in non-gallery spaces. It is not our intention to programme one-person shows.

- Subject-specific shows of Art, Human History and Natural Sciences.
- Historic material: though these must have a strong contemporary context
- Material produced as a result of the Creative Learning Programme

3.3.10 Ensure that all new acquisitions for displays are in accordance with the Acquisition and Disposal Policy.

3.3.11 Ensure that all items on display, including items on loan, have been ethically acquired, in accordance with the UK Museums Association Code of Ethics.

3.4 Access

Art Galleries and Museums will:

3.4.1 Develop exhibitions which are accessible and in accordance with Dundee City Council's Access Policy.

3.4.2 Develop exhibitions which reflect, and are responsive to, the cultural and social diversity of our audience.

3.4.3 Consult with user and non-user groups on exhibition programming and exhibition evaluation.

3.4.4 Ensure that all exhibitions comply with legal requirements for access, and guidelines for access from specialist advisory groups.

3.4.5 Use exhibitions to experiment with interpretative methods which increase intellectual access.

3.4.6 Use exhibitions as a springboard for [outreach programmes](#) and [engagement with harder to reach audiences](#).

3.4.7 Maintain an archive, including a photographic record, of all exhibitions.

3.5 Marketing, Audience Development and Evaluation

Art Galleries and Museums will:

3.5.1 Plan exhibitions with a clearly defined audience profile in mind.

3.5.2 Develop a strategic marketing campaign for temporary exhibitions.

3.5.3 Incorporate exhibitions into Art Galleries and Museum audience development strategy.

3.5.4 Ensure a balance between exhibitions aimed at a general audience, and those aimed at a specialist audience.

3.5.5 Use exhibitions to develop and maintain partnerships between Art Galleries and Museums, funders, the wider museum community and our audience.

3.5.6 Set up an internal process for exhibition evaluation and act on the findings.

3.5.7 Incorporate into exhibitions informal mechanisms for audience feed-back.

3.5.8 Set up a process for formal exhibition evaluation with external advisory groups, and user and non-user groups.

3.6 Education and Interpretation

Art Galleries and Museums will:

- 3.6.1 Explore methods of interpretation which establish a dialogue between the visitor and the Museum.
- 3.6.2 Use exhibitions to explore innovative approaches to lifelong learning and interpretation.
- 3.6.3 Apply the most relevant interpretative methods to each exhibition, depending on its content and target audience.
- 3.6.4 Ensure that interpretation, in whatever medium, complies with guidelines for access from relevant advisory bodies.
- 3.6.5 Plan exhibitions in collaboration with the Education Department to make the most of the opportunities for education, lifelong learning and public events offered by the exhibition programme.
- 3.6.6 Involve originating communities, whenever possible, in the presentation and interpretation of material from their culture.
- 3.6.7 Ensure that Front of House staff are briefed on all exhibitions.

3.7 Conservation

Art Galleries and Museums will:

- 3.7.1 Ensure that, within the capabilities of Art Galleries and Museums, all items on display are protected from loss, damage or physical deterioration.
- 3.7.2 Ensure that, where appropriate, the Technical Team are consulted on the display of objects from the City's collection.
- 3.7.3 Monitor and record the environmental conditions of exhibition spaces and related storage areas.
- 3.7.4 Require from all lending organisations environmental parameters for objects coming into Art Galleries and Museums before a loan can be agreed.
- 3.7.5 Ensure that all loan items are condition checked on their arrival at Art Galleries and Museums and prior to departure, and monitored throughout their exhibition.
- 3.7.6 Ensure that the all objects are inspected coming into Art Galleries and Museums for display to prevent the accidental introduction of pests, and that there is provision for quarantine of suspect items.
- 3.7.7 Assess the conservation standards of potential exhibitions from other organisations prior to programming, to ensure that they are compatible with the standards agreed for Art Galleries and Museums.
- 3.7.8 Ensure that all contractors and Museum staff working on exhibitions comply with the Museum's Instructions to Contractors and Procedures for Handling Museum Objects.

3.8 Security

Art Galleries and Museums will:

- 3.8.1 Ensure that the Emergency plan covers all exhibition and related storage areas.
- 3.8.2 Achieve Government Indemnity standards when necessary.
- 3.8.3 Ensure that all objects brought in for exhibition go through a formal and fully documented loans procedure, covering insurance, transport, conservation, copyright, etc.
- 3.8.4 Request from all lending organisations security requirements for objects coming into Art Galleries and Museums.

3.9 Design

Art Galleries and Museums will:

- 3.9.1 Promote high standards of exhibition design using professional designers.
- 3.9.2 Promote innovative and experimental exhibition design, where appropriate.
- 3.9.3 Use exhibition design as an interpretative tool.
- 3.9.4 Only accept exhibition projects that we can satisfactorily implement.
- 3.9.5 Ensure that exhibition design within the Museum complies with access guidelines and standards.
- 3.9.6 Ensure that exhibition design within the Museum complies with Health & Safety and Fire regulations.
- 3.9.7 Ensure that all contractors working on exhibitions within the Museum comply with Health and Safety regulations.

3.10 Funding and Income Generation

Art Galleries and Museums will:

- 3.10.1 Ensure that there is an adequate annual temporary exhibition budget.
- 3.10.2 Ensure that there is an adequate maintenance budget for permanent displays.
- 3.10.3 Ensure that there is a rolling programme of funds for changes within the permanent displays.
- 3.10.4 Seek sponsorship and grant funding for exhibitions where appropriate.
- 3.10.5 Draw up contracts between the Art Galleries and Museums and sponsors, which clearly outline commitments and benefits to both the sponsor and the Service.
- 3.10.6 Draw up contracts between the Art Galleries and Museums and artists/makers which clearly outline the procedures for sale of work from exhibitions, and the percentage of sales taken as commission by the Service.
- 3.10.7 Support an ethical sponsorship policy.