

RUSSELL COTES ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Report subject	Approval of Museum Policies Required for Accreditation
Meeting date	28 October 2024
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>The Russell-Cotes is an accredited museum under the Museum Accreditation Scheme administered by Arts Council England ACE. It was last accredited in 2015 and has been invited to make an accreditation return by 1 May 2026. Accreditation sets standards for governance, collection care and users and is a requirement for much vital museum activity, such as inter-museum loans, and for grant applications.</p> <p>The Museum has a suite of policies and plans that provide a framework of good practice and outline future plans. These are reviewed at least every five years. Some require sign-off by the governing body, ie the Management Committee.</p> <p>The Forward Plan and Documentation Policy and Plan require formal Committee approval.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>The Management Committee approves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitional Business Plan 2025 -2030 • Documentation Policy and Plan 2024
Reason for recommendations	The documents are required to be approved formally by the Management Committee to enable the Museum to make an accreditation return to Arts Council England (ACE) to preserve their full museum accreditation status.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Andy Martin, Customer, Communications and Culture
Corporate Director	Glynn Barton, Chief Operations Officer
Report Authors	Sarah Newman, Museum Manager
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. The Russell-Cotes is accredited under the Arts Council England (ACE) Scheme for museums (no 793). The Accreditation Scheme sets out nationally agreed standards for museums and galleries to inspire the confidence of the public and funding and governing bodies. It sets standards for governance, collections care and user experience.
2. The Museum was last reviewed in 2015 and has been anticipating an invitation to make a return for some years, but this has been delayed by Covid. However, it has now been asked to make a review by 1 May 2025. For this, it will need to submit a number of policies and plans, as well as respond to the issues raised at the last review and complete a self-assessment questionnaire. There may be a review by an ACE Accreditation Manager.
3. As good practice and in anticipation of the review, the Museum updated many of its policies, plans and procedures in 2021 and these were agreed by the Management Committee. However, two policies need approval by the Management Committee in order to complete the return.

Accreditation Review

4. The intention is to complete the review as soon as possible, because the Museum is largely compliant and ready and because the current governance changes have the potential to change the situation significantly, necessitating further reviews which will complicate and delay the submission.

Business Plan

5. It is an Accreditation Standard that the Museum has a Forward or Business Plan which covers the current and next financial year, includes budgets and has been agreed by the governing body.
6. The Russell-Cotes Forward Plan, agreed by the Committee in 2020 only covers the period 2020 - 2024 and therefore is not sufficient.
7. The Museum is in a period of transition from one Trustee to another, with no clarity around time frames, so a Transition Plan has been drafted for 2025 – 2030, to cover the transition from BCP Council to a new sole trustee on the basis of continuity. It seeks to demonstrate that there is a strategy in place for continued improvements and consideration has been given to a full range of issues to give confidence of financial stability in the next few years. This business plan has already been

submitted to ACE to accompany the application for MEND round 4 funding as a requirement.

8. It is anticipated that once the new Company which will act as Sole Trustee is incorporated and there is clarity on time frames, the new Board of Directors will wish to establish their own vision for the Russell-Cotes in line with its charitable objectives and revise the Business Plan accordingly.

Documentation Policy and Plan

9. The Documentation Policy was agreed in 2021, but needs updating slightly to ensure that it has adequately covered issues of accessibility and security. A policy is required as documentation is central to being accountable for the collections, for their effective management, accessibility and use.

Options Appraisal

10. n/a

Summary of financial implications

11. n/a

Summary of legal implications

12. n/a

Summary of human resources implications

13. nA

Summary of sustainability impact

14. n/a

Summary of public health implications

15. nA

Summary of equality implications

16. n/a

Summary of risk assessment

17. n/a

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 Transition Business Plan

Appendix 2 Documentation Policy and Procedure