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| Committee: | Westbury Manor Museum Joint Management Committee |
| Date: | 4 February 2013 |
| Title: | Museums Accreditation 2013 |
| Report from: | Jo Bailey, Collections Team Manager Hampshire County Council Arts and Museums Service |
| Contact details: | jo.bailey@hants.gov.uk 01962 826708 |

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to inform the members of the Westbury Manor Museum Joint Management Committee (JMC) that Hampshire County Council Arts and Museums Service has been invited to submit a Museum Accreditation Return for Westbury Manor Museum (Acc. No. 1175) by 29 April 2013. The paper summarises the aims and benefits of the scheme to the museum, outlines the progress that has been made so far and the implications for the JMC. If the JMC would like further details, Jo Bailey, Project Sponsor and Collections Team Manager would be available to provide a presentation at the next JMC meeting.

2. Background information

2.1 Accreditation is the UK standard for museums and galleries and is managed by the Arts Council in England. It defines good practice and identifies agreed standards, thereby encouraging development. It helps guide museums towards being the best they can be for current and future users.

2.2 The aims of the Accreditation scheme are:

1. To encourage all museums and galleries to achieve agreed standards in
 - how they are run (Organisational Health)
 - how they manage their collections and
 - the experience of users.
2. To encourage confidence in museums as organisations that manage collections for the benefit of society and manage public funds appropriately.
3. To reinforce a shared ethical and professional basis for all museums.

2.3 The benefits of taking part in the Accreditation Scheme are:

Patronage - demonstrates that the museum has met a national standard, which strengthens applications for public and private funding and gives investors confidence in the organisation.

Performance - serves as an authoritative benchmark for assessing performance, rewarding achievement and driving improvement

Profile - raises awareness and understanding of museums, so building confidence and credibility both within the governing body and among the public

People - helps museums to improve their focus on meeting users' needs and interests and developing their workforce

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Partnerships - helps museums to examine their services and to encourage joint working within and between organisations

Planning - helps with forward planning by formalising procedures and policies

2.4 The national Accreditation Panel requires the following types of evidence to be submitted for each museum:

1. **Organisational health** – clear statement of purpose, acceptable constitution, appropriate management arrangements, effective forward planning, secure financial arrangements, appropriate workforce, emergency plan and an environmental sustainability policy statement
2. **Collections** – satisfactory arrangements for ownership of collections, policies approved by the governing body (Hampshire County Council) for Collections Development, Documentation and Care & Conservation supported by appropriate plans and procedures for their implementation
3. **Users and their experiences** – an Access Policy Statement approved by the governing body, evidence of consultation, evaluation, customer care, effective learning and communication with visitors through exhibitions, access to stores, research and activities based on collections.

2.5 The museums managed by Hampshire County Council were last required to provide evidence that they all met the Accreditation Standard in 2009. All the museums met the standard but a small number of 'Areas for Improvement' were identified by the national Accreditation Panel, none of which related specifically to Westbury Manor Museum.

3. Progress to date and implications for the Westbury Manor Museum JMC

- 3.1 An internal working group has been formed and the Collections Management Policies, including a new Acquisitions and Disposals Policy (now known as a Collections Development Policy), have to been drafted and will be going to the HCC Executive Member for Culture and Recreation for approval in March 2013. Copies of the draft policies can be provided on request to JMC members.
- 3.2 The Westbury Manor Museum Joint Management Committee will need to consider and approve the budget and Service Plan for the Museum for 2013/14 so that both pieces of evidence can be included in the submission along with equivalent documentation for 2012/13.

Recommendation

That the Westbury Manor Museum Joint Management Committee:

1. Notes the information provided on the Arts Council [Museums Accreditation Scheme](#), the aims and benefits of the Scheme, progress made against the preparing the Accreditation Return and the implications for the JMC.
2. Considers the offer of a presentation at the next JMC meeting and copies of the Collections Management Policies for information.