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**MUSEUM ACCREDITATION POLICIES**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Nick Wallis,  
Leisure and Local Environment Portfolio**

**Responsible Director - Paul Wildsmith,  
Director of Neighbourhood Services and Resources**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval for the Head of Steam Forward Plan 2016-2019, Head of Steam Collections Management Framework 2016-2021 and Head of Steam Access Statement Policy 2016-2021 before submission to Arts Council England for Museum Accreditation.

**Summary**

2. The museum was invited to submit an Accreditation Return to the Arts Council England by 2 December 2016. The return must include a current Forward Plan, Collections Management Framework and Access Statement Policy approved by the museum's governing body.

**Recommendation**

3. It is recommended that Cabinet approve the Head of Steam Forward Plan 2016-2019, Head of Steam Collections Management Framework 2016-2021 and Head of Steam Access Statement Policy 2016-2021 in preparation for submission to the Arts Council England for Museum Accreditation.

**Reasons**

4. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons :-
  - (a) To evidence effective and professional management of Darlington's Museum Service to enable the museum to remain an accredited museum and entitled to future support from the Arts Council England (Central Government Body).
  - (b) To enable the museum to be eligible for future funding from external bodies, e.g. Arts Council England, English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

- (c) To enable the museum to be eligible for future loans from other museums, e.g. The National Railway Museum.
- (d) To ensure that the museum remains registered and complies with the standards and ethics as set out by the Museums Association.

**Paul Wildsmith**  
**Director of Neighbourhood Services and Resources**

### **Background Papers**

- i. Accreditation Guidance Section One: Organisational Health (June 2014)
- ii. Accreditation Guidance Section Two: Collections (June 2014)
- iii. Accreditation Collections Development Policy template (2014)
- iv. Head of Steam Business Plan 2009-2014
- v. Head of Steam Collections Management Strategy 2012-2017

Leona White-Hannant : Extension 5544

S17 Crime and Disorder	The content of this report has no impact on Crime and Disorder.
Health and Well Being	The content of this report does not impact on Health and Well Being.
Carbon Impact	There are no carbon impact implications in this report.
Diversity	There is no impact on Diversity or Equality as a result of this report.
Wards Affected	Head of Steam is located in Northgate Ward.
Groups Affected	No particular or individual groups are affected as a result of this report.
Budget and Policy Framework	There are no Budget and Policy Framework implications in this report.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	History and heritage of Darlington is an important aspect of Darlington as a place, the Head of Steam being one of the key locations where Darlington's story is told.
Efficiency	There is no impact on efficiency as a result of this report.

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

5. Accreditation by the Arts Council is the UK standard for museums and galleries. It defines good practice and identifies agreed standards, thereby encouraging development. It is a baseline quality standard that helps guide museums to be the best they can be, for current and future users.
6. One of the aims of the Accreditation Scheme is to encourage all museums and galleries to achieve agreed standards in how they are run, how they manage their collections and the experiences of their users.
7. To be Accredited, museums must (amongst other things) be committed to forward planning to improve the service for users and hold a long-term collection of artefacts.
8. The museum's Forward Plan 2016-2019 outlines the vision for the museum service for the next five years and is a precursor to the countdown to the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Stockton and Darlington Railway celebrations in 2025.
9. The museum's Collections Management Framework 2016-2021 includes the museum's policy for developing its collections, its documentation policy and its care and conservation policy. Accredited museums must manage collections effectively and make them and the information they hold about them available to everyone.

10. The museum's Access Statement Policy 2016-2021 outlines the museum's commitment is to accessibility for all visitors.

### **Financial Implications**

11. If the museum does not achieve Accreditation they will no longer be eligible for future funding from external bodies, e.g. Arts Council England, English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

### **Appendices**

- i. Head of Steam Forward Plan 2016-2019 (**Appendix 1**)
- ii. Head of Steam Collections Management Framework 2016-2021 (**Appendix 2**)
- iii. Head of Steam Access Statement Policy 2016-2021 (**Appendix 3**)