

TRANSFER OF CROMWELL MUSEUM COLLECTION TO CROMWELL MUSEUM TRUST

To: **Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee**

Meeting Date: **15 January 2019**

From: **Graham Hughes - Executive Director of Place & Economy**

Electoral division(s): **Godmanchester and Huntingdon South
Huntingdon North and Hartford
Huntingdon West**

Forward Plan ref: **N/a** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To ask members of the Committee to agree to the transfer of the Council's assets in the Cromwell Museum collection to the Cromwell Museum Trust**

Recommendations:

- **To agree the transfer of the ownership of those items of Cromwelliana owned by the County Council to the Cromwell Museum Trust, whilst safeguarding these assets from any potential sale or disposal**
- **To delegate authority to the Executive Director, Place and Economy in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee to finalise the agreement with the Trust**

<i>Officer contact:</i>	<i>Member contacts:</i>
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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In October 2014 Full Council approved the creation of a separate Cromwell Museum Trust to run the Cromwell Museum in Huntingdon, which had been a Cambridgeshire County Council service since 1974 and before then a Huntingdonshire County Council (HCC) service (1962-1974).
- 1.2 In April 2016 the independent Cromwell Museum Trust (CMT) took over the running of the Museum.
- 1.3 During the years 1962-2014, when the Museum was a local authority service, many items relating to Cromwell and his legacy were purchased by HCC and then by CCC for display at the Museum, some with the assistance of external grant funding. As a result, CCC now owns a large number of items of Cromwelliana which it loans to the CMT for display to the public.
- 1.4 The items owned by CCC have been valued for insurance at £376,000. In addition, there are some items belonging to third parties which are on loan to the County Council and then loaned onwards to the CMT for display. These items are fewer in number but are far more valuable. These third party loaned items taken together have been valued for insurance purposes at £2,175,000. Insurance cover on all items, CCC-owned and on loan, is paid by CCC.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 The CMT is required by Arts Council England (ACE) to have Accredited Museum status. Accreditation gives a museum access to ACE funding and is increasingly necessary to secure other funds, for example from the Heritage Lottery Fund. A museum which does not have Accredited Museum status has little success in applying for external grant funding, has great difficulty in attracting professional staff, and cannot host loans of objects from other Accredited Museums. The Cromwell Museum currently has Provisional Accreditation status from ACE but this status will expire in March 2019 and the Trust must apply to ACE for Full Accreditation before that date.
- 2.2 ACE has expressed concern to CCC Officers over the fact that the CMT does not own any of the items on display in the Museum, but that all these items are on loan, the majority from CCC. If the loaned items were ever withdrawn then the Museum would have nothing to display. ACE regard this as a serious threat to the sustainability of the Cromwell Museum and they have indicated to Officers that this would be enough to prevent Accreditation.
- 2.3 It is the understanding of CCC Officers that the transfer of the ownership of the CCC-owned items to the CMT would allay ACE's concern over the collection, and thereby help ensure the future of the Museum.
- 2.4 Given the tight deadline for the Museum's Accreditation, work has already begun on drafting an agreement to transfer ownership while we await Committee approval. Since local authority funding has been used to purchase items in the collection, it is important to ensure the CMT could not in the future attempt to sell these items, or put the items at risk of being sold as part of the general sale of assets of the CMT should it ever fold. Therefore, the draft agreement contains relevant safeguards. Under the terms of the agreement

drafted, the Trust warrants that it shall not sell, transfer or otherwise dispose of, or grant any encumbrance over, any of the objects. In the event that the Trust sells or attempts to sell any of the objects or if the Trust ceases to exist for whatever reason, the Trust shall forthwith transfer ownership of the objects back to the Council. Also, under the terms of the agreement being drafted, the Trust shall pay for insurance on the items.

- 2.5 The agreement being drafted does not affect any of the items on loan from third parties. CCC Officers are making contact with the owners of such loans to inform them that their loans in future should be made directly with the Trust, rather than with CCC for onward loan to the Trust.
- 2.6 A few items on display at the Museum and which are owned by CCC fall within the collecting policy of Cambridgeshire Archives Service or within the Library service's Cromwell Collection collecting policy. These are some manuscripts and books. These items have been identified and their ownership will be retained by CCC. They will continue to be loaned to CMT for display as required.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- If the Museum fails to win Accreditation from ACE because it does not own the majority of items on display, and it therefore closes, then the local Huntingdon economy will be negatively impacted.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Museums contribute towards social well-being and health, both generally through a commitment to volunteering, work placements and training, and more specifically through discrete and focused projects dealing with the broad range of social issues including ethnicity, community, growing old, and literacy programmes, while using a variety of engagement methods, such as object handling, loan boxes, reminiscence work etc. The Cromwell Museum has significantly contributed towards establishing cultural and social welfare capital in Huntingdon. CCC can help sustain the Museum for the future by transferring ownership of its collection of Cromwelliana, whereas a failure to transfer this ownership would put the Museum's viability at risk.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- The agreement proposes that CCC will cease to pay for insurance on the objects and that this insurance would instead be paid by the CMT.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- The proposed transfer would have a positive impact for the older age group, for the reasons outlined in paragraph 3.2 above.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- If the Museum loses its ACE Accreditation because of a decision not to transfer the collection then news of that would necessarily become public, with possible reputational risk for CCC.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.7 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Sarah Heywood
Have the procurement/contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	Yes Name of Officer: Paul White
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Elsa Evans
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Name of Officer: Jo Shilton
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Christine May
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Name of Officer: Stuart Keeble

Source Documents	Location
None	