

Bath & North East Somerset Council

DECISION MAKER:	Single Member Decision: Councillor Paul Myers, Cabinet Member for Economic & Community Regeneration	
DECISION DATE:	On or after 16th June 2018	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE
		E 3062
TITLE:	Museums Forward Plans 2018-2021	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
<p>List of attachments to this report:</p> <p>Appendix 1: Fashion Museum Forward Plan 2018-2021</p> <p>Appendix 2: Roman Baths Museum Forward Plan 2018-2021</p> <p>Appendix 3: Victoria Art Gallery Forward Plan 2018-2021</p>		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 The report introduces the 3-year forward plans for the Fashion Museum, Roman Baths Museum and Victoria Art Gallery necessary to attain Full Accreditation status with Arts Council England (ACE). The Government's Accreditation scheme requires governing body approval of the forward plans.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That on behalf of the Council the Cabinet Member approve the 2018-2021 forward plans for the Fashion Museum, Roman Baths Museum and Victoria Art Gallery.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The museum forward plans will be delivered within the Service's cash limits as adopted by the Council in the Heritage Services 5-year rolling Business Plan, so no new resources are sought.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The provision of museum services by local authorities is a discretionary rather than statutory service. This authority has important museum collections which are used to deliver much-valued services to residents and visitors alike. The basis for the proposal is that the authority would wish to continue to observe best practice in the management of its museum collections and the services delivered using them.
- 4.2 ACE Accreditation is evidence that a museum is well run to nationally-accepted standards and is a condition of grant-aid from a range of funding bodies.

5 THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Council holds important collections of historic material in its museums. Two of these collections, at the Roman Baths Museum and Fashion Museum, have been 'Designated' by Government as nationally / internationally important collections held in non-national institutions.

5.2 The Council last adopted its museum forward plans in May 2014 (Fashion Museum) and February 2015 (Roman Baths Museum and Victoria Art Gallery). The timing of those applications was set by ACE who have since indicated that, to simplify matters, it will in future harmonise the date it requires the Council's three museums to update their Accredited status. The next ACE Accreditation Review will probably take place in 2019.

5.3 The museum forward plans will contribute to Heritage Services' Service Aims, which are:

- to enhance the quality of life for residents of Bath & North East Somerset;
- to maximise public enjoyment of the Council's world class heritage;
- to enable people to learn from the activities and achievements of past and present societies;
- to promote understanding and appreciation of different cultures;
- to contribute to the district's economic prosperity through our Business Plan.

5.4 The museum forward plans have been drafted to a common formula prescribed by ACE. They include a statement of purpose, a description of the museum's collection, its staffing arrangements, opening hours and audiences, organisational structure, finances and building and a review of the previous plan. The forward-looking sections concern each museum's aims and objectives, future priorities and an action plan. In summary the key issues are:

5.5 Fashion Museum:

- investigate options for sustainable premises for the Museum in the longer term;
- raise and maintain the profile of the Fashion Museum and its world-class collection, particularly with local and global audiences;
- maintain the Museum's reputation as a key lender to major exhibitions at the world's leading museums;
- locate all objects on the documentation database to improve public access to the collection, through display, engagement, on-line and on-tour activities;
- maintain pest management, emergency response, salvage and insurance valuations programmes.

5.6 Roman Baths Museum:

- complete the Archway Project as a major capital scheme;
- prepare a scheme of improvements in conservation, public access and interpretation in the West Baths;
- install a new energy capture scheme in the King's Spring to heat the Pump Room & Roman Baths complex, replacing the former equipment installed in 1992;
- re-purpose the existing learning space in the museum for informal learning activities for daytime visitors;
- improve accessibility and environmental standards for collections in store;
- work with other Council services and city-centre agencies to improve the quality of the public realm in the vicinity of the Pump Room & Roman Baths complex.

5.7 Victoria Art Gallery:

- bring forward for consideration a business case for extending the Gallery into the void between it, the Market and the Guildhall, to improve public service delivery and become more financially sustainable;
- prepare business cases for all major exhibitions to improve financial performance;
- replace the air-conditioning plant by March 2019 to retain the conditions for prestigious loans from national collections;
- improve efficiency of storage systems and bring forward proposals for disposal of non-relevant items via the agreed procedure.

6 RATIONALE

- 6.1 The Council has a good reputation for managing its museums to high professional standards. The museum forward plans will maintain this reputation for best practice and will have positive implications for public access to the Council's museum collections and the information they contain.
- 6.2 The museum forward plans are important for demonstrating that the Council's museums are important contributors to the quality of life of Bath and North East Somerset residents and to the cultural 'offer' of the district.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 None.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Users at all three sites are consulted on an ongoing basis and issues that arise are incorporated into work plans to improve the services delivered. The Heritage Services Focus Group has also been consulted. A public consultation meeting was being held in May 2018 and Discovery Cards holders were invited to attend via their e-newsletter.
- 8.2 The museum forward plans have been considered by the Property Housing and Economic Development Scrutiny Panel.
- 8.3 The s151 and Monitoring Officers have had opportunity to review and input into this report.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance.

Contact person	Stephen Bird, Head of Heritage Services 01225 477750
Background papers	E2663 <i>Heritage Services Business Update and Fashion Museum Forward Plan</i> , Cabinet, May 2014 E2745 <i>Heritage Services Business Plan 2015-2020 and Museum Forward Plans</i> , Cabinet, February 2015 <i>Property Housing and Economic Development Scrutiny Panel</i> , May 2018

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