

**Report to:** Lead Member for Community Services

**Date of meeting:** 25 May 2016

**By:** Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

**Title:** East Sussex Record Office Collections Policies

**Purpose:** To seek approval for a suite of policies relating to East Sussex Record Office collections

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:** The Lead Member is recommended to:

- (1) Approve the East Sussex Record Office Collections Development Policy, as set out in Appendix 1;**
  - (2) Approve the East Sussex Record Office Selection, Appraisal and Disposal Policy as set out in Appendix 2; and**
  - (3) Approve the East Sussex Record Office Collections Information Statement and Policy as set out in Appendix 3.**
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## **1 Background Information**

1.1. East Sussex Record Office (ESRO) collects and preserves archival material relating to past and present life in East Sussex and Brighton & Hove. The records are stored at The Keep and are made available to the public by a variety of means for research and enjoyment.

1.2. The work of ESRO is underpinned by legislation and overseen by The National Archives (TNA). The Keep is licensed as a 'Place of Deposit' to hold public records by TNA.

1.3. A new system of accreditation for archive services ('Accreditation') has recently been introduced, and is managed by TNA. All Places of Deposit are required to achieve Accreditation by 2017 and ESRO is aiming to apply in the summer of 2016.

1.4. Accreditation has a range of requirements, which include the existence of service policies approved at an appropriate level. Many of the policies to which ESRO currently works have been agreed through the governance framework of The Keep. However, because the collections held by each partner at The Keep (East Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council and the University of Sussex) ('The Keep Partners') remain the responsibility of the relevant partner, certain policies relating to the management of those collections held by ESRO must be approved through the County Council's internal processes.

## **2 Supporting Information**

2.1. The Keep Collections Statement, which has been approved at Keep Board level, describes how The Keep Partners work together to manage the holdings at The Keep. The individual collections management policies of each Keep Partner are annexed to it. For ESRO, this consists only of its terms of deposit.

2.2. Accreditation expects a number of collections management policies to be in place in addition to the terms of deposit. Although such policies have been followed at ESRO, they have never been formalised. This has also been the case for a number of other archive services

seeking Accreditation, which have created such documents from scratch since there is currently no template available within the archives sector. Consequently, the policies for which approval is now sought are based on documents created by archive services that have already achieved Accreditation.

2.3. The Collections Development Policy (Appendix 1) describes what, why and how ESRO acquires archives and considers the strengths and weaknesses of its collections in order to inform its priorities for collecting in future.

2.4. The Selection, Appraisal and Disposal Policy (Appendix 2) describes in more detail the principles underpinning decisions about which records to retain permanently as archives.

2.5. The Collections Information Statement and Policy (Appendix 3) sets out the principles for documenting ESRO's archive holdings, including information about ownership and rights, and establishes its priorities for cataloguing the archives in order to provide public access.

### **3 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

3.1. The Lead Member is therefore recommended to formally approve the three policies, as set out in Appendices 1 – 3. The policies are required in order for ESRO to achieve Accreditation. The policies formalise existing principles and good practice and are based on documents produced by archive services that have already achieved Accreditation.

RUPERT CLUBB

Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

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#### LOCAL MEMBERS

All

#### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

The National Archives Accreditation Scheme at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/accreditation.htm>