

Committee(s)	Dated:
Culture, Heritage and Libraries	11/12/18
Subject: Revision of Guildhall Art Gallery's Collections Development Policy	Public
Report of: Peter Lisley, Assistant Town Clerk and Culture Mile Director	For Decision
Report author: Elizabeth Scott, Head of Guildhall Galleries	

Summary

The Guildhall Art Gallery's Collections Development Policy was reviewed as part of its Arts Council England Accreditation re-application and was approved by the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee on 24 October 2016. The Gallery's Collections Development Policy is due for review in 2021 but has been revised ahead of this date in order to align the development of the collection with the Gallery's new strategic direction.

Recommendations

Members are asked:

- To review and approve the revised Collections Development Policy.

Main Report

Background

1. The Guildhall Art Gallery's current Collections Development Policy was approved 24 October 2016 and was reviewed as part of the Gallery's re-application for Arts Council England's Accreditation scheme.

Current Position

2. The 2016 Collections Development Policy has a focus on collecting works with direct relevance to London, particularly works of art with particular relevance to the City of London and subjects associated with the locality, such as money, power, boom and bust, trade and commerce, and justice, with particular reference to financial services.

Proposals

3. The proposal for the revised Collections Development Policy is to re-focus the Gallery's collecting on London more widely. This move is not new to the Gallery which has its origins in collecting works of art about London and which is important to the history of London. It is therefore a 're-focus' which harks

back to the Gallery's original intention, to 'form a Collection of Art Treasures worthy of the capital city...' and the Gallery's collecting focus as specified in a memorandum approved on 24 November 1944, that in future, acquisitions should consist principally of works of London interest.'

4. This step is not a regression for the Gallery's collection, it instead offers an opportunity to develop the collection to reflect the Gallery's audience, its strategic direction and its position as an art gallery in London.
5. The revised Policy offers more detail and direction, with specified Collections Development Objectives and Priority Collecting Areas, this will allow the Gallery to collect in areas which are underrepresented in the current collection and give the Gallery team more guidance in assessing potential acquisitions.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

6. The revised Collections Development Policy aligns with the City Corporation's Corporate Plan, in particular Key Policy Priority 10d to *Protect, curate and promote world-class heritage assets, cultural experiences and events*. The proposal will enable the collection to reflect its communities, removing institutional barriers and structural inequalities and will ensure the Corporation's collection creates a sense of place, remaining relevant to and representative of the capital.

Conclusion

7. The gallery's collection is highly-regarded within the arts sector and much loved by the public. In order to maintain an inspiring collection for learning and enjoyment and remain relevant to the public, acquisitions must be made which will artistically enrich the collection and support its expansion and development. The revised Collections Development Policy will enable the Gallery to remain a compelling attraction for visitors and ensure the City Corporation maintains its recognition and prestige within the art world as a collector, lender, and guardian of heritage assets.

Appendices

- GAG Collections Development Policy - 2018-23

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