

Title of Report:	Museum Services Stores
Committee Report Submitted To:	Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	21 September 2021
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, Healthy & Engaged Communities
Outcome	Council will work to develop and promote stable and cohesive communities across the Borough
Lead Officer	Head of Community & Culture Museum Development Manager

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£12,000 (additional net cost) p.a
Included in Current Year Estimates	NO
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	10401/10411
Staffing Costs	n/a

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date: Aug 2016 (CAH strategy)
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date: 2019
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date: n/a
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

To establish storage needs for Council's Museum Collections to reduce carbon footprint, address health and safety issues, provide more suitable medium to long term conditions for storing Council's museum collections, release use of commercial assets at Juniper Hill and improve access to collections for staff, researchers, volunteers and other stakeholders.

2.0 Background

Council maintain 5 museum collections across the Borough that hold UK Accreditation Standard for museums. The policies and plans that are required for Accreditation include Collections Development, Learning and Access and Collections Care and Conservation (including storage). These were updated and approved in 2017 and we await updated guidance on the new Accreditation Scheme post COVID. The Collections Care and Conservation across all our museums includes the need to provide a suitable building for the purpose of storing the collections. This policy takes into account the Museums Association Benchmarks in Collections Care.

In 2017 Blueprint Consultancy in their report to Council on OPTIONS FOR MUSEUMS identified that the storage for collections and display equipment was an issue across the Museum Service

In 2018 the Outline Business Case for Ballycastle Museum, adopted December 2018, a recommendation was included to develop a Council wide stores solution.

A Collections store review has now been undertaken by Museum Services with a view to making a recommendation to provide suitable accommodation to store collections and other museum services resources such as display equipment, handling boxes and publications.

An analysis of options are provided in the table in **ANNEX C**.

3.0 Current Situation

3.1 Council Collections

Museum collections develop over time as local families have gifted the legacy Councils and now Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, collections relating to the people and places of our Borough. All collections include family items relating to WWI and WWII as well as substantial photographic, folk music, artworks and postcard collections as well as domestic, school, civic, industrial and commercial life across the Borough.

The total number of items is over 46,000 and these are insured for over £1,000,000. Each of the collections have unique stories to reveal and are distinguishable from each other through documentation processes required for UK Museum Accreditation Scheme. Collectively they represent the rich tapestry of human interaction over thousands of years with our spectacular landscape.

For further detail on the development of each collection, please refer to **ANNEX A**

3.2 Collections stores facilities across Council

Museum stores house the items not on public display and are sites that staff need to work in on a regular basis.

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council have museum stores in **ten locations** across the Borough. Eight of these hold museum collections and two hold museum display equipment, handling boxes and publications.

The locations of these storage facilities includes Council venues as well as Acorn Industrial Centre Ballymoney. Council venues include purpose built museum stores areas in Ballymoney Museum and Roe Valley Arts and Cultural Centre, general storage in Ballymoney Town Hall, caretaker bungalows in caravan parks and stores depots in Limavady and Ballycastle.

For further details of specific sites, please refer to **ANNEX A**

4.0 Current Challenges for Museums Stores

- All Museum Stores are either at or above storage capacity.
- All Collection Stores are unable to meet Health and Safety Standards for working at heights and lifting heavy loads due to lack of space to accommodate appropriate moving equipment.
- Collection stores environment apart from two areas in Ballymoney Museum and the collection store in Roe Valley Arts and Cultural Centre do not have adequate environmental protection for sensitive objects.
- Legacy Council storage of items has resulted in inaccessible storage areas for items e.g. Ballymoney Town Hall store and open storage in Council depots for large robust items.
- Only Ballymoney Town Hall has Museum Services staff on site full time although staff spend some time each week in Coleraine, Ballycastle and Limavady stores working with the collection.
- Geographically dispersed smaller units, results in inefficiencies for environmental controls, security and working with collections.
- Storage in decommissioned caretaker's houses in caravan parks is only a short-term solution and restricts the commercial potential to develop these sites.
- Public requests to research and view items in storage, co curate exhibitions and other resources or to tour the stores cannot be accommodated.

Total current floor space, excluding Ballymoney Museum stores area and Roe Valley Arts & Cultural Centre museum stores, is approx. 200 sq. m. for storage with a requirement for a further 30 sq. metres to accommodate current need. This does not include general circulation, toilets, desk space, lobby or stairs/lift if required.

The current budget for Museum Stores is £13,990.

Further details on the review of storage requirements are contained in **ANNEX B**

5.0 Museum Storage Requirements

A synopsis of the requirements for Council's museum collections are as follows:

- Ballymoney Museum and Roe Valley Arts and Cultural Centre museum collection stores will be retained as they are good museum quality stores and support day to day work by museum services staff.
- A centralised storage area of 230 sq. m. (2500 sq. ft.) that provides space for sensitive material to be stored and the more robust items kept separately. Prioritise 90 sq. m. of this space at higher levels of environmental control for the sensitive items.
- Depending on building layout, additional space would be required for circulation, access, loadings, workspace for desk, staff toilet, staff kitchen/facilities. A lift would be required if over more than one floor.
- Maintenance of required temperature, humidity and light levels to appropriate stores areas.
- Vehicular access for vans and staff cars to move items in and out for display, documentation, research, workshops etc.
- Double entrance/Lobby area to manage air exchanges.
- Fire and intruder alarms, preferably with CCTV.

Further details of the museum collections storage requirements are presented in **ANNEX A**.

6.0 Summary of Options

In view of the storage requirements outline at 5.0, a range of options* have been considered and reflects the current availability within the Council estate and the rental market for appropriate space.

- 6.1 Option 1 Do nothing** is not an option due to short term and dispersed nature of the ten locations, health and safety risks to staff and the risks to collection.
- 6.2 Option 2 Shipping containers** - this option has been ruled out due to inefficient use of space, services and security, no council site available, separate storage area for large objects required and unsuitable without considerable modification – individual insulation, individual buffer zone etc.
- 6.3 Option 3 Rent an industrial unit and adapt** - one off expense of **approx. £47000** to provide the environmental conditions necessary. This cost would have to be borne by the council as a tenant with sufficient lead in time to complete additional works. Annual rent including rates approximately £15,000 p.a. plus overheads. The *additional net cost to council* (taking into account the existing budget) over a 5 year period would therefore be circa £10,410 p.a. plus overheads.
- 6.4 Option 4 Use of Council estate** such as Sheskburn House, has been ruled out due to unavailability of space and/or future plans for Council estates.
- 6.5 Option 5 Rent office/retail space** is viable and the preferred option with existing controllable heating and lighting as well as suitable access and security. This option would cost approx. Annual rent of circa £26000 p.a including rates, plus overheads based on availability at present. The *additional net cost to council* (taking into account the existing budget) over a 5 year period would therefore be circa £12,000 p.a plus overheads.

*An analysis of options are provided in the table in **ANNEX C**.

7.0 Preferred Options Benefits

The benefits of both Option 3 and 5 (Annex C) include:

- Collections and other museum resources all in a single location.
- Reduction in carbon footprint – mileage and single source of energy costs.
- Collections care and security improved and all under the control of museum services.
- Health and safety issues in all museum stores addressed.
- Access to collections for staff, volunteers, researchers and other stakeholders improved.
- Release of Council commercial asset at Juniper Hill.
- Efficiencies for management, monitoring and maintaining a single location.
- Medium to long term storage solution secured.

Option 5 has the additional benefit of being ready to move in with no capital investment and is therefore the preferred option. However the anticipated costs over 5 years are similar.

8.0 Recommendations

- 8.1** The current museum grade stores in Ballymoney Museum and RVACC are maintained

- 8.2 Approval to secure the rental of a centralised store for at least five years, providing 230 sq. metres of storage space, at an additional cost to the museums budget of £12,000 per annum plus overheads.

ANNEX A

CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS BOROUGH COUNCIL MUSEUM COLLECTIONS, STORAGE REQUIREMENTS AND CURRENT MUSEUM STORES

A1: MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

Museum collections develop over time as local families have gifted the legacy Councils and now Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, collections relating to the people and places of our Borough. All collections include family items relating to WWI and WWII as well as substantial photographic, folk music, artworks and postcard collections as well as domestic, school, civic, industrial and commercial life across the Borough.

The total number of items is over 46,000 and these are insured for over £1,000,000. Each of the collections have unique stories to reveal and are distinguishable from each other through documentation processes required for UK Museum Accreditation Scheme. Collectively they represent the rich tapestry of human interaction over thousands of years with our spectacular landscape.

Ballycastle's Collection dates back to 1983 when Moyle District Council took over the contents of the Irish Home Industries Shop. It has developed further since the mid-1990s and currently totals over 3000 items. Key features include Taise Banner, Liscolman Pot, King of Ballycastle Statuary, 1904 St Louis World Trade Fair items as well as a small collection of artworks by important Ulster artists.

Ballymoney's Collection dates back to 1860 and has continued to grow. Key features of the collection include the enigmatic Derrykeighan Stone, NW200 and Victorian collections of archaeology from the surrounding area as well as the recent bequest of the Alex Blair collection. It currently totals over 8000 items.

Coleraine's Collection commenced back in the mid-1900s as local historians donated items to the Council. Significant donations since 1999 have built the collection to its current size of over 30,000 items. Key features include 1859 Revival Bible, Gribbon linen industry items, Coleraine Battery Collection, illuminated addresses, artworks, travel posters Moore and other local photographers, 1614 Coleraine Sword and the prestigious and substantial Sam Henry Collection. In 2005 Council secured public funding to acquire the Hugh Thomson collection that is the largest known collection of this Coleraine born and highly regarded Victorian book illustrator. In addition the Museum holds the Constitution and Chronicle archive of negatives recording 69,546 events across the Borough between 1956 and 2003.

Limavady Collection commenced in mid 1990s and currently holds 2900 items. Featured items include the 1696 Newtowne-Limavady Estate Maps, 1835 Sampson map, Drumcovitt estate archives and 19th century Edward Bunting songbooks

Green Lane Collection was handed over in 1997 when Limavady Borough Council took over the operations of Green Lane Museum from the then Department of Environment. The Collection has remained at 220 items since then.

A2 COLLECTIONS STORAGE

The source of risks to collections are

Relative humidity

Temperature

Light

Pests

Pollution

Building condition

As part of our Collections Conservation and Care Policy and Plan (approved by Council in 2017), we currently monitor these risks through digital data loggers and portable spot reading equipment for RH, temperature and light. Pests are monitored through sticky traps. Pollution risks are managed through house-keeping procedures and monitoring. Regular calibration of our data loggers and portable spot reading equipment is carried out biannually. All items are stored in archival materials and located in numbered boxes.

Our stores facilities are maintained with the support of Councils Estates team who arrange monitoring and testing as for any Council property including Fire Safety Officer inspections, Legionella testing and Alarm Company monitoring. Councils Estates team also carry out works to address maintenance issues.

BS4971:2018 is the current standard for Conservation of Cultural Heritage. However museums are increasingly responding to the challenges of climate change and reducing their carbon footprint.

Current considerations stress that the crucial management of the stores environment to reduce energy use comes from reducing air exchanges and maintaining a stable environment within a range. That range for libraries and archival material is 16- 20 C and 40 – 60 % humidity with photographs range being lower 15- 18 with 30 – 50% humidity

For small mixed museum collections such as Council hold, cool, dry and steady environmental conditions are recommended for most items. Organic materials are the most sensitive. This would include works on paper, textiles, some wood and some archaeological material. Less sensitive would include glass, ceramics and metals. Some of our agricultural items are more robust.

Recognising that our museum collections include sensitive materials and less sensitive, our storage areas should:

- Be buffered from air exchange through double entrance lobby

- Include a separate internal area for sensitive materials – paper, watercolours, textiles, photographs/negatives

- Provide controlled heating in sensitive store area maintaining 16 - 18 degrees C and 40 – 50%

- Maintain cool dry stable environment for all less sensitive materials

- Reduce/block out all windows

- Light sources to have UV filters

- Maintain current risk management procedures including digital data loggers, spot readings and pest traps.

- Introduce dehumidifiers to assist if necessary

All fire and physical perimeter alarms wired in to meet standards.

A3 CURRENT MUSEUM STORES

Ballymoney Collection Stores

1.1 The Museum inner stores and outer store were provided as part of the extension and refurbishment of Ballymoney Town Hall completed in 2010. Prior to that the collection had been housed in Charlotte St

1.2 The stone archaeology store under the fire escape was introduced in 2010 when the museum collection moved into the building.

1.3 Over Chair/Piano Store area appears to hold items from the Reading Room in Ballymoney Town Hall. The use of this space predates 2010.

Limavady Collection Store

The collection was moved into its current location in 2010 on the completion of the building of RVACC. Prior to that it was housed in the Leisure Services Department stationery store in Limavady Borough Council.

Coleraine Collection Store #2

The collection was moved into this location in 2017 when the collection had to vacate Cloonavin

Coleraine Collection Store

The collection was moved into its current location in 2017, after a brief period in Flowerfield following the removal of collection from Cloonavin where it had been since 2002. Before that it had been held in the Belfry of Coleraine Town Hall and old Cloonavin.

Ballycastle Collection Store

The collection was moved into its current location in June 2021 after a brief period in Sheskburn House, due to health and safety works requiring a more extensive period of work

Ballycastle Depot Storage

Due to the size and weight of items a small number of items were moved into the Council depot in 2010.

Dungiven Printing Press storage

The contents of Dungiven Printing Company including the printing press, was acquired by Limavady Borough Council and moved into the current location in 1996 and boxed in and secured with a padlock.

Neelys sewing machines storage

Neelys 2 x industrial sewing machines remained in the Coleraine Town Hall Belfry when all other items transferred to Cloonavin in 2002.

Display equipment store

All items of equipment across the Service for display and handling activities including the sensory play tent.

Ballycastle fixtures and fittings temporary store

All shelving and display equipment from Ballycastle Museum are relocated until Museum ground floor reopens.

Kitty of Coleraine boat store

This item is a poorly documented loan from the Ulster Folk & transport Museum in the early 1990s. The boat, at the time in very poor condition, was spotted at Cultra by local boat enthusiasts who undertook to restore the boat on the understanding that Coleraine Borough Council store the boat. Given the costs of storage locally, NMNI has been approached to take back the item, as its their property. Currently arrangements have been made to move the boat into more appropriate storage within NMNI.

**ANNEX B
MUSEUM STORES REVIEW**

Location	Storage areas	Stores Budget 21-22		Storage space	Additional estimate	Materials	Security		Staff Health & Safety	Access in and around for trolleys and vans	Notes
							Physical	Env			
1.0	Ballymoney Collection stores Also holds Chronicle and Constitution archive and Items from other collections in use by museum staff		Museum Inner stores	4.16 x 7.34 = 32.6 sq.m.	6 bays of 1m wide x 2m high 600mm shelving	Works on paper, Textiles Artworks Metals Archaeology	V G	VG	Limited access to certain areas for staff Limited access for equipment for working at heights	No access for trolley Building has good access for vans	Over full especially with two bequests Alex Blair and Wallace McNaul Museum staff on site Air conditioned
			Museum Outer store	4.19 x 8.89 = 37.23 sq. m.	2 bays of 1m x 2m x 600 mm wide shelving	Metals wood Works on paper	G	G	Limited access for equipment for working at heights	No access for trolley Building has good access for vans	Fire escape route Not fully sealed to external air exchange Key pad access Little control on external contractors servicing mechanical units housed here

			Stone archaeology store	2 sq.m.	2 sq.m.	Stones	V P	VP	Low head height Lack of ventilation Damp	No access for trolley	Part of fire escape
			Over Chair store		2 sq.m.	Works on paper Wood Metal	V P	VP	Inaccessible Working at considerable height (5m or more) Lack of ventilation		Items from old Reading Room Only way in is through pop hole in floor from store below.
2.1	Limavady Collection store		Museum store 1	50 sq metres	Storage for display cases 4 sq metres	Works on paper Textiles Artworks Metals Stone Display cases	V G	VG	High noise level from mechanical ventilation	Building has very good access for vans. Little access for trolleys when display cases stored	Arts centre staff on site Museum Services staff only on site as required Risks to collection monitored
2.2	Coleraine collection store#2		Museum store 2			Archaeology Glass	V G	VG		Building has very good access for vans. Some trolley access	Arts centre staff on site Museum Services staff only on site as required Risks to collection monitored

3.0	Coleraine Collection store with items from other collections stored here	£4790		8.05 x 3.85 = 31 sq m 4.42 x 2.64 = 11.7 sq m 4.49 x 3.06 = 13.7 sq m 3.05 x 2.50 = 7.6 sq m 4.33 x 3.00 = 13 sq m TOTAL 77 sq m	4 x 1m x 2m x 600mm wide shelving	Works on paper Artworks Textiles Archaeology Ceramics Glass Metals Stone Conservation materials	V G	P - G	No dedicated work space Lone working Lack of air circulation Limited access for equipment for working at heights	Good access for vans and trolleys	High value items Salt air risk to collections Limited air circulation Minimal heat control Full Staff only on site as required Risks to collection monitored
4.0	Ballycastle Collection store	£5000		56 sq m		Works on paper Textiles Artworks Archaeology Ceramics Glass Wood	V G	G	Suitable work environment with heating and toilet Staff only on site as required	No access for trolleys currently Good access for vans	Full due to museum closure Once displays reinstalled circulation becomes clear

						Metals Stone Display cases			Currently lacks dedicated work space H & S risks Lone working Working at heights (2m)		Risks to collection monitored
5.0	Ballycastle Depot storage	Large items of archaeology and small boat		10 sq m			V P	VP	No access Extremely heavy	No access	No access except through depot Not monitored by Museum Services
6.0	Dungiven Printing press store			9 sq m			P	P	Boxed in and secured by padlock so no access	No access	No access Not monitored by Museum Services
7.0	Neelys sewing machines storage			1 sq m			P	P	Very steep stairs Overheats due to hot	No access for trolleys	Not monitored by Museum Services

									water tank in situ		
8.0	Display/loan boxes/publications store	£3000		56 sq m		Display stands Display frames Exhibition panels Printed images Sensory tent Display figures Plinths Frames Display cases Handling boxes Learning resources/publications Childrens furniture	P	P		Very good access for vans No access for trolley	Most material is robust Over capacity due to impact of COVID on Ballymoney Museum and closure of Ballycastle Museum building Supports all temporary programming in venues across Causeway Coast and Glens No alarms No staff on site
9.0	Ballycastle display fixtures and fitting /publications temporary store			15 sq m approx		Shelving Plinths Frames	N A	NA	Very good access	Very good access for trolleys and vans	Temporary store until museum ground floor reopens Part of shared Council facility
	TOTAL	Stores Budget 21-22		Current Storage space	Additio nal 30 sq m						Excluding museum stores in Ballymoney Town Hall and RVACC

ANNEX C

OPTIONS INVESTIGATED FOR MUSEUM STORES

			Additional costs/ savings
1	Do nothing	DESCRIPTION Maintain all current storage areas	NOT FEASIBLE due to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health and safety risks to staff • lack of environmental controls, • short term solution at Juniper Hill, • duplication of security, monitoring, environmental controls • mileage • risk to collection - damage & loss • reputational risk
		PROS No additional cost to Council	
		CONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juniper Hill short term solution • Very dispersed stores • Collections damaged or lost • Health and safety risks for staff • Lack of environmental controls • Reputational risk • Inefficient, carbon costs high – travel, energy. 	
2	Containers	DESCRIPTION 12 of 40 ft x 6ft (12 m x 1.8m) containers to be purchased Insulation, conditioning, lighting and security to be installed	Purchase price of containers plus fitout and site costs NOT FEASIBLE due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of Council site, • width of units restricting access, • Large items such as map cabinets difficult to accommodate, • No work space, • Inefficient as each unit would require a lobby/air exchange buffer, insulation, environmental equipment, security etc.
		PROS Council asset after purchase	
		CONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site required to house 12 of 40 ft x 6 ft containers • Inefficient layouts due to width remaining when shelved • No work space • Access for trolley and other health and safety equipment • Costs to insulate, secure and fit out • Large items difficult to store • Maintaining environmental conditions and security 	

3	Industrial unit or similar	<p>DESCRIPTION 230 sq. m. (2500 sq. ft.) of floor space with no heat/light/security etc. Conditioned room 90 sq. m. to be built inside. Heating, lighting, alarms required One off accessible site store for collections, handling boxes, display equipment</p> <p>PROS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All items in one place under Museum Services management • Appropriate controlled space with lobby/air exchange buffer • Accessible for staff, equipment and public • Collections better stored • One security and environmental system • Monitoring and maintenance of one location • Release of caravan park asset <p>CONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up costs • Schedule to insulate, install security, fit out • Increased annual cost • Not in Council ownership 	<p>Circa £15,000 per year including rates Plus Circa £47,000 one off cost to adapt</p> <p>Plus annual overheads</p> <p>Space currently available August 2021</p> <p>AN OPTION IF OPTION 5 NOT ACHIEVABLE DUE TO AVAILABILITY</p>
4	Sheskburn or other civic building space	<p>DESCRIPTION Existing Council property. Portable conditioning equipment</p> <p>PROS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Council ownership • Already being maintained and secured by Council with associated budgets • Reuse of vacant buildings • One centralised store • Accessible for staff, equipment and public. • Collections better storied • Release of caravan park asset 	<p>Internal transfer costs plus fitting out with existing shelving costs (£3000 - £5000) and annual overheads</p> <p>Informed no such space is available</p>

		CONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No space available 	
5	Office/retail unit	DESCRIPTION 230 sq. m. (2500 sq. ft.) of storage space Move in with existing heating, lighting, security, circulation. Existing heating lighting, toilets, staff work areas. suitable space to accommodate shelving and large objects	£17,000 per annum rent, £9000 in rates One off costs Shelving out £3000 - £5000 Plus annual overheads Such spaces currently available August 2021 PREFERRED OPTION
		PROs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ready to move in All items in one place under Museum Services management Appropriate controlled space with lobby/air exchange buffer Accessible for staff, equipment and public Collections better stored One security and environmental system Monitoring and maintenance of one location Return of caravan park asset 	
		CONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rental property Increased annual costs 	