

Resolution of Council

18 November 2019

Item 4.1

Curatorial Policy Review

Memorandum by the Chief Executive Officer

To Council:

In May 2016, Council endorsed an updated review of the Civic Collection Curatorial Policy. The Civic Collection Curatorial Policy was scheduled for cyclical review by September 2019.

The Civic Collection Curatorial Policy sets out the City's commitment to managing and developing its collection of movable cultural heritage, official gifts and contemporary artworks. These items provide the tangible evidence which document the civic traditions and creative processes that define the City of Sydney. A framework for collection management guides decisions and actions relating to the care of the Collection and procedures for acquisition, deaccession, disposal, use, display, storage, documentation, conservation and interpretation of items.

The 2019 review of the Civic Collection Curatorial Policy consulted widely across the City, including Governance, Public Art, Community Engagement, Archives, Protocol, Creative City, Events and Major Festivals, Civic Functions, Libraries and the Curatorial Advisory Panel. These consultations established that the provisions of the Civic Collection Curatorial Policy were administered as internal processes, using City-endorsed guidelines to guide the curatorial staff in the transparent acquittal of their responsibilities.

The Policy:

- aligns the processes for managing the Collection with 'best practice' international standards; and
- brings it in line with management policies and procedures which guide the delivery of administrative services within the City of Sydney.

Its emphasis is therefore on ensuring that its administrative framework and guidelines are consistent with the City's adopted procedures.

Accountability for all curatorial actions is measured against the City's professional standards and quarterly reporting to the Civic Collection Advisory Panel, which provides professional expertise and support to the City of Sydney in curatorial matters.

The Panel is chaired by Councillor Jess Scully. External members include Dolla Merrillees, Project Leader, Arts and Culture Strategy, University of Western Sydney and Dr Daniel Mudie Cunningham, Director, Programs, Carriageworks. Apart from the responsibility to meet the requirements of the Local Government Act 1993 and the Heritage Act 1977, curatorial actions have no statutory powers or legal authority.

In order to reflect the findings of the consultation and to bring the Curatorial Policy in line with the City's policy framework, it is recommended that the Civic Collection Curatorial Policy be changed from a Council-endorsed policy to an internal administrative policy, endorsed by the Chief Executive Officer. This requires a resolution from Council to rescind the existing policy.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) rescind the Civic Collection Curatorial Policy, as detailed in Attachment A to the subject memorandum; and
- (B) note the internal administrative processes, the Civic Collection Policy and Management Guidelines as detailed in Attachments B and C to the subject memorandum.

MONICA BARONE

Chief Executive Officer

Attachments

Attachment A. Civic Collection Curatorial Policy

Attachment B. Draft Civic Collection Policy

Attachment C. Draft Civic Collection Management Guidelines

Moved by the Chair (the Lord Mayor), seconded by Councillor Scully –

That the memorandum by the Chief Executive Officer be endorsed and adopted.

Carried unanimously.

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