

**Silverdale Hoard
29 May 2012**

Report of Head of Community Engagement

PURPOSE OF REPORT				
To seek members support for the ambition to secure the Silverdale Hoard for the district				
Key Decision		Non-Key Decision		Referral from Cabinet Member
				x
Date Included in Forward Plan		n/a		
This report is public				

RECOMMENDATIONS OF COUNCILLOR SANDS

- 1 That Cabinet supports, in principle, the ambition to secure the Silverdale Hoard for the district.**
- 2 That a further report be brought back to Cabinet setting out the financial implications of securing the Hoard once a valuation has been made and the longer term strategy for the conservation, research and interpretation of the Hoard.**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A hoard of Viking silver coins and pieces of jewellery was found in September 2011 near to Silverdale by a metal detector enthusiast.
- 1.2 It was declared treasure by the Lancashire Deputy Coroner at a hearing in Lancaster and is currently being valued. A decision as to the value of the hoard is expected in July.
- 1.3 The decision may make it possible to keep the Silverdale Hoard in Lancashire rather than going to a national museum. The designation of the hoard as treasure means that a local museum has the opportunity to bid for it. Any proceeds of a sale will be divided equally between the landowner and the finder.

2.0 Proposal details

- 2.1 A substantial sum will need to be raised to retain the Hoard and display it appropriately. Whilst this figure is not yet available it is likely to be a six figure sum.

- 2.2 Until a valuation has been agreed the City and County Councils are unable to make formal approaches to funding bodies.
- 2.3 Until a valuation is agreed the Museums Service is unable to borrow any items from the Hoard and this will affect planning and programming.
- 2.4 Although there is a delay in the valuation process there is still a need to secure the commitment from both Councils that they would wish to secure the Hoard and a commitment for longer term support for the conservation, research and interpretation of the Hoard within the City Museum. The collection could have significant visitor appeal.
- 2.5 Until a valuation has been agreed and the scale of the funding required determined and the potential sources of external funding identified that commitment can only be an in principle decision

3 Details of Consultation

There has been no public consultation though there is ongoing dialogue between the City and County councils

4 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

Members have the option to either support or not support the ambition to secure the Silverdale Hoard for the district. There is no risk at this stage as the decision to support securing the Hoard is an in principle one as long as this appreciated by all parties and communicated clearly.

5 Conclusion

The Silverdale Hoard is a significant find for both the district and Lancashire. Acquiring the necessary funding to both secure the Hoard and conserve, research and interpret it within the City Museum will be costly and access to external funding will be required.

<p>RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK</p> <p>The district's Museums and their collections are an important element of the Council's priorities of Economic Regeneration – and is cited within the Corporate Plan 'An improved future for the district's museums is secured'.</p>
<p>CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)</p> <p>Will all be taken into consideration during the development of the acquisition</p>
<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</p> <p>None</p>

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A management fee is paid to the County Council to manage the City, Maritime and Cottage museums on the city's behalf. The fee for the current year is £549K of which £24K is set aside as an Acquisition Fund. This fund could be used to form a contribution toward the match funding required to support external funding bids.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**Human Resources:**

None

Information Services:

None identified to date.

Property:

The city Museum is owned by Lancaster City Council and currently managed by Lancashire County council through a partnership agreement

Open Spaces:

No implications

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

At this stage there are no financial commitments being made. If, in due course, external fundraising is insufficient and there is a need for the Council to consider making a financial contribution, then this would need to be considered alongside other competing needs and requests and in context of the Council's financial prospects.

Nonetheless, other reports elsewhere on this agenda either highlight extra (unavoidable) financial pressures facing the Council, or other potential investment / spending aspirations. The s151 Officer would highlight the risk of becoming over-ambitious, particularly in respect of other stakeholders' (as well as the Council's own) expectations. This risk needs to be managed and communication is a key element.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comment

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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