Survive and Thrive

Helping to improve the effectiveness and resilience of non-national museums

June 2016

Introduction

This Framework identifies the main organisational capabilities against which non-national museums can measure their performance and implement improvements to ensure that they can survive and thrive in the future.

The Framework is to be used as part of a process of self-assessment and peer review. Your self-assessment will involve your whole workforce, including Trustees, the leadership team and relevant stakeholders. Your peer review will be carried out by trained peers (other museum managers and Museum Development Officers). These tools do not involve 'badges', awards or certifications or require you to produce a portfolio of documentary evidence. They are intended to help your museum team develop collective agreement about improvement priorities, which will lead you to an effective and workable improvement plan. More than anything, this requires an investment in time, commitment, awareness and complete honesty!

The Framework comprises nine organisational **Characteristics**, which are recognised as significant:

1. **Leadership**
2. **A Focus on the Needs and Expectations of the Museum's Community**
3. **Governance and Management System**
4. **Outcomes Focus**
5. **Forward Planning**
6. **Workforce Management**
7. **Collaborative Working**
8. **Financial Management**
9. **Improvement and Innovation**

Each of these areas contains a definition of the **Characteristic**. Characteristics are broken down into **Criteria** which provide the basis for Self-Assessment, Peer Review and subsequent improvement planning. There is no expectation that museums will completely achieve these **Characteristics** and **Criteria** – they are designed to be a challenging way to trigger continuous improvement.

The **Criteria** within this Framework reflect the 'Organisational Health' and 'Users and their Experiences' sections of the new Museum Accreditation Standard; we have shown these links against the relevant criterion. Survive and Thrive also maps effectively across to the Archives Accreditation scheme which means that organisations with integrated services can self-assess across all aspects of the heritage offer. Where the document refers to 'museum' please take this to read 'museum and archive' if you are operating an integrated service. This enables you to adopt one improvement programme for your whole organisation. In practice this means that your self-assessment, peer review and improvement activity will provide key evidence for your museum and archive Accreditation applications and forward plan.

Self-assessment, peer review / challenge and peer support remain very important and valuable tools for the whole cultural sector as it strives to survive and thrive in the face of this extremely challenging climate. This Framework and approach to improvement is based on the *Culture and Sport Improvement Toolkit (CSIT)* produced by Local Government Improvement and Development (LGID) and national cultural agencies and as such, reflect recognised best practice. Honest, incisive and challenging self-assessment, peer review and improvement planning using this Framework provide

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an ideal springboard for enhancing and sustaining the services that you provide for the community and developing your organisational resilience.

Self-Assessment and Peer Review Process

Stage One: Understanding, Scoping and Planning

This stage helps to ensure that your museum makes to the most of the opportunities arising from this improvement programme. It has three elements:

a.   Ensuring that your team has a clear understanding of – and commitment to - this process

b.   Establishing a clear scope (e.g. what is included in the Self-Assessment and Peer Review, who are the 'leaders', what are you delivering for whom and who are your 'partners')

c.   Planning your Self-Assessment, Peer Review and improvement planning activity (see below)

Your Museum Development Officer (MDO) will help you achieve this through an Inception Meeting.

Stage Two: Self-Assessment

Self-assessment underpins improvement activity (for many types of organisations in many sectors). This is your improvement programme and so it is critical that your team owns responsibility for identifying the museum's strengths and areas for improvement – self-assessment is a great way of achieving this.

Self-assessment should take you 4 to 6 hours, split into two or three meetings, and simply involves consensus discussions on each *Characteristic* in the Framework. Self-assessment needs to be a rounded and incisive view of your organisation's strengths and areas for improvement; therefore it is vital that it is not just carried out by one person in their office! The Self-Assessment Team should comprise leaders (including Board members/Trustees), key partners and, where possible, front-line staff (not everyone needs to be at every session and it can be useful to gather information in advance). Your MDO is available to facilitate your self-assessment sessions and act as a critical friend. It is essential that all participants including volunteers, partners and internal staff are well briefed at all stages of the process.

Stage Three: *Light Touch* Peer Review

The Peer Review is a positive, 'light touch' and supportive process designed to help your team develop greater collective awareness of your museum's strengths, areas for improvement and improvement priorities, at the same time building the relationship with peers (which will be of value in the future when implementing improvements).

The Peer Review Team will comprise the MDO and a peer from another museum, and may be led by an external facilitator. They will spend up to a day at the museum having discussions with various members of the team about the way in which the museum operates and reviewing key documentation (your forward plans, etc). This is not a test or inspection, but a valuable part of your Self-Assessment and improvement planning process.

Stage Four: Planning and Implementing Improvements

This stage involves you using your key areas for improvement as the basis for establishing a small number of significant short, medium and long-term improvement projects. Implementation of these projects will build organisational capability to enable the museum to survive and thrive in the future.

To maintain ownership, improvement planning should be conducted by the same people who were involved in the self-assessment. Your MDO will facilitate this process, challenge your thinking and signpost you to resources (e.g. financial

Self-Assessment and Peer Review Process

resources for consultancy support, examples of best practice, etc). The other members of your Peer Review Team will also be available to review your improvement plans, challenge your thinking and add ideas.

Your improvement plan will be a working document for your team and effective communication around its design and implementation throughout the team and organisation will play a key role. Your MDO will support you to implement the actions.

Scoping and Planning Template

This template is designed to help the museums to prepare for their Self-Assessment, Peer Review and improvement planning activity.

Scope of your Self-Assessment, Peer Review and Improvement Planning Activity

The Leaders i.e. those people who influence the strategic direction of the museum.
This may also include external partners or stakeholders who hold influence over the direction of the museum.

Partners

The Museum (& Archive) (i.e. what is being reviewed)

Partners

The Services (i.e. what the museum is delivering)

The Museum's Community (i.e. the potential and existing users of the services)

The Outcomes (i.e. the intended results of the services)
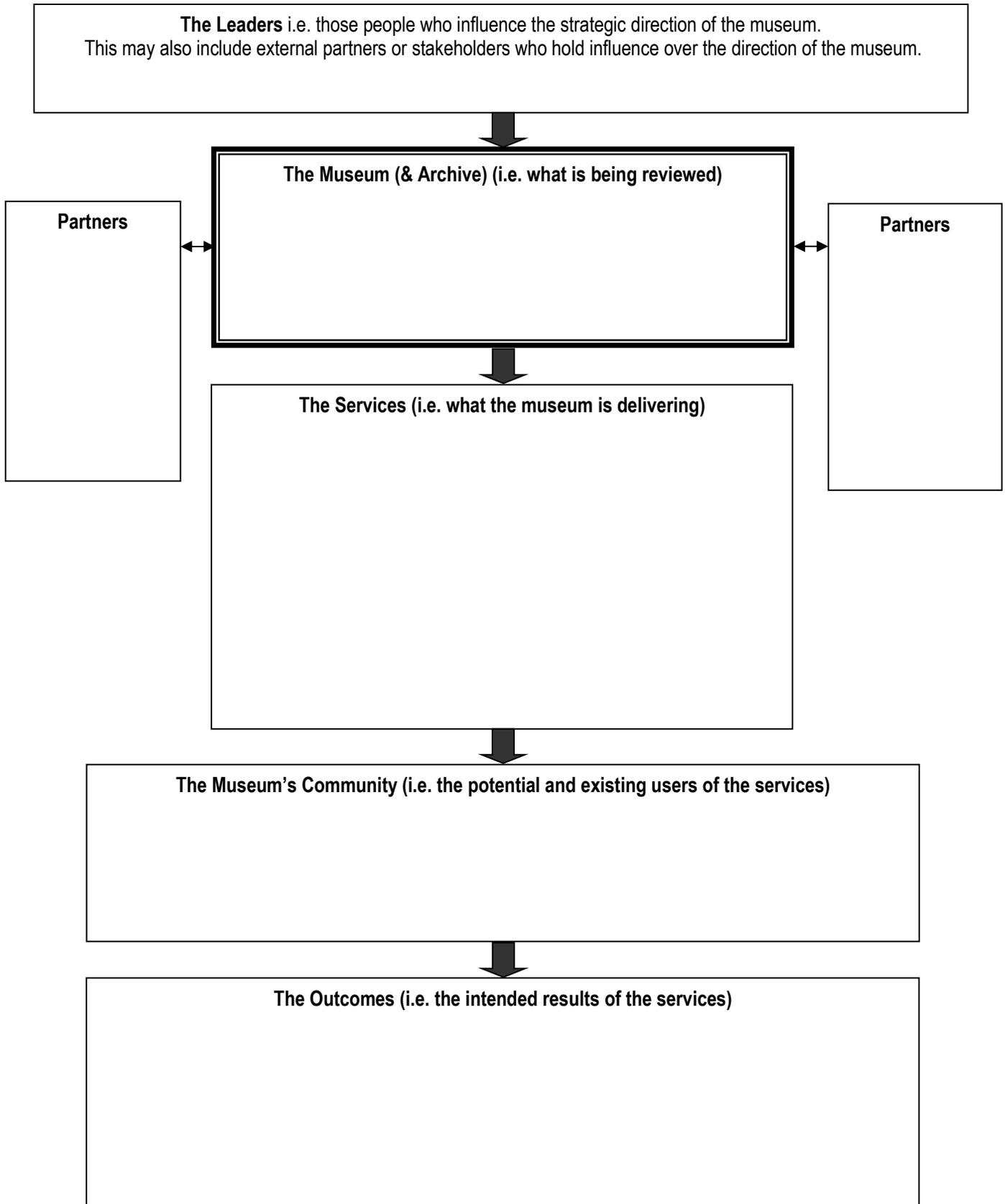
Scoping and Planning Template

Self-Assessment Plan

Characteristic	Self-Assessment Team Members	Facilitator / Critical Friend	Dates of Session
Leadership			
Focus on the Needs and Expectations of your Community			
Governance and Management System			
Outcomes Focus			
Forward Planning			
Workforce Management			
Collaborative Working			
Financial Management			
Improvement, Learning and Innovation			
Peer Review	**Peer Review Team**	**Review Lead**	**Date of Peer Review**
Peer Review day			
Improvement	**Who will be involved**	**Facilitator / Critical Friend**	**Date of Session(s)**
Improvement Planning session (1)			
Improvement planning session (2)			

Evaluation System

This evaluation system is designed to help the Self-Assessment and Peer Review team members to crystallise their thinking about strengths and areas for improvement. The goal is not to obtain the highest possible rating….it is simply to agree improvement priorities.

The Self-Assessment team should aim to reach consensus agreement on the ratings for each Criterion using the following system. This will help to identify the main areas for improvement and strengths.

Rating	Definitions
0	*Time for action! –* nothing has been planned so we need to review and make improvements
1	*We have a plan and have made a start –* we are planning ways of doing this
2	*We are steadily improving –* we have partly implemented ways of doing this and have achieved some of our goals/outcomes
3	*Time for accelerating our improvements –* we have fully and systematically implemented ways of doing this
4	*A role model …Is there anything we could do better and smarter?–* we have fully and systematically implemented ways of doing this; the effectiveness and efficiency of our approaches is measured, reviewed and improved; there is evidence that they have worked!

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Characteristic One: Leadership

Resilient museums are led by visionary, forward-thinking and self-determined leaders who are passionate about making a difference to people through the museum services

This includes the following:

Ref	Criteria	✓ the appropriate box					Link to Museum Accreditation Scheme	Link to Archives Accreditation Scheme	What practices do we currently have in place? (include references to documentation)
		0	1	2	3	4			
1.1	Developing and communicating and modelling a clear and compelling vision and purpose for the museum, and meaningful values						1.1, 1.4.1, 3.3	1.1	
1.2	Having a high profile, communicating well, being a powerful influencer and advocate and campaigning for the museum both internally and externally.						3.2,3.2	1.2, 3.2, 3.3	
1.3	Creating, leading and implementing a system for continual organisational improvement, innovation and personal development						1.4, 1.7.4	1.2, 1.3, 1.6	
1.4	Connecting to and building collaborative working relationships with local strategic organisations* and partners; including those with responsibility for strategic commissioning, and relevant public and private sector specialist organisations *Local strategic organisations might include other Council services such as Children and Young People's Services, Cultural consortia, Business in the Community etc,						1.4	3.1,3.2	
1.5	Ensuring that the museum is committed to - and plans for – equity, inclusion and diversity at all levels including governance.						1.7,3.1	1.2, 1.3, 1.6	
1.6 a)	Ensuring that the museum is committed to and plans for social responsibility, (behaving ethically and working to improve the quality of life of its workforce, local community and society at large).						1.4.3, 1.4.4	1.3, 1.6, 3.1, 3.2	
1.6 b)	Ensuring that the museum is committed to and plans for environmental sustainability (including reducing pollution, waste, energy consumption and water usage)						1.10		

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1.7a	Identifying the roles, responsibilities and competencies of the leadership team (including trustees/members of the governing body), seeking to meet these competencies (through recruitment, learning and development) and planning succession						1.3.1, 1.3.4, 1.3.5	1.2, 1.6	
1.7b	(Distributive leadership) Supporting front line and other staff (in some cases this may be volunteer staff) to act as leaders and ambassadors at all levels of the organisation							1.6	

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Characteristic Two: Focus on the Needs and Expectations of your Community

Sustainable museums understand the needs and expectations of their community and keep these at the heart of all actions

This includes the following:

Ref	Criteria	✓ the appropriate box					Link to Museum Accreditation Scheme	Link to Archives Accreditation Scheme	What practices do we currently have in place? (include reference to documentation)
		0	1	2	3	4			
2.1a	Having a formal system in place for analysing data to help better understand your local demographics and audiences							3.2.2	
2.1b	Understanding the needs and service expectations of users and non-users through consultation and research						3.1	3.2.1	
2.2	Developing and delivering services which provide a high quality and stimulating learning and discovery experience reflecting the needs and expectations of users and potential users						3.1. 3.3	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	
2.3	Ensuring that the facilities are accessible for everyone						3.1.5, 3.2	3.2, 3.3.3	
2.4	Working with users and non-users to develop the museum services and improve the methods used to access and engage with the collections						1.4, 3.1.2	3.2	
2.5	Communicating and marketing the museum service and its benefits to all parts of the community, linking with the tourism sector and other cultural services and local priorities where appropriate						3.1.6, 3.2	3.1, 3.3	

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Characteristic Three: Governance and Management System

Sustainable museums implement a professional, robust and transparent management and governance system which provide the best value for all stakeholders in the short, medium and long-term

This includes the following:

Ref	Criteria	✓ the appropriate box					Link to Museum Accreditation Scheme	Link to Archives Accreditation Scheme	What practices do we currently have in place? (include references to documentation)
		0	1	2	3	4			
3.1	Ensuring that the delivery model for the museum is the most efficient and effective vehicle to ensure the organisations long-term future in order for it to provide benefits for the public and all stakeholders and ensure the preservation and effective management of the collections owned or managed by the museum,						1.2. 1.3.1	1.2	e.g. undertaking options appraisals, reviews where appropriate
3.2	Establishing a professional structure, in which the lines of authority and decision making responsibilities are transparent and effective. The constitution, policies and management arrangements , including collections management, enable long-term thinking and planning (in line with the purpose and vision), innovative service development and effective day-to-day and collections management.						1.2, 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3, 1.3.4, 1.3.6	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.6, 2.1, 3.1	
3.3	Complying with statutory requirements (e.g. HR, data protection, accounting, child protection) and codes of conduct (e.g. Nolan principles and MA Code of Ethics, reporting to the Charity Commission, Companies House etc)						1.7.2	2.1, 3.1	
3.4	Managing health and safety relating to staff, visitors and collections, including conducting risk assessments and implementing safe working practices and emergency procedures						1.7.3, 1.8, 1.9	1.6, 2.4, 2.4.4	
3.5	Assessing and managing risks to the future of the museum and creating contingency plans						1.4	1.3, 2.4	

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| 3.6 | Establishing transparent decision-making processes, based on facts, in line with the needs of stakeholders and involving staff and key partners | | | | | 1.3.3. 1.4 | 1.2, 1.3, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, | |

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Characteristic Four: Outcomes Focus

Sustainable museums focus on achieving desired outcomes ** for its stakeholders.

** The term 'desired outcomes' relates to what the museum or its parent organisation is aiming to achieve through providing the services. Museums may contribute to the delivery of outcomes in a number of ways:

- *Direct contribution:* - what the museum directly achieves for its stakeholders (e.g. more people discovering the unique heritage of the community, more people volunteering to work at the museum, reducing isolation through providing social, group activities in the museum)

- *Partnership contribution* – what the museum achieves in collaboration with other service providers (e.g. making people proud of where they live through programme of events, tours etc., reducing fear of crime by hosting relevant sessions, developing confidence and skills for young people with learning difficulties through partnership projects with related charities…).

- *Longer term/wider contribution:* – the long term, generational, social, economic, health and educational outcomes to which the museum contributes, which may relate to wider, civic or societal priorities (e.g. – improved health, wellbeing and resilience throughout life, improved quality of life, more children and young people achieve their learning potential and fulfil their talents, increased pride and satisfaction for residents with their local area, more attractive, cleaner and greener places, more integrated and resilient communities, strong, attractive and thriving neighbourhoods).

This Characteristic includes the following:

Ref	Criteria	✓ the appropriate box					Link to Museum Accreditation Scheme	Link to Archives Accreditation	What practices do we currently have in place? (include references to documentation)
		0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**			
4.1	Developing a shared understanding that the museum's existence depends upon achieving sustainable outcomes for all stakeholders						1.4, 1.4.3	1.2, 1.3, 3.2	
4.2	Defining the museum's direct contribution (including learning and discovery outcomes) in line with its vision and purpose and the identified needs of its community and other stakeholders						3.1,3.2,3.3	1.1, 1.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3	
4.3	Aligning the museum's direct contribution to the desired improvements to the social, economic, environmental, health and educational outcomes for the community,						1.4.3, 1.4.4	1.1, 1.3, 3.1, 3.2	

	reflecting local policy and strategy.								
4.4	Establishing ways of measuring, monitoring and predicting the museum's performance in achieving outcomes, value for money and social return on investment (e.g. savings on social care costs as a result of active citizenship), including its contribution to *intermediate* and *overarching* outcomes					1.4.9	1.3,	e.g. use of the AIM economic impact and advocacy toolkits
4.5	Focussing all activities and plans on achieving the desired outcomes for the community at all levels					1.4.2 1.4.6, 1.4.7	3.1, 3.2	
4.6	Generating innovation and enhanced collaborative working in order to achieve the desired outcomes for stakeholders.						3.1, 3.2	
4.7	Agreeing the priorities for service development and organisational change, which will have the greatest impact on the desired outcomes.						1.2, 1.3	

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Characteristic Five: Forward Planning

Resilient museums create, plan and manage the medium and long-term future so that they can continue to achieve desired outcomes

This includes the following:

Ref	Criteria	✓ the appropriate box					Link to Museum Accreditation Scheme	Link to Archives Accreditation Scheme	What practices do we currently have in place? (include references to documentation
		0	1	2	3	4			
5.1	Predicting and understanding the future needs and characteristics of the museum's community, using research from a variety of sources (e.g. community consultation, population profiles, socio-economics, demographics, museum usage trends, etc)						1.4.4, 3,1,1	3.1, 3.2	
5.2	Developing and maintaining an understanding of what will happen in the museum sector, including new practices						1.4.3	1.3, 1.6	
5.3	Understanding the political, economic, social, technical, environmental and legal environment in which the museum operates and the strategies of relevant national and local organisations and partnerships						1.4.3	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	
5.4	Developing, communicating, reviewing and updating a medium and long term plan for the museum, to achieve the desired outcomes and priorities and to create enhanced long-term resilience.						1.4.5, 1.4.6, 1.4.9	1.3	
5.5	Aligning resources to this long and medium term plan						1.4.7, 1.4.8	1.3, 1.5	
5.6	Identifying the need for, planning and managing major organisational change with a constancy of purpose, ensuring the workforce (including volunteers) are consulted and engaged in the process						1.4.4	1.3, 1.6	

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Characteristic Six: Workforce Management

Resilient museums recruit, manage and develop their paid and volunteer workforce in line with the needs of its community, the organisation and the workforce.

This includes the following:

Ref	Criteria	✓ the appropriate box					Link to Museum Accreditation Scheme	Link to Archives Accreditation Scheme	What practices do we currently have in place? (include references to documentation)
		0	1	2	3	4			
6.1	Planning the workforce capacity, establishing clear roles and responsibilities and identifying the required competencies and knowledge, to ensure the museum has the capacity to meet the needs and expectations of its community						1.4.8, 1.7.1, 1.7.2,		1.6
6.2	Attracting and recruiting paid and volunteer staff with the required competencies and knowledge and the potential to develop, using transparent, accessible and equitable criteria						1.7.1		1.6
6.3	Supporting paid staff and volunteers to develop, learn and improve in line with the needs and expectations of the community, the organisation and the workforce, using a mixture of learning and development methods (e.g. induction, formal and informal training, mentoring, sharing of knowledge, projects, job swaps, learning from partners, etc)						1.7.3, 1.7.4,		1.6
6.4	Developing a team of paid staff and volunteers which owns collective responsibility for the service, engaging everyone in service development and improvement activity and making the best use of people's knowledge, skills and creativity						1.4.4		1.6
6.5	Communicating effectively with each other, giving people the opportunity to know as much as they need.						1.4.4		1.6
6.6	Supporting paid staff and volunteers to develop enhanced workplace resilience (i.e. people's ability to respond to the challenges of the workplace in a way which allows them to flourish).						1.7.4		1.6

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Characteristic Seven: Collaborative Working

Resilient museums develop genuine partnership working and collaborations with public sector, commercial sector and civil society bodies, including other museums, to provide innovative, efficient and joined-up services which achieve desired outcomes

This includes the following:

Ref	Criteria	✔ the appropriate box					Link to Museum Accreditation Scheme	Link to Archives Accreditation Scheme	What practices do we currently have in place? (include references to documentation)
		0	1	2	3	4			
7.1	Seeking and establishing collaborations which help to develop innovative museum services and to deliver the services in an efficient way (e.g. shared back office functions etc.)						1.4.3, 1.4.7	1.2, 1.3	
7.2	Building links and becoming involved in value-adding networks and consortia to achieve desired outcomes (such as the Manchester Museums consortium 'to stage intelligent, thought provoking exhibitions and events' – include other examples)						3.1.6	1.3, 3.1, 3.2	
7.3	Assessing the opportunities and collaborating with peers to make the best use of each other's skills, knowledge and resources (e.g. joint learning and development, peer coaching and mentoring, sharing of practices, action learning sets, joint projects, joint fundraising and commissioning bids, joint procurement, shared management and shared support / admin functions)						1.4.3, 1.4.4	1.3, 1.6	
7.4	Developing joined-up services with other providers of cultural services in the area where appropriate (so that users experience a linked and seamless service, rather than a collection of different services)							1.2, 1.3	
7.5a	Developing and maintaining effective relationships with partners, identifying and resolving any conflicts or tensions							3.1	
7.5b	Developing positive relationships with other civic society organisations (e.g. vcs							1.6, 3.1, 3.2	

	umbrella organisations/networks) to extend community reach, opportunities for collaboration and learning								
7.6	Continually reviewing the value of collaborations and making the necessary changes					1.4.2	1.3, 3.1	

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Characteristic Eight: Financial Management

Resilient museums secure, allocate and manage financial resources to support the achievement of desired outcomes

This includes the following:

Ref	Criteria	✓ the appropriate box					Link to Museum Accreditation Scheme	Link to Archives Accreditation Scheme	What practices do we currently have in place? (include references to documentation)
		0	1	2	3	4			
8.1	Planning revenue budgets (and cash flow where relevant) to support achievement of the desired outcomes						1.4.8	1.5	
8.2	Securing and allocating capital funds in line with medium and long-term plans						1.4.8	1.3, 1.5	
8.3	Monitoring and managing budgets (and cash flow where relevant) in a robust and transparent way, complying with relevant financial regulations and standards, with the necessary flexibility in place to meet the changing needs of the museum's community						1.6	1.5	
8.4	Proactively seeking and developing diverse and sustainable funding and income streams						1.4.7	1.3, 1.5	
8.5	Identifying and responding to strategic commissioning opportunities either independently or part of consortia (e.g. adult social care or health and wellbeing commissioning commissions)						1.4.7	1.3, 1.5	
8.6	Maintaining and renewing equipment and refurbishing premises so that these assets ensure value for money						1.4.8	1.4	

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Characteristic Nine: Improvement and Innovation

Resilient museums continuously improve, learn and continually innovate to provide increased value for money and achieve better outcomes.

This includes the following:

Ref	Criteria	✓ the appropriate box					Link to Museum Accreditation Scheme	Link to Archives Accreditation Scheme	What practices do we currently have in place? (include references to documentation)
		0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**			
9.1	Reviewing performance (using measurement activity) on a cyclical basis and implementing improvements, at Board, operational, andand service level to improve the customer experience and enable better outcomes to be achieved						1.4.2	1.3, 1.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3	
9.2	Continually seeking to make internal practices more efficient (through reducing waste and non-value adding activity)						1.4.2	1.3	
9.3	Releasing and making the most of the creativity and social entrepreneurialism of the workforce to develop innovative services, marketing approaches and funding solutions						1.7.4	1.6	
9.4	Using ideas from partners, users and non-users to help improve the service provided						1.4.3, 1.4.4	3.1, 3.2	
9.5	Learning from peer museums and organisations in other sectors						1.4.3	1.6	
9.6	Learning from the past and using this knowledge to improve the future						1.4.2	1.3	

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<u>Key Themes</u>

'Golden Threads' (i.e. positive themes running through the strengths)

'Fault Lines' (i.e. reoccurring areas for improvement or clear underlying common causes)

Priority Areas for Improvement (bearing in mind your long-term direction and plans)