



Registered Charity No 802547

Policy 1

FUNDRAISING POLICY

1. The Foundation is established to raise the profile of Maidstone's Museums and to provide support to them in every way. It does this by:

a) promoting the three Museums to the residents of Maidstone, and beyond;

b) securing finance to help with the Museums' operating costs, the purchase of artefacts, display, restoration of works, improved display, & improvement/adaption of the buildings - through grant-giving trusts, local fund-raising activities, donations, and the membership scheme; and

c) co-ordinating and operating the membership (Friends') scheme.

2. The fund-raising agenda (b) is thus broad and there are no set limits on the minimum and maximum amounts of finance that the Foundation will seek to raise on any individual aspect or project.

3. There are four interrelated aspects to the Policy.

Gift Aid

4. By virtue of the fact that MMF is a Registered Charity it is permitted to raise Gift Aid from any giver, so long as the giver has given their permission and is a tax payer. Gift Aid represents an additional 25% of the donation, and thus this could amount to a significant sum of value to the Museums. MMF uses all its communication tools – leaflets,

flyers, posters, website, blog and social media – to promote the benefits of Gift Aid and to enable the giver to participate in the scheme. Within the Museums themselves there are public collection boxes, together with appropriate posters and envelopes on which the givers provide their details.

Operating Costs of the Museums' Service

5. The Museums' collections and the buildings housing them are owned by the Borough Council. Almost all of the revenue costs of operating this service are also met by the Council. This is a significant annual sum, amounting to about £1million in 2020.

6. The aim of MMF is to support this revenue cost by fundraising. There are two objectives:

- * to bolster revenue income where there are pressures in Local Government finance: and
- * to enhance the Museums by increasing the budget, and thus enabling the service to do more.

7. For this support an annual agreement has to be agreed by MMF and the Council to establish how any such finance is to be used (clearly only by the Museums' service), and the necessity of keeping detailed accounts of any transaction(s).

Small Projects

8. There is often the need to support projects involving small sums of money (normally less than £5,000 per project). These can be – the restoration of an artwork or artefact, orientation materials, or the purchase of a small item of equipment, etc. The Foundation Board expects there to be an advance priority list of small works the Museums wish to address. For each bid (which may be made at any monthly Board meeting) there needs to be clear demonstration of need put forward by the Museums. It is recognised that sometimes a project may be driven by urgency or by opportunism, and these will be considered on their merits. Foundation finance is considered against the situation of the Board's current accounts and forward budget.

Major Projects

9. At times, there will need to be the identification of significant capital works required, consistent with the Museums' medium term plan. The project(s) need to be -

- * of long term benefit for the Museums,
- * be value for money, and
- * be sustainable beyond the project itself.

In some cases the Board will consider large purchases of art or artefacts, based upon a firm cultural case. As with small projects, this must be agreed by the Foundation Board.

Naturally, this project will be led by Museum staff, but it is especially important for the Foundation to be a contributor in full project planning, and for it to be crystal clear about (and be in acceptance of) the amount being sought from the Foundation.

10. Normally, the Foundation will only pursue one major project at a time, because – fundraising may take many years; clarity needs to be given to Foundation Friends, and other supporters, about the relevant fundraising 'campaign'; and all efforts (by the Foundation and Museums) need to be concentrated on one objective at a time.

Decision Making

11. In all fundraising it is imperative that Maidstone Museums' Foundation works closely with the staff of the Museums. In most instances the Museums' management will set out their needs against a robust cultural case, and there will be joint agreement and working. However, it is accepted that there will be instances where the Foundation feels strongly about an element, and will drive an agenda (subject to Museums' staff agreement). But in both cases there must be partnership in final decision-making, and never any confusion created by unilateral bids for third party finance.

12. It is the Board's ultimate responsibility to determine the levels of giving to be assigned to operating support on one hand and project costs on the other.

Fundraising

13. There is a multi-pronged approach to the Foundation's fundraising activities.

14. *MMF Subscriptions* – there are various categories of membership (single, couple, family, corporate and life) which provide people with

various benefits (as Friends) in the Museums. The current income stream is not huge, but is constant annually (and increasing).

15. *Events* – a whole variety of activities which include – visits to external historical destinations, events within the Museums themselves, attendance at local fairs, etc. All of these are arranged and conducted by the Board and some Friends (ie volunteers). They have multi-purposes – to raise the profile of the Museums, to encourage greater membership of MMF, organise events of interest to Friends and guests, etc. However, we ensure that all such activity does break even and, hopefully, ends with a net financial surplus, for MMF work.

16. *Fundraising Events* – these are dedicated events with the express purpose of raising finance toward a stated objective. ~~an overt project.~~ All attendees are to be made aware of the funding purpose ~~campaign,~~ the need identified, and the target. Again, they are organised by the Board and Friends (ie volunteers).

17. *Collection Boxes* – there are collection boxes at the entrance/exit to the main Museum and in many of the galleries, and visitors are requested to contribute to the Museums' development. It is made clear that all donations are to the Foundation, a charitable body, which in turn supports Maidstone Museums (thus benefitting from Gift Aid).

18. *Personal Donations* – these are encouraged at all times through the Foundation membership leaflet, MMF website, and two-monthly electronic newsletter to all Friends.

19. *Sponsorship* – specific sponsorship for certain purposes ~~projects~~ is always encouraged, but any such negotiation must be in conjunction with Museum management. There may be inducements, such as naming opportunities, which the Museums must agree.

20. *Grant-Giving Trusts and Foundations* – these are for Major Projects. There will be 'target' trusts according to the type of project for which financial support is being sought; there will be differing financial support levels by each trust (if successful); and there will need to be a plan of how to raise the total required when individual trusts can only meet part of the total sought. It is worth pointing out that few grant-giving trusts and foundations will permit grants to be used for revenue purposes. Thus the record keeping of 'gifts' will need

to be crystal clear over the matter of permitted usage, and conditions stated by the giver.

Strategy for each Fundraising Campaign

21. For each clearly demonstrated need for projects, and the acceptance by the Foundation board of its involvement, there is required to be a strategy for the specific fundraising 'campaign'. This will be so especially for any Major Project. There must be awareness of the approach to be taken, the mix of activities to be used, and the sources to be targeted. Because 'fundraising' is not easy and there is much competition for support requests there needs to be 'plans B, C, D' (and so on) and a willingness to adopt them if necessary.

Fundraising Regulator

22. This Foundation endeavours to be consistent with the Fundraising Regulator's "Code of Fundraising Practice", which outlines the standards expected of all charitable fundraising organisations across the UK. The Foundation registered with the Fundraising Regulator in March 2017, and has signed up to its code of practice.

23. This policy, therefore, is to set down the agreed principles of the Foundation approach to fundraising.

Agreed by the Board - October 2015

Revised by the Board - March 2017

Revised by the Board - February 2021