

<b>Members Interest</b>
N/A

## **Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Joint Archive Committee 3 April 2018**

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### **Forward Plan Review 2018 and Predicted Performance Outturn 2017-18**

#### **Recommendation(s)**

1. That the Committee approve the review of the Forward Plan for the Service and note progress so far.

#### **Report of Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities (Staffordshire County Council) and Director of Housing and Community Services (Stoke on Trent City Council)**

#### **Reasons for Recommendations**

##### **Background**

2. The Joint Archive Service has worked to a three year planning cycle since its inception in 1997. The scope of the seventh plan was extended to ten years as it will transform the service and will take more than three years to deliver some of these changes. The ten year Plan has been reviewed and updated to reflect progress made so far.

3. The 2015-2018 plan was developed with stakeholders, partners, and Friends groups. Public consultation was carried out on the themes of the plan and it was amended to reflect comments made. The plan was approved by the Joint Archive Committee on 26 March 2015.

4. This Plan covers the Joint Archive Service and the Museum Service for the County Council. Together the services are known as 'Archives and Heritage'. The ten year Plan has been reviewed and updated to reflect progress made so far. A summary of progress for 2015-2018 is given below and the amendments for the following three years. The revised Plan is at Appendix 2.

##### **Background, partners and context headlines**

5. The context headlines have been updated to reflect progress made by the Service since 2015 and changes which have occurred. Lichfield Record Office closed to the public on 1 January 2018 with records transferring to Staffordshire Record Office and Outstore. They will be available to access from May 2018.

6. The partners who work with the service has been updated reflecting changes at the Museum Service after the Shugborough Estate transferred back to the National Trust in November 2016.

7. A new section has been inserted on the project vision, aims and objectives for the Staffordshire History Centre (SHC). Staffordshire County Council and William Salt Library Trust were awarded a development grant of £333,400 in June 2016 to develop the project and round 2 submission. The SHC project was a direct result of the work on the new vision in 2015 and enables the Service to deliver the aims for the service if the round two bid is successful. The round 2 bid is due to be submitted in June 2018 requesting almost £4m funding from HLF towards the project.

8. Information on the collections, buildings, outreach, volunteers, partnerships and resources has been updated with current statistics and key achievements.

### **Vision and mission statement**

9. The vision and mission statement remains current for the service and complements the one developed for the SHC project.

### **Developing an Active Partnership approach**

10. The partnership between the Archives and Heritage Service and William Salt Library Trust has been strengthened as evidenced by the shared vision for the Staffordshire History Centre project.

11. The consultation for the SHC project has enabled the service to identify new partnerships with local groups, enthusiast and special interest groups across the county and city. Users and stakeholders have been consulted about the way they could work with the service in the future. A new Staffordshire History Centre Network was proposed which has received support from over 30 organisations so far. A total of 47 groups and organisations have agreed to support the project in some way.

12. Work has progressed to establish a Development Trust to continue fundraising for the SHC after the HLF funding has ceased. The Joint Archive Committee and William Salt Library Trust have both approved the principle of the Trust at their recent committee meetings.

13. Plans for the SHC include new roles for volunteers supporting delivery of the Activity Plan. As part of the plans 370 volunteers will be trained and an estimated 4,976 days will be contributed at a value of £746,400 over the 4 years. During 2017/2018 an estimated 7,800 hours have been given to the Archive and Heritage Service.

### **Resilience and sustainability**

14. Five matched funding bids have been submitted to support the SHC project and other work of the Service. One has been successful, two have passed the first stage application and two are still being considered. Four other bids are being developed for submission in 2018. The total value of the bids is approximately £400,000.

15. A major depositor event was held in November 2017 to showcase the SHC project and encourage donations. Another depositor made a separate approach to support the Archive and Heritage Service and is making a donation to the SHC

project. The Friends of Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service continue to fundraise support the Service focussing on the SHC project. The value of all this support is approximately £123,000.

16. The Archive Service achieved Archive Accreditation in July 2017. It has developed plans for the storage of all its collections in conditions compliant with national standards for the next 20 years. In addition the plans have developed new space for researchers, learning activities and exhibitions. These plans depend on the success of the SHC project.

17. Conservation programmes were completed across the service including the Minton Archive project. Collections have been assessed and re-appraised in accordance with agreed policies.

18. Three projects are being delivered in partnership with universities. One is a doctoral research project on flood and drought with Liverpool University. A project with Keele University and AHRC funding is looking at the lives of paupers by working with volunteers to extract information within parish archives. Another project in partnership with Nottingham University is extracting Staffordshire place names from documents within the archive collections. All of the projects use archive collections and work with volunteers to open up access information held within them.

19. Annual cataloguing programmes are still being delivered but with substantial support from volunteers and external funding. Doulton Described to catalogue more records from the Minton Archive has been progressed during the year supported with funding from a National Archives Cataloguing Grant.

### **Reaching and engaging new audiences**

20. During 2017 the Service has piloted new activities as part of the development of the SHC Activity Plan. These have included talking to teachers and inviting school groups in to test new learning activities. Staff have attended village fairs and fetes to raise awareness of the Service and gain feedback on proposals for events and the new offer at the SHC.

21. Plans for the public spaces at the SHC and also the outreach offer have been developed and tested. Consultation during September sought feedback on proposals.

22. Digital newsletters have been launched for the Archive and Heritage Service and the SHC project. Both have succeeded in reaching new audiences and have sometimes resulted in follow up contact from people to engage further with the service.

23. An Activity Plan and Interpretation Plan have been developed for the HLF Staffordshire History Centre project. The plans cover the four year programme including reaching new audiences through outreach events and community projects. The Interpretation Plan outlines how collections will be viewed at exhibitions both onsite at the SHC and through touring exhibitions. The plans have been developed with stakeholder input.

## **Sharing knowledge across the sector**

24. The Archive and Heritage Service contributes to the wider sector working with a number of different organisations. It is an active member of Archives West Midlands with two county council staff as trustees including Chair of AWM. Members of staff have presented at two conferences during the year on conservation and Archives West Midlands. Two case studies were published during the year. One as part of Volunteer Cataloguing Guidance by the National Archives and another in the Touring Exhibitions Group journal on about a WW1 touring exhibition.

25. The service works closely with local history groups and museums to share knowledge and support work in local communities. It is planned to widen this role with the development of a Staffordshire History Network.

## **Online presence and remote access**

26. As part of the SHC work a Digital Plan has been developed which is focussed on digitisation priorities and development of a website to make access easier for users. This has been done in consultation with users and stakeholders.

27. The Service has continued to add content to its existing online platforms including two new name indexes, additional images on Past Track, and more collections added to the online catalogue.

28. Work has also progressed on plans for managing digital archives. This is part of a consortium with Archives West Midlands (AWM). The service took part in a survey to assess readiness for handling digital archives and tested a software package. This work will progress in 2018/19 thanks to funding being awarded to AWM from the National Archives.

## **The year ahead**

30. The plans for 2018/19 are focussed on the Staffordshire History Centre project and dependent on a successful second stage bid to HLF. Other work is dependent on continuing to work with key partners and volunteers to support the delivery of the Service. The Service will also implement a new operating model for the Staffordshire History Centre and to make savings in service delivery. Work will continue to fundraise matched funding and other project funding to support the work of the service.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Equalities implications:**

The National Archives, stakeholders, partners and staff have been involved in development of the project. Further consultation is planned in the development stage.

**Legal implications:**

The Staffordshire History Centre will deliver archive services under the terms of the Joint Agreement which is reviewed and amended as required by both authorities.

**Resource and Value for money implications:**

The delivery of the Staffordshire History Centre will enable the Archive and Heritage Service to achieve its MTFS savings and a sustainable model for the future.

**Risk implications:**

The project has secured a stage 1 pass and development stage funding. To proceed to the delivery phase the partnership will need to secure stage two funding, and raise £150,000 of matched funding.

**Climate Change implications:**

The project balances online access and physical access to services and collections to offer options for remote use and not necessarily travel to multiple locations. Any new buildings will be compliant with modern standards for energy efficiency and minimise impacts on climate change.

**Health Impact Assessment screening:**

The project offers opportunities for volunteers to get involved and add value to the service with support and accredited training programmes from staff. Volunteering provides many social benefits for individuals which can impact positively on health.

**Report author:**

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**List of Background Papers**

Papers	Contact/Directorate/ext number
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Plans for Proposed Staffordshire History Centre December 2017	
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