



Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 15 May 2019

Staffordshire History Centre Stage 1 National Heritage Lottery Fund Application

Cllr Gill Heath, Cabinet Member for Communities said,

“Staffordshire’s archive and heritage collections are of outstanding quality and importance and we are extremely proud to be custodians of these invaluable items.

They enable individuals and communities to reflect on their past and inform their future.

“If our new bid for Heritage Lottery Funding for the Staffordshire History Centre project is successful, it will provide new ways in which collections can be used by individuals, historians and communities. It will secure access to historic collections for the next twenty years.”

Report Summary:

During 2018/19 Staffordshire County Council’s Archives and Heritage Service and the William Salt Library Trust made a Round Two application for £3.9m to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) supported by £1.8m of fundraising, in kind contributions and matched funding from the partnership. On 26 September 2018 HLF informed the service that the project had been unsuccessful at Round Two. The Staffordshire History Centre project was one of five projects which was rejected out of a total of twenty national second round applications. Members of the Project Board and Team met with HLF representatives in November 2018 and received positive feedback on the application.

Cabinet recommended a resubmission of a revised application for funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to support the creation of the Staffordshire History Centre. At the same time Cabinet asked for a detailed business plan on future storage for Archive Service collections in the context of the Strategic Property Rationalisation.

This paper outlines the Staffordshire History Centre Stage 1 application to be submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund on 28 May 2019. It seeks approval for the matched funding and submission of the stage 1 application.

Recommendations

I recommend that:

- a. The stage 1 application is submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.
- b. The matched funding is earmarked for the stage 2 application for the Staffordshire History Centre.

Local Members Interest
N/A

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Staffordshire History Centre Stage 1 National Heritage Lottery Fund Application

Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Communities

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Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

Reasons for Recommendations:

Background to the Archive and Heritage Service

1. Staffordshire County Council's Archive and Heritage Service is an accredited archive and museum. Its purpose is to locate, collect and preserve collections relating to past and present life in the county and city and make them accessible to the public. The Service manages two record offices (Stafford and Stoke on Trent), the County Museum, a family and local history centre in Burton Library and a History Access Point in the new Lichfield Library.
2. The William Salt Library Trust (WSLT) was founded in 1872 to care for the collection of William Salt. This collection focused upon Staffordshire and its history. It is a unique collection of books, manuscripts, engravings, deeds, autographs and works of art and is held in a grade II* listed building in Eastgate Street. Staffordshire County Council (SCC) delivers the service and maintains the library building on behalf of the Trust through a 99-year full repairing lease which was agreed in 1994.
3. As a grade II* William Salt Library is a difficult and costly building for SCC to maintain. It does not provide an appropriate environment for the collection nor does it offer inclusive access.

Collections

4. Staffordshire is one of only eleven local authority archive services to have its entire archive collection designated as outstanding by Arts Council England. The content of the collections is varied dating back to the Anglo-Saxon period and they document all aspects of life in the county. It includes the County Council's own archives and predecessor bodies. The family and estate archives and the ecclesiastical archives document the development of the county and its significant

role during the industrial revolution. The social history, oral history and photographic collections held by the County Museum and the parish collections in the Archive Service provide a rich history of local people, communities and industries. Together the archive, museum and WSL collections form a coherent, comprehensive and unique resource for the history of Staffordshire, and they are of outstanding quality and significance.

5. The Archive Service is appointed as a Place of Deposit by The National Archives which means it holds Public Records of Local Interest. These include collections such as court records, coroner's inquests, hospital records and other public bodies as defined by the Public Records Act. Preservation of such archives enables the County Council to demonstrate accountability and transparency of its decisions and those of other public bodies. The records held by the Service are used as research and evidence for public inquiries.

Accreditation

6. The Archive Service is one of 145 accredited archive services. It is appointed by The National Archives as a Place of Deposit and is therefore required to meet Archive Service Accreditation. The accreditation scheme was introduced in 2013 and the service was awarded full accreditation in July 2017. This standard covers the essential elements for managing the service, caring for the collections and making them accessible. A key part of the requirements is to have a viable plan for future storage to provide reassurance that the service can continue to collect.
7. If the Service is unable to meet the accreditation standard its Place of Deposit status would be reviewed. This would not only affect the reputation of the Service and the County Council but also prevent the service from accessing additional funding from key national bodies and charities. In 2018 the Archive Service received £153,000 of new burdens funding for the receipt of Public Records; this would not have been available if the service was not a Place of Deposit status.
8. The Museum is one of 1,700 accredited museums. Its status changed from fully accredited to provisional following the transfer of Shugborough to the National Trust, the closure of the Shire Hall Gallery and transfer of the collection. Currently the Museum service lacks its own exhibition space.
9. The Museum has received funding from Arts Council England for several projects most recently it received £102,000 of resilience funding to support its transition from the Shugborough Estate. If it lost accreditation it would also lose access to a number of funding streams, most notably Arts Council England.
10. From 2006-2018 the Archive and Heritage Service has raised a total of £3.2million in external grants as either the sole bidder or lead partner. Both the Archive and Museum services would struggle to access this level of funding if neither were accredited to date. Since 2015/16 the Archive and Heritage Service has delivered £121,000 of MTFs savings. These efficiencies have in part been made possible by the receipt of additional grant funding.

Engagement with collections

11. Archive and Heritage Collections are used extensively by individuals, academics, historians and communities. Historic collections enable individuals and communities to reflect on their past and inform their future. The way collections are used has changed with a greater focus on online access, events, and exhibitions whilst maintaining physical access in a public search room.
12. The experience that users, volunteers and stakeholders have of the service reveals the impact it has on education, learning and health and wellbeing. The 2018 survey of our volunteers evidenced the impact that the service has on reducing loneliness and isolation. Half of the surveys completed indicated that socialisation is a reason that they volunteer, and one response added “To be a part of a group with similar interests.” For others volunteering personalises history for them – learning more about their local area, and more about ordinary people, “I feel that I have a greater knowledge of everyday life for ordinary people’.

Vision for the Staffordshire History Centre project

13. The vision for the Staffordshire History Centre is to bring together three separate collections and services. Together they will offer a complete, varied and fascinating insight into Staffordshire’s past and present and inform the future. The History Centre would be a new attraction and form part of Staffordshire’s cultural and heritage visitor offer.
14. The key objectives for the Staffordshire History Centre project are:
 - a. New strongrooms providing 445.5m³ PD5454 compliant storage space for 20 years’ of future collecting.
 - b. New visitor attraction with space for exhibitions, volunteers, and digitisation.
 - c. Be a pivotal point for heritage, excellence and expertise across the county.
 - d. Engage with new and diverse audiences through a four-year programme with schools, community groups and families.
 - e. Take an ‘Active Partnership Approach’ to working with local groups and volunteers
 - f. Invest to become more cost effective.
 - g. Be resilient and sustainable securing the future of the collections and maintaining Accreditation.
 - h. Re-use of the William Salt Library listed building.
 - i. Work within the parameters of the Strategic Property Rationalisation Programme to maximise efficient use of storage space, thereby releasing revenue savings of £468,000 as required by the MTFS.

Revised project bid and application process

15. In November 2018 members of the project board and team met with representatives of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The HLF team were very impressed with the Round 2 application, however it was down to the level of competition and the reduced overall funding pot that was available which meant that it was

unsuccessful. The West Midlands Committee and the HLF Board recognised the importance of the heritage, why it is at risk and stated that this was communicated well in the bid. They agreed that the right solutions were proposed for the staffing structure, recognised the partnership work with the William Salt Library Trust and the very significant amount of partnership funding that had been secured. Overall it was considered a high value for money bid.

16. The quality of conservation and capital work proposal was considered good. It was noted that the Activity Programme was not fully developed, however HLF recognised the distance being travelled by the Service through the development of this project. The assessment visit had answered all the outstanding questions and concerns and HLF did not consider any elements of the proposed project as a high risk. Risk calculations for this project came out as medium, but this is expected for projects of this size.
17. The project had a realistic timetable and good risk management. HLF noted that political commitment to the project and sustainability was strong.
18. A new national Strategic Funding Framework 2019-2024 was launched by the Lottery on 30th January. There has been a rebranding and the fund has been renamed the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). The application process is in three stages with an initial expression of interest assessed by the regional team who decide whether to invite a stage 1 one application to be submitted. An expression of interest was submitted at the beginning of March and has been successful.
19. NLHF have made it clear that there is increased competition for their funding. Feedback from the expression of interest included a recommendation to reduce the level of the grant required and increase partnership funding as 'a request of £4 million will always face high levels of scrutiny when competing for limited funds'. The last round of applications for grant funding in September and December 2018 had just a 14% success rate at round 1.
20. NHLF have invited the partnership to submit a stage 1 application. A commitment from Cabinet for the matched funding will be required and approval for submission. The revised application will focus on strengthening areas of the bid including:
 - a. Why the project must proceed now
 - b. Clear presentation of the benefits for communities in Staffordshire
 - c. Improving the learning and digital plans
 - d. Testing and piloting the Activity Plan during the development phase

Project Costs

21. Detailed project costs are shown in Appendix A to the report. Note figures have been rounded as required by NHLF for the stage 1 application. A minimum of 10% matched funding is required for grants of this size. Costs for the development phase are shown below:

Development Phase Costs	
Contracted / Consultants	£14,000
Staff costs	£18,000
Other costs	£3,000
Legal	£4,000
Contingency	£1,000
Total Development Phase Costs	£40,000
Grant request	£36,000
Matched funding from Archive Reserve	£4,000

22. The development phase will use existing plans developed during the previous project. It will be a shorter phase than the previous bid and therefore costs will be reduced. The focus will be on review, revision and strengthening plans.

23. Estimated costs for the delivery phase are shown below:

Delivery Phase Costs	
Capital Works Extension	£1,184,404
Capital Works Link	£2,591,579
Capital Works WSL	£548,018
Capital- Interpretation	£193,441
Revenue- Activity Costs	£717,846
TOTAL	£5,235,288
Funding secured from previous bid	
Archive Service reserve	£251,000
Hildegard Simon Trust	£100,000
William Salt Library Trust cash and land in-kind	£58,000
Wellcome Trust	£31,340
Friends and depositors fundraising	£28,537
Diocese	£5,000
TOTAL	£473,877
Grant request	£3,900,000
Shortfall/funding to find	£861,411

24. The majority of funds from the previous bid are still secure assuming the project can proceed. In 2014 Staffordshire County Council's Cabinet agreed £377,000 of matched funding. The funding shortfall (excluding the grant request) is £861,411.

The recommendation is that Cabinet earmarks an additional £484,411 of matched funding to the £377,000 already confirmed towards the delivery phase. This is subject to further work on the business case for storage see below at paragraph 27. This amount is the minimum funding needed and a level of flexibility around funding is necessary to ensure the project has the best chance of success in a highly competitive process. Recent successful bids to NLHF have on average over 30% of matched funding. If Cabinet agree the recommended minimum this would mean a matched funding percentage of over 25.%. A cabinet decision is required by NLHF as evidence of the financial commitment.

MTFS savings

25. Since 2015 the Archive and Heritage Service has delivered £121,000 of MTFS savings. The Service still has to deliver a further £468,000, which are dependent on operating from a single site as the Staffordshire History Centre. A new operating model will be implemented designed to deliver the plans developed for the Staffordshire History Centre.
26. Investment is required to enable these savings to be delivered supporting the County Council's MTFS programme.

Business case for storage

27. In February Cabinet members asked for a detailed business case on future storage to be brought for consideration.
28. Work has begun on that detailed business case to assess storage needs not just for the Archive and Heritage Service but also the Information Governance Unit. This will continue in parallel to work on the stage 1 application. A report will be brought in the autumn to update on this work and make recommendations about additional investment required and further savings which could be delivered.

Timescales and next steps

29. The project plan with detailed timescales is at Appendix B to the report. The key dates are:
 - a. Stage 1 submission 28 May 2019
 - b. Detailed business case for future storage autumn 2019
 - c. Stage 1 decision Sep 2019
 - d. Development phase Sep 2019 – March 2020
 - e. Stage 2 submission March 2020
 - f. Delivery June 2020 – 2025.
 - g. Staffordshire History Centre opened by September 2022.
30. To enable the stage 1 submission to be made a commitment from Cabinet for the development phase funding is required. An indication of minimum funding for the delivery phase is required subject to the detailed business case.

31. The Service will continue to work in parallel on both the NLHF application and the business case.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix A - Project Costs

Appendix B - Project Plan

Community Impact Assessment - Summary Document

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