

**Minutes of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Archives Committee  
meeting held on 6 February 2020**

Present: Mike Davies (Invitee/Observer), Gill Burnett and Lorraine Beardmore

Apologies for absence: Gill Heath

**PART ONE**

**18. Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16**

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

**19. Minutes of meeting held on 14 November 2019**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2019 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**20. Predicted Outturn 2019/20 and 2020/21 Revenue Budget**

The Committee considered a joint report (Schedule 1 to the signed minutes) of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities (Staffordshire County Council) and Director for Housing and Community Services (Stoke-on-Trent City Council) giving details of the predicted outturn for the Joint Archives Service for 2019/20.

Members noted that a spend of £813,055 was predicted against an approved budget of £633,770 which resulted in an overall estimated overspend of £179,285 comprising (i) staffing and training (£179,570); (ii) Transport (£1,185) and; (iii) Supplies and Services (£11,160). However, these amounts were offset, in part, by an over recovery of income of £12,630.

With regard to the General Reserve, the current balance was £204,830 (which included a receipt of £1,364 from the New Burdens Fund and an outlay of £4,000 towards the Development Phase of the Staffordshire History Centre Project following the successful Round 1 Bid).

They also noted that the balance in the Archive Acquisition reserve was £57,542.

With regard to 2020/21, the Joint Archives Service budget was £665,120 comprising £451,020 or 68% from the County Council and £214,100 or 32% from the City Council. This was based on the new funding arrangements adopted in February 2019 and represented an increase of £31,350 or 4.9% on the previous year's budget.

**RESOLVED** – (a) That the report be received and noted.

(b) That the 2020/21 Joint Archive Service net Revenue Budget be approved.

## **21. Predicted Performance Outturn 2019/20**

The Committee considered a joint report (Schedule 2 to the signed minutes) of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Families and Communities (Staffordshire County Council) and Director of Housing and Community Services (Stoke-on-Trent City Council) detailing the predicted performance outturn for 2019/20.

The Service Plan set out annual targets for the Joint Archive Service and Museum Service for the County Council. Performance against these targets contributed towards achievement of the overall objectives contained in the Services' ten-year Forward Plan 2015-2025, which had been reviewed and updated in 2018.

With regard to Objective 1 - "Developing an Active Partnership Approach", the joint working between the Archives and Heritage Service and William Salt Library Trust in respect of the Staffordshire History Centre Project had continued during the year. Stakeholder meetings had been revived to support the development of a further Stage 1 bid to the National Lottery and Heritage Fund (NLHF) and consultation with other Partners had commenced. In addition, further work had been undertaken to establish a Development Trust to continue fundraising for the Project after funding from the NHLF had ceased.

Work to develop new partnerships and specialist interest groups had continued with (i) two projects in co-operation with Keele University and; (ii) Michelin Volunteers and; (iii) 18/21 Lancers Volunteers. Consultation with stakeholders had been undertaken in respect of a proposed revision to the opening hours of the Staffordshire Record Office and approximately 6,500 hours were to have been given by volunteers in support of the service, by 31 March 2020, which represented a 3% increase on the previous year's total.

With regard to Objective 2 - "Resilience and Sustainability", the service had achieved Stage 1 funding bid success with a grant of £36,000 being awarded. Work had commenced on the new Development Phase and additional funding amounting to approximately £5,000 had been awarded by the National Archives Testbed Fund to support digital drop-in session across the County. A further £35,000 had been secured from the developer of the former Rugeley Power Station site enabling the transfer of the station's archive and creation of an exhibition in partnership with the Museum of Cannock Chase.

A cross service exhibition team had been established to support the Distinctive Staffordshire Exhibition at the Staffordshire Record Office during the summer of 2019. Smaller displays had also been staged at the Office and History Access Points on (i) Queen Victoria; (ii) D-Day; (iii) Moon Landings; (iv) English Civil War; (v) Christmas and; (vi) new accessions, throughout the year.

In addition, progress had been made by the Service on its Annual Work Programme for collections including conservation, cataloguing and improving descriptions. The Doulton Described Project had been completed with support from the National Archive Cataloguing Fund and work on the Bawdy Courts and Asylum Projects had continued.

With regard to Objective 3 – “Reaching and Engaging with New Audiences the majority of work had focussed in the establishment of an exhibition team and volunteer research group. Distinctive Staffordshire was the first exhibition to be delivered by the new team and a further exhibition entitled Pushing up Daisies would be launched by the volunteer group during the current year.

The service continued to attend community events, help local groups deliver their own projects and provide learning activities through the Staffordshire History Day event. In addition, the service had supported school college and university placements. Delivery of a more formal learning programme was dependent on the availability of external funding. However, the post of Learning Consultant had recently been advertised for recruitment.

With regard to Objective 4 – “Sharing Knowledge Across the Sector”, the service continued to be an active Member of Archives West Midlands and had attend:- (i) the Discovering Collections, Discovering Communities national conference in November 2019 on their behalf. In addition staff from the service presented at the following events West Midlands Museum development event in ; Society of Bookbinders Conference in and Rural Museums Conference in 2019.

In addition, partners, users and volunteers had continued to contribute to blogs posted in support of the Service’s projects including Bawdy Courts and Asylums.

With regard to Objective 5 – “Online Presence and Remote Access”, the service had begun work to review the Digital Plan which had been developed for the Staffordshire History Centre Project. This initiative involved consultation with key partners including the City Council’s Potteries Museum and Art Gallery and the County Council’s Historic Environment Team.

Online content had increased with addition of three new name indexes to the Staffordshire Names index Indexes site and 1511 images to the Staffordshire Past Tracks site. Visits to all sites remained high at more than 1.5 million which represented a 30% increase on the previous year’s total. Digitisation of the Staffordshire Tithe Maps ad been completed. Progress had also been made with regard to digital preservation and staff had received further training made available through membership of Archives West Midlands.

During the year ahead, the focus was to be on Phase 2 (Development Phase) of the Staffordshire History Centre Project in order to secure a pass and implementation of a new staffing structure to enable delivery of the savings identified in County Council’s Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be received and noted.

## **22. Staffordshire History Centre Project - Update**

The Committee considered a report (Schedule 3 to the signed minutes) by the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Families and Communities (Staffordshire County Council) and Director of Housing and Community Services (Stoke-on-Trent City Council) updating them on progress with regard to the Staffordshire History Centre Project.

Permission to commence work on the project was granted by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) on 17 December 2019. Since this time efforts had been made to commission (i) a consultant required to undertake audience research and develop a marketing strategy for the project and; (ii) a consultant to review the learning aspects of the Delivery Plan with a focus on the work undertaken with schools. Subject to approval of the NLHF, both consultants would commence their roles in February 2020.

In addition, smaller commissions were being agreed with the consultants who had developed the Conservation Management Plan and Evaluation Strategy for the previous Project's Development Phase during 2016/18. Members noted that the majority of these plans' content was valid and would require only minor updates to support the current submission.

Work to prepare the Project's Business Plan had also commenced and would be delivered by the project team with support from the Director of Corporate Services. The Plan would be informed by the above-mentioned audience development research and learning work.

Other notable developments included (i) the preparations made for the relocation of the William Salt Library collection; (ii) review of the digital offer for the project; (iii) an opportunity to improve the environmental outcomes of the project which had been highlighted by a review of the design proposals and; (iv) the constitution of the Staffordshire History Centre Development Trust under the Charitable Incorporated Organisation Foundation Model.

**RESOLVED** – (a) That the report be received and noted.

(b) That a representative of the Joint Archives Service be nominated for Membership of the Staffordshire History Centre Development Trust having regard to the necessary approvals required by both Authorities'.

(c) That in the event that the forthcoming application to the National Lottery Heritage Funding for Stage 2 funding is unsuccessful, preliminary approval be granted to the establishment of a fund-raising Trust in order that the Project may proceed.

## **23. Review of Terms of Deposit**

The Committee considered a joint report (Schedule 4 to the signed minutes) of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Families and Communities (Staffordshire County Council) and Director of Housing and Community Services (Stoke-on-Trent City Council) regarding a review of the Terms of Deposit by third parties to the Joint Archive Service.

The Service was responsible for the location, collection and preservation of archive collections relating to past life within the administrative County of Staffordshire and City of Stoke-on-Trent and for making these available for use by the public. As such, the service was willing to receive records by gift or deposit from third parties subject to Terms of Deposit which were approved in 2008.

Members noted that the introduction of General Data Protection Regulations in 2018 had prompted a review of the Term in order to ensure that they were compliant with the new legislation. In addition, the opportunity had been taken to review and update other elements of the Terms to ensure that they remained fit for purpose, going forward. The key changes included:- (i) revised definitions of 'the Council' and '2018 Act' contained in paragraph 3.1; (ii) strengthening paragraph 3.5 to clarify that any significant 'weeding' will be undertaken at the Owner's expense; (iii) changes to paragraph 3.6 to clarify that the Councils are joint Data Controller together with the depositor and as such should make the Authorities aware of any personal data contained within the collection(s) to be deposited; (iv) clarification in Section 5 that multiple copies were to be made of collections to ensure their ongoing preservation and to highlight the depositors responsibilities in respect of copyright legislation and; (v) changes to Section 10 to clarify the arrangements for claiming costs by the Service in the event that a collection(s) is withdrawn by the depositor.

During her presentation of the report the Director highlighted that both Authorities' Legal Departments had been involved in the review and that the revised Terms would be included on the Service's Website following the Joint Committee's approval being given.

**RESOLVED** – (a) That the report be received, and revised Terms of Deposit approved.

**24. Date of next meeting - Thursday 11 June 2020 at 10.30 am, City Central Library, Hanley**

**RESOLVED** – That the date, time and venue of the next meeting be noted.

**25. Exclusion of the public**

**RESOLVED** – That the public be excluded for the following items of business which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972 indicated below".

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## **PART TWO**

**26. Relocation of Stoke-on-Trent City Archives**

The Committee received and noted an exempt joint report (Schedule 5 to the signed minutes) of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Families and Communities (Staffordshire County Council) and Director of Housing and Community Services (Stoke-on-Trent City Council) informing them of the proposed relocation of Stoke-on-Trent City Archives Service.

## **27. Update on Archives and Heritage Service Reorganisation**

The Committee received and noted an exempt joint report (Schedule 6 to the signed minutes) of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Families and Communities (Staffordshire County Council) and Director of Housing and Community Services (Stoke-on-Trent City Council) updating them on progress with regard to the re-organisation of the County Council's Archive and Heritage Service.

**Chairman**