

**Minutes of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Archives Committee
meeting held on 21 February 2013**

Present: Janine Bridges (Chairman), Pat Corfield (Vice-Chairman), Ian Parry and
Geoffrey Martin (Observer Substitute)

Apologies for absence: Jeremy Oates (Observer)

PART ONE

16. Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16

None at this meeting.

17. Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2012

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2012 be agreed and signed by the Chairman.

18. Annual Implementation Plan, 2012-13: Predicted Outturn

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director for Place and Deputy Chief Executive and the Director of Adult and Neighbourhood Services informing them of the predicted outturn against targets set in the Joint Archive Service's Annual Service Plan.

The Annual Service Plan sets the annual targets for the performance of Joint Archive Service. These targets work towards the overall achievement of the Archive Service's current three- year service objectives, which were set out in its Forward Plan, 2012-2015, approved by the Joint Archives Committee at its meeting on 23 February 2012. The key achievements included: (i) integrated onsite and online customer experience; (ii) innovative online presence which showcases Staffordshire's archives; (iii) engagement with Staffordshire's communities to strengthen their identity and place; (iv) celebrate and discover Staffordshire's history; (v) a sustainable high performing service which provides leadership for the Archives and Heritage sector; (vi) improving and promoting user access to Staffordshire's archive collections; (vii) delivering high quality care of Staffordshire's archive collections; and (viii) extend volunteer working to provide new opportunities for people to increase their skills and increase access to collections.

The Committee were aware that the performance indicators were revised at the Joint Archive Committee on 21 June 2012. Some new targets were set including one for Usages of the Archive Service. This figure was set to exceed the target predominantly due to the continued increase in online access to Archive Service websites and resources. Attendances at events had dropped by about 25% and members noted this was because the previous year was boosted by the Out of Darkness exhibition visits compared to this year when no exhibition has been held.

The Head of Archive highlighted the launch of the Archive and Heritage Facebook page which enables the Archive Service to reach new audiences. She also updated members on the Digitisation project with the award of the tender due at the end of March.

Members noted the detail of performance to local indicators showing that Volunteer hours were likely to drop by about 15% and this was partly due to changes in membership of some of the groups as well as ill health for some volunteers. Performance against the customer satisfaction target had been maintained. It had been predicted that overall satisfaction would fall after reductions in opening hours but this has not seen. However there have been comments about the changes to opening hours. The Chairman asked that the Committee's thanks be passed to the staff and volunteers for their efficient work and dedication to the service.

RESOLVED – that the report be received as a record of the predicted performance of the Joint Archive Service for the year ending 31 March 2013.

19. Predicted Outturn 2012/13 and Proposed Revenue Budget

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Finance and Resources and the City Director of Business Services detailing the current predicted outturn for 2012/13 for the Joint Archive Service and to consider the revenue budget position for 2013/14.

Members noted that the latest revenue outturn forecast showed an anticipated underspend of £2,313 at the end of the financial year. The current balance on the General Reserve was £66,734. The Archive Acquisition Reserve had a balance of £62,342 towards the purchase of new collections.

Members noted that the proposed revenue budget for 2013/14 of £668,180 had increased by 1.1% when compared to estimate for the current year.

Under the Joint Archive Agreement the total cost of the service was currently apportioned between the two authorities 77.59% (County) and 22.41% (City), based on the June 2010 population estimates for the County and the City. It was proposed to revise the apportionment of revenue costs to reflect the latest available respective population levels as at June 2011. This would increase the percentage charge to the City Council to 22.69% for 2013/14, with a corresponding decrease in the County Council's percentage share to 77.31%. The proposed revenue budget had been apportioned on this basis and the County's proposed share of the costs was £516,570 and the City's £151,610. Both authorities had sufficient budgetary provision to meet these costs.

A member commented on the potential income that could be generated from the Digitisation Project. As the tender had not been awarded yet it was too early to speculate on any possible income.

RESOLVED – (a) that the current predicted outturn for 2012/13 be noted;

(b) that the revenue budget proposed for 2013/14 be approved and submitted to the County Council for consideration.

20. Review of Preservation and Conservation Policy

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director for Place and Deputy Chief Executive and the Director of Adult and Neighbourhood Services updating them on the Preservation and Conservation Policy.

Preservation and conservation was a core function of the Joint Archive Service and these responsibilities follow from the fundamental collecting activity of the Service. A new Archive Accreditation standard was being developed and the new standard was due to come into force in the summer of 2013. The draft standard required archive services to have a policy on collections care and preservation to ensure the long-term preservation of, and access to, the collection.

This Policy provided the basis for the technical function of collections care, which was carried out by the Archive Service. It sets out our commitments and responsibilities to ensure that the irreplaceable archives in our care were handed on to future generations in as good a condition as we can achieve. This area of activity has remained largely unaltered and the content of the policy is largely unchanged.

However the Policy had been updated to take account of revisions to standards for the care of collections; new ways of working for annual work programmes and highlighting the advice and training given by staff of the Archive Service to creators of archives.

RESOLVED – that the revised Preservation and Conservation Policy be approved.

21. Date of next meeting - 20 June 2013

RESOLVED – that the next meeting of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Archives Committee be held on Thursday 20 June 2013 at 10.30 am in the County Record Office, Eastgate Street, Stafford.

Chairman