

Members Interest
N/A

Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Joint Archive Committee 28 June 2018

Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service: Staffordshire History Centre Project Update

Recommendation(s)

1. That the Committee note progress of the project.

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. Staffordshire County Council's Archives and Heritage Service and the William Salt Library Trust are working in partnership to create and deliver the Staffordshire History Centre Project. We are making an application for £3.9m from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) supported by £1.8m of fundraising, in kind contributions and matched funding from the partnership.

3. In April 2018 the project passed its mid-stage review and received extensive feedback from HLF.

4. At the beginning of May a planning application for the project was validated by Stafford Borough Council. A decision is expected by the Borough Council in June.

5. The Project Executive Summary at Appendix 2 gives an overview of the whole project and the transformation of the archive and heritage offer within the county which this project will enable.

HLF process

6. In April HLF confirmed that the project had passed its mid-stage review. Extensive feedback was received from the project mentors to assist the team in producing the highest quality bid for round two.

7. The Project Board, Project Team and consultants worked together to review and improve the final documentation. The final second stage application was submitted to HLF on 14 June 2018. A decision is expected later in the autumn.

Finances

8. Total project costs are £5.7m for the new centre and a four year programme of activity across the county. The majority of funding will come from the HLF grant of £3.9m (69% of costs) assuming the application is successful. The partnership funding required is £1.8m. So far £717,877 funding has been secured. This represents a combination of organisational funding (Staffordshire County Council capital funding and Archive Service reserve), William Salt Library Trust (cash and land contribution) and private donations, Friends groups, and grants from trusts and charities. An additional sum of £746,400 is also secured by planned volunteer working during the project.

9. The current shortfall in funding is £159,000. This will be secured by further applications to grant giving bodies and fundraising by Friends groups. Staffordshire County Council has agreed to underwrite the gap in fundraising as necessary reassurance for the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Risks Identified

10. The key risk is not realising the HLF funding and matched funding to deliver the project. Additional and unforeseen costs are another financial risk. The reputational risk to the council if the project does not proceed would be high given the public profile and anticipation for the History Centre. MTFs savings of £315,000 committed against the project would still be delivered however the ability for the Archive and Heritage Service to operate would be severely limited. This is because storage is fully occupied and public services will be very restricted.

11. To mitigate these risks the project team have submitted the highest quality application possible to HLF. Alternative plans (Plan B) for the service were prepared prior to the round 1 application and these will be revisited once the stage 2 application has been submitted.

Timescale

12. The round 2 application was submitted on 14 June 2018. The project will be considered at the HLF board meeting due in September. If the application is successful construction would start in the summer of 2019 and the Staffordshire History Centre will open in 2020.

Appendix 1

Equalities implications:

The National Archives, stakeholders, partners and staff have been involved in development of the project.

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 £159,000 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:

Authors' Names: **Janene Cox OBE, Commissioner for Culture and Communities; Joanna Terry, Head of Archives & Heritage**

Telephone No: (01785) 278370
Room No: Staffordshire Record Office

List of Background Papers

Papers	Contact/Directorate/ext number
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HLF Application and supporting documents.	
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