

Local Members' Interest
N/A

**STAFFORDSHIRE AND STOKE-ON-TRENT JOINT ARCHIVES COMMITTEE
22 NOVEMBER 2010**

**REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR FOR PLACE AND DEPUTY CHIEF
EXECUTIVE AND THE DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND
COMMUNITIES**

PROPOSED REVISION TO THE JOINT AGREEMENT FOR ARCHIVE SERVICES

1. Purpose Of Report

- 1.1 To consider proposed changes to the Joint Agreement for Archive Services.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Joint Agreement for Archive Services, between Staffordshire County Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council, was last updated in 2003. A review of the content of the Joint Agreement is therefore long overdue.
- 2.2 There have been recent changes to the constitution of Stoke-on-Trent City Council. In addition new proposals have been made in relation to the future definition of the revenue budget for the Joint Archives Committee.
- 2.3 The Joint Agreement for Archive Services between the County Council and the City Council has been re-drafted to reflect these changes and proposals. As part of this work the opportunity has been taken to update and to clarify other clauses of the Agreement where necessary.
- 2.4 Subject to the approval of the Joint Archives Committee, officers will make the necessary arrangements for the signing and sealing of the revised Joint Agreement by both authorities so that this is in place before the budgets are set for the next financial year, 2011/2012.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That the proposed changes to the Joint Agreement for Archive Services as attached at Appendix 1 be approved.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Joint Agreement for Archive Services enables both Staffordshire County Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council to discharge their functions with regard to archives through the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive Service. The Joint Archives Committee exercises delegated powers in respect of archive functions in the County and the City within an annual budget approved annually by both authorities. The Agreement prescribes those functions and lays down the standing orders and financial procedures to which the Joint Committee is subject.

- 4.2 The current Joint Agreement was re-drafted in 2000 and operates under a nine year rolling term, maintained every three years by an automatic extension for a further three years, unless either authority has served notice to terminate the agreement. There is provision for termination by either authority at three years' notice or by mutual agreement at any time.
- 4.3 The management of the Joint Archive Committee budget is set out fully in Section 8 of the Joint Agreement. The agreed revenue expenditure is apportioned annually between the County Council and the City Council according to the Registrar General's most recently published population estimates. The Joint Committee's revenue budget is made up of two budgets, the core budget and the sites and public services budget. The core budget relates to the costs of the professional management of the Archive Service, the conservation of collections and service-wide programmes such as micro-filming. The public sites and services budgets include all the public service delivery costs of the County Record Office, Lichfield Record Office and Stoke-on-Trent City Archives and the cost of the Archive Service's out store in Stafford. . Until now both budgets have been maintained by annual indexation to the Retail Price Index.
- 4.5 There are elements in its revenue expenditure budget which the Joint Committee does not directly control. These are central support costs and property-related costs. These are fixed and apportioned centrally. It is proposed therefore that, because the Joint Committee cannot control these costs, they should be defined as Non-Agreement Expenditure and removed from the Committee's Agreement revenue budget.
- 4.6 The relevant clauses in the Joint Agreement have therefore been re-drafted to reflect this proposal with all property and support service costs, excluding ICT, being moved out of the revenue budget and included under the definition of Non-Agreement Expenditure.
- 4.7 Due to the current financial situation both Councils felt that it would be inappropriate to maintain the automatic indexation to the Retail Price Index so this clause has been removed from the Joint Agreement.
- 4.8 As noted at paragraph 2.2, there have been only minimal changes to the Joint Agreement for Archive Services since 2000. Other clauses of the agreement have therefore been updated or clarified as considered necessary. These amendments include the most recent constitutional changes in the City Council, which have impacted upon the City Council's elected member representation; the re-definition of budget terms; reference to liabilities and conditions of external funding contracts; and the updating of job titles. Further clarity has also been introduced into the clauses of the Agreement in relation to the nine year rolling term provision and the management of the Appropriation and Acquisition Reserves.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 If approval is given to the proposed changes, the impact of the changes is unlikely to be felt until the financial year, 2012/2013. A full Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities audit will be required in 2011/2012 and members were made aware of this at the last Committee on 17 June 2010.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 The Joint Agreement has been amended and re-drafted in consultation with officers of Legal Services in the County Council and the City Council.

David Wilson, Interim Director for Place and Deputy Chief Executive
Tony Oakman, Director of Adult Social Care, Health and Communities

Background Documents Public:

Joint Agreement on Archive Services, 1997, 2000, 2003

Contact Officers:

Michelle Rowe, Solicitor, Legal Services,
Staffordshire County Council

Kristina Taylor, Solicitor, Legal Services,
Stoke -on -Trent City Council

Thea Randall, Head of Archive Services,
Culture and Leisure, Staffordshire County Council