

Members Interest
N/A

Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Joint Archive Committee

13 June 2019

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

Recommendation(s)

1. That the committee notes the update on the Staffordshire History Centre project
2. That the Committee earmarks £4,000 towards the new Round 1 National Lottery Heritage Fund development phase pending a successful outcome.

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

Summary

3. On 15th May Staffordshire County Council's Cabinet approved submission of a Round 1 National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) application for the Staffordshire History Centre project. It earmarked additional funding towards the delivery of the project pending a successful outcome of the round 1 application.
4. A round 1 application was submitted to NLHF on 28th May 2019 seeking a development grant of £36,000 and a delivery grant of £3.9 million. The outcome of the round 1 application will be known at the end of September.

Background to Archive and Heritage Service

5. The 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.
6. In addition it manages the William Salt Library on behalf of the William Salt Library Trust, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The Library is situated in a grade II* listed building. The Library is a unique collection of books, manuscripts, engravings, deeds, autographs and works of art focused on Staffordshire. 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. 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.

7. Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service 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 and city.

8. 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. These include collections such as court records, coroner's inquests, hospital records and other public bodies as defined by the Public Records Act. 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.

9. The County 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 relocation of the collection. Currently the Museum service lacks its own exhibition space which is the main reason the service is only provisionally accredited.

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. Since 2015/16 the County 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.

Revised round 1 NLHF application

11. The Project Board and Project have worked together to review the aims and objectives of the Staffordshire History Centre project in line with the new NLHF Strategic Funding Framework. This has resulted in a new project vision and aims:

Placing Heritage at the Heart of the Community: the Staffordshire History Centre.

A Dynamic partnership between Staffordshire Archives and Heritage, William Salt Library Trust and Staffordshire communities to create a centre of excellence to engage the wider community. Unique collections of designated outstanding archives, rare books, and museum objects will be brought together, interpreted and made fully accessible for the first time.

Comprising:

- *Truly engaging spaces where people of all ages can learn, share, and engage with Staffordshire's heritage*

- *Research centre for people to discover their own stories and develop new skills*
- *Preservation of unique collections in proper storage conditions*
- *Conserving and opening access to a loved Georgian grade II* listed building*
- *Establishment of a mutually supportive network of history groups, community organisations, schools and universities, in partnership with the History Centre*
- *Touring exhibitions, activities, sharing resources and partnership to deliver a countywide offer.*

This creative blend of exhibitions, engagement activities, learning and volunteering opportunities will engage individuals and community groups in researching, curating, cataloguing and discovering their own histories. The SHC will complement and enhance Stafford's tourism offer, ensuring that Staffordshire's communities are placed at the heart of this project. We will reimagine our collections and spaces to reflect their relevance to the lives of Staffordshire people and communities.

12. The new vision refocuses the project on strengthening the community engagement delivered through the activity programme rather than on the new building. This fits with the vision for the Archive and Heritage Service, 'Connecting people to the collected stories and heritage of Staffordshire, Stoke on Trent and beyond'. It also ensures the project is aligned to corporate priorities for Staffordshire County Council and Stoke on Trent City Council promoting growth in volunteering, engagement with collections and delivering services online. The NHLF strategy promotes the importance of community heritage and this is supported by the revised project vision. See Appendix two for the full project executive summary.

13. The round 1 application references the work already completed in the previous development phase from 2016 – 2018. It also outlines the focus on strengthening areas of the project including:

- Why the project must proceed now
- Clear presentation of the benefits for communities in Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent
- Improving the learning and digital plans
- Testing and piloting the Activity Plan during the development phase

The development phase will be shorter, approximately six months, and requires a smaller grant to review and strengthen existing plans.

Project costs

14. A minimum of 10% matched funding is required for grants of this size. Note figures have been rounded as required by NHLF for the stage 1 application. 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 required	£4,000

The Joint Archive Committee is asked to earmark £4,000 from its reserve towards the development phase work if the application is successful.

15. The delivery phase costs are based on the previous round 2 application which was rejected in September 2018. This includes a sum of £251,000 to be earmarked from the Joint Committee reserve. The costs have been updated in line with inflation as 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
SCC capital funding	£861,411
TOTAL	£1,335,288
Grant request	£3,900,000
Shortfall/funding to find	£0

16. The Project Team will continue to identify external funding streams appropriate for the SHC. Other funding bids will be submitted to either match the NLHF project or deliver elements separately.

17. Since 2015 the County 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.

Business case for storage

18. In February Cabinet members asked for a detailed business case on future storage to be brought for consideration. 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. A report will be brought to SCC's Cabinet and the Joint Committee in the autumn to update on this work and make recommendations about additional investment required and further savings which could be delivered.

Stakeholder engagement

19. The SHC project team held a stakeholder event on 20th May to update individuals and groups about the new round 1 application. The meeting was attended by 20 people representing groups from across Staffordshire. The meeting was an opportunity to consult groups on the revised digital and community offers.

20. The group supported the revised application and proposals for a digital offer to include a new website, an integrated search facility across content and a new front end for the online catalogue. The group was also keen to see further digitisation of content including photographs, maps, Tudor material, poll books, and twentieth century trade directories.

21. A questionnaire was sent to attendees to assess support for creating a Staffordshire History Network (including Stoke on Trent). This will be supplemented by a short online survey during the summer. Feedback received so far indicates support for a network.

22. Consultation on proposed new opening hours at Staffordshire Record Office has been carried out from 13 May – 9 June 2019. The results of the consultation will be used to inform the proposals for 25 hours per week opening and come into effect from Monday 15 July 2019.

Timescales and next steps

23. The project plan with detailed timescales is at Appendix B to the report. The key dates are:

- Stage 1 submission 28 May 2019
- Detailed business case for future storage autumn 2019
- Stage 1 decision Sep 2019
- Development phase Sep 2019 – March 2020
- Stage 2 submission March 2020
- Delivery June 2020 – 2025.
- Staffordshire History Centre opened by September 2022.

24. The Project Team will continue to develop plans for the SHC and the business case for storage. An update will be brought to the next Joint Archive Committee.

Appendix 1

Equalities implications:

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

Legal implications:

The consideration of alternative options will be in line with the Joint Agreement and the sector standards for archives and museums.

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:

There is a risk that funding will not be secured for any of the options. This will affect the accreditation of the Archive and Heritage Service.

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 will offer 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:

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List of Background Papers

Papers	Contact/Directorate/ext number
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Appendix Two: Project Executive Summary
Appendix Three: Development Phase Plan