

Members Interest
N/A

Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Joint Archive Committee 14 November 2019

Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service: Standard text for Archive Service Policies

Recommendation(s)

1. That the committee approves the standard introductory text for all Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive policies.

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

2. In 2017 Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Service was awarded accredited status under the Archive Service Accreditation scheme. The feedback was positive and constructive and highlighted improvement and required actions.

3. One of the improvement actions related to a light touch review of Archive Service policies to ensure consistent branding, balance and cross referencing.

Background

4. Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service is managed and funded under the terms of a joint agreement between Staffordshire County Council and Stoke on Trent City Council. Within Staffordshire County Council the Archive Service is managed alongside the County Museum Service which is funded by the County Council. The County's Archive Service also manages the William Salt Library on behalf of the William Salt Library Trust. The Trust is an independent charity.

5. The three services are all managed by the Head of Archives and Heritage and operationally this is the most efficient and beneficial arrangement for users, depositors and visitors to the services.

6. All three services work to a shared vision and forward plan. This is underpinned by a comprehensive set of policies. Many of the policies are shared but some are specific to each individual service. The Archive Service and County Museum are both accredited services and are required to submit specific policies to meet the standard.

7. When the Archive Service was assessed under the Archive Service Accreditation scheme several improvement actions and required actions were identified including the following relating to policies:

At the appropriate time, undertake a light-touch overhaul of all policy documentation to ensure consistent branding, balance, and cross referencing.

8. The Conservation Management Plan developed for the Staffordshire History Centre project in 2017 also recommended a review and alignment of key policies across the three services.

9. There are nineteen policies across the three services of which ten are approved by the Joint Archives Committee. The remainder are approved by delegated decision within Staffordshire County Council, senior officer approval and William Salt Library Trust for their specific policies.

10. The Archive and Heritage Management Team have reviewed the introductory text to the Service policies and developed new standard introductory text to insert into all policies. The text clearly explains the composition of the service and states the vision and mission for the Service. The proposed text is set out below:

Staffordshire Archives and Heritage comprises Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service, the William Salt Library and the County Museum Service. The Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service is an Accredited Archive Service administered and funded by Staffordshire County Council and Stoke on Trent City Council under a joint agreement. The William Salt Library is a charitable library delivered by the Archive Service on behalf of the Trustees. The County Museum is a provisionally Accredited Museum funded by Staffordshire County Council and works in partnership with museums across the County and region to provide museum development support.

The Archive Service manages and delivers services via Staffordshire Record Office, Stoke on Trent City Archives and the William Salt Library. A significant proportion of the County Museum Service's collection is on long term loan and public display at Shugborough Estate. The Archive Service provides services for Staffordshire County Council in relation to its legal documents and archives.

The vision is:

Connecting people to the collected stories and heritage of Staffordshire, Stoke on Trent and beyond.

The mission is:

To connect people to the memories of Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent, by engaging them with the collections we develop and preserve for current and future generations.

11. It is recommended that the Joint Archives Committee approves the standard introductory text to be inserted at the beginning of all current Archive Service

policies. Policies will continue to be brought for review and approval to this committee when they are due for renewal or prompted by a change in circumstances.

Appendix 1

Equalities implications:

Policies are developed to ensure the service collections are representative of local communities and access is provided to meet diverse groups and specific needs as appropriate.

Legal implications:

Where a policy has legal implications it is referred to the Legal Services within both Staffordshire County Council and Stoke on Trent City Council.

Resource and Value for money implications:

All policies consider resources and value for money as appropriate.

Risk implications:

Aligning policies across the services ensures risks of conflict or duplication are mitigated.

Climate Change implications:

Where appropriate policies consider and mitigate to reduce impact of climate change.

Health Impact Assessment screening:

Most policies have no direct impact on health however access to archive services, volunteering and engagement all contribute towards positive wellbeing.

Report author:

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List of Background Papers

Papers	Contact/Directorate/ext number
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