

<b>Local Members Interest</b>
N/A

## **Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Archive Committee – Tuesday 28 February 2023**

### **Digital Engagement Strategy**

#### **Recommendation(s)**

1. That the Committee approves the Digital Engagement Strategy

#### **Report of Director for Economy Infrastructure and Skills (Staffordshire County Council) and Director of Strategy and Resources (Stoke-on-Trent City Council)**

#### **Reasons for Recommendations:**

2. The Digital engagement strategy required updating to ensure that our digital work remains relevant and current in an ever-evolving field.
3. The updated strategy allows the service to highlight areas for improvement and development and make positive changes that will enable the service to reach targets and better meet our audiences and service user's needs.
4. The strategy encourages a cohesive approach across the service and empowers staff to follow best practice.

#### **Background**

5. The service has previously been an early adopter of digital engagement and has gradually built an impressive online offer across multiple digital resources. The updated strategy builds upon this earlier work.
6. The service has a strong current digital presence across various platforms including around 17,000 followers on social media. The adoption of the strategy and plan will allow the joint service to develop even further, improve how content is shared and ultimately grow audiences.

7. The strategy recognises the needs of both areas of the joint service, the current digital climate, the value of digital engagement tools and the need to be mindful of accessibility and inclusion.
8. The digital engagement plan sets out in more detail how the service will maintain, manage and develop each of our digital assets and offers:-
  - a. The key priority is to commission a new external website with greatly increased functionality and a user-friendly design.
  - b. Both ICT and Digital teams have been consulted and have advised during the website procurement process. They will be included in the evaluation of bidders, briefing the contractor and testing the product.
  - c. As an interim measure two microsites will be established to effectively communicate with service users and audiences the current progress and goals of the Stoke on Trent City Archives move and the Staffordshire History Centre project.
  - d. The plan covers how we will manage existing digital resources including blogs and social media, external sites and create new digital resources and offers.
9. The strategy includes guidance on how we will monitor our digital performance including that we will review our digital assets annually and archive those that are no longer in active use.
10. The strategy and plan include changes to how we use social media to reach audiences more effectively.
  - a. Best practice guidelines for social media have been created to improve consistency, signpost staff to further resources and minimise potential negative interactions.
  - b. Staff are given clear instructions on how to respond to negative comments or interactions appropriately and how to make post more accessible.
  - c. Guidance and support has been given by the Staffordshire County Council social media manager.
  - d. A content calendar has been implemented to balance social media posts across four themes: sharing collections, celebrating projects, key service messages and marketing & promotion.
  - e. We will prioritise content that celebrates our achievements and shares our collections.
11. The strategy states that we will work safely with children and young people in a digital context by using guidance created by our parent authority and the guidance created by National Lottery Heritage Fund

which can be found here: [Digital guide: working safely online with children and young people | The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)

12. The strategy complies with best practice for the archive and heritage sector and will support the Staffordshire History Centre project and the Stoke City Archives relocation. It is recommended that the committee approve the strategy which is attached as Appendix 1.

## **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.

## **Climate Change Implications**

Where appropriate policies consider and mitigate to reduce impact of climate change. As the digital strategy encourages increased use of digital communication it will have a positive impact by reducing the number of physical resources used in communications and marketing.

## **List of Background Documents/Appendices:**

- Appendix 1 - Digital Engagement Strategy
- Appendix 2 - Digital Engagement Plan
- Appendix 3 - Social Media Guidance for AHS Staff

## **Contact Details**

**Assistant Director:** Catherine Mann MBE, Interim Assistant Director – Culture, Rural and Safer Communities

**Report Author:** Sarah English  
**Job Title:** Engagement & Access Manager, Staffordshire Archives & Heritage

**Telephone No.:** 01785 276379

**E-Mail Address:** sarah.english@staffordshire.gov.uk