

## **Appendix 1: Key findings from Evaluation Report on the capital works**

### 1. The aims of this report were:

- To identify learning in project stages: design, procurement, build, and communications.
- To evidence what skills have been developed.
- To identify recommendations from the initial phase of programme delivery which could improve future capital programmes in Staffordshire and those in receipt of NLHF grant funding.

### 2. The key findings were:

- The dynamic cross team communication and range of skills ensures the project runs effectively and efficiently. Communication between the partners, service teams, contractors and Project Board is collaborative and relatively non-hierarchical making it very effective. The team shares the same goal and is committed to its success.
- Involving the team who will be using/working in the building with contractors and suppliers will ensure specifications are more accurate and there are likely to be fewer revisions of plans keeping the project on track.
- Sharing detailed information with the operational team will enable them to pre-empt issues and mitigate risks.
- Moving some of the collections to temporary storage and the moving the team base has meant there is a physical impact on staff to access collections. Whilst this cannot always be mitigated ensuring safe working practices and making adjustments will ensure the team are better able to cope with the physical demands of their role during the project.
- Supporting staff through the process of change that the project will bring is important. Appreciating this and providing more opportunities for engagement and feedback will enable staff to adapt and prepare for reopening.
- An effective project board and leadership has contributed to project success to date and a good relationship with the National Lottery Heritage Fund.
- Ensuring resourcing is in place with specialist expertise. This sometimes led to delays appointing contractors.
- There has been extensive skills development across the team from designers, contractors, subcontractors and the History Centre team. There is likely to be a significant legacy emerging from the project.
- Managing risks to the collection which remains on site has been challenging and more could have been done to explore this with other services to understand them better. However few archive projects have such extensive extension and remodelling as the History Centre project.

- Recording the knowledge and history of the William Salt Library building and the background to decision making will be important for future trustees and visitors to the Library.
- Skills in procuring good value contracts and effective budget planning have been learnt by the History Centre team. The process was complex but robust and fair and complied with local authority and NLHF requirements.
- Planning for works out of scope of the main contract could have been identified earlier to make delivery easier for the main contractor and reduced potential for delays.
- The team are already planning for the site handover and opening. It was recommended that adequate time for this period and collaboration with the frontline team to create systems and process is included.