

**Minutes of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Archives Committee
meeting held on 16 June 2011**

Present: Pat Corfield and Gwen Hassall

Apologies for absence: Simon Tagg

PART ONE

1. Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

The Committee noted changes to the Stoke-on-Trent City Council representative following recent elections at Stoke-on-Trent City and welcomed Mrs. Gwen Hassall to the meeting.

(a) **RESOLVED** - That Mr. Pat Corfield be appointed Chairman of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Archives Committee up to the annual meeting of the Joint Committee in 2012.

Mr. Pat Corfield took the Chair

(b) **RESOLVED** – That Mrs. Gwen Hassall be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Archives Committee up to the annual meeting of the Joint Committee in 2012. The City Council would identify a second elected member, as substitute, to represent the City Council in the event that Mrs. Gwen Hassall was unavailable, but would only assume voting rights in Mrs. Hassall's absence.

2. Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16

None at this meeting.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2011

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2011 be agreed and signed by the Chairman.

4. Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive Services: Annual Report 2010/11

The Committee considered the joint Annual Report of the County Council's Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Place and the Director of Adult and Neighbourhood Services, on the work of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (Joint) Archive Service for the period April 2010 – March 2011.

The Head of the Archive Service indicated that the Annual Report provided an account and review of the work and performance of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive Services. It demonstrated a productive year for the Joint Archive Service in terms of its performance, achievements and other activity. The most notable successes had been: achievement of the Customer Service Excellence Standard, the National Archives self-assessment retaining four-star rating and tenth place, the Children on the move Project funded by Heritage Lottery Fund, the launch of International Staffordshire – an online exhibition forming part of our 2012 Cultural Olympiad Programme, and the completion of the new outstore to enable the continued expansion of the collections.

The Service had made good progress in all its core areas of activity: improving access to collections; the public services; cataloguing; learning; preservation; and conservation. It had been a particularly successful year in terms of outreach working with some very positive outcomes for communities. The service continued its survey of records of sports organisations, developed as part of the 2012 Olympics Legacy. The service also celebrated 10 years of volunteering with a celebration for its past and present volunteers.

The Committee noted that personal visits saw a downturn which was a common trend to most archive services, although they noted that online resources (analysed using different software) had exceeded predicted targets.

The Olympic Torch relay would be travelling through Staffordshire via Stoke-on-Trent City and the search was on for inspiring young people to be torchbearers to carry the Olympic Torch on its journey through the County.

RESOLVED – That the Annual Report for the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive Service for 2010/11 be received as a record of the performance of the service in the year under review.

5. Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive Services: Results of the National Archives Assessment of Local Authority Archives Services, 2010 and Results of Survey of Visitors to British Archives, 2011

The Committee considered a joint report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Place and the Director of Adult and Neighbourhood Services detailing the outcome of the National Archives Assessment for the Joint Archive Service, completed during the summer of 2010 and the results of the survey of visitors to British Archives carried out in February 2011. The Appendices were circulated to Members at the meeting as they were omitted in error from the original report sent to Members.

Members noted that The National Archives introduced a self assessment process in 2006 to enable it to discharge its legal functions in relation to the inspection and monitoring of local authority archive services. The Archive Service's submission for the 2010 self assessment was completed last summer (performance bandings were 1-4 four star ratings). The Joint Archive Service had been judged as a four star service and as such, was one of the leading local authority archive services in England and Wales retaining its tenth position within the Local Authority League tables.

It was noted that the Archive Service participated in the national survey of visitors to British Archives in February 2011. The survey was run under the auspices of the Public Services Quality Group: Quality Forum for Archives and Local Studies, and it was carried out every 18 months. The statistics were interpreted and externally validated by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance (CIPFA).

Twelve individual areas of service provision and delivery were covered by the survey, so provided regular trend data for the Service over a period of time. The ratings allocated by the respondents were: very good; good; adequate; poor; and very poor. In calculating its overall customer satisfaction rating, the Service combined the very good and good ratings.

The Chairman asked that the Committee's compliments be passed to staff for all their hard work, ensuring the service continues to be an excellent, high performing valued service. The Chairman also requested a press release to publicise these excellent results to a wider audience and highlighting the impact on the local economy in attracting visitors to Staffordshire.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

6. Joint Archive Service - Outturn 2010/11

The Committee considered a joint report of the County Council's Director of Finance and Resources and the City Director of Central Services presenting the final outturn for the Joint Archive Service for 2010/11.

The outturn showed that the service had spent £1,122,690 compared with an approved budget of £1,156,550, giving an underspend of £33,860 which was transferred to the General Reserve at the end of the financial year. The General Reserve had a balance of £99,204, of which £42,000 had already been earmarked for Alterations / Environmental Controls at Stoke - £30,000; Staff reduction costs - £9,000; Exhibition costs – Staffordshire Hoard - £3,000.

They noted that approval was sought to earmark an additional sum of £25,000 to progress preparatory work and associated costs for improvements to Stoke's basement strongroom.

The Archive Acquisition Reserve had a balance of £66,114 towards the purchase of new collections for the benefit of archive users in the County and City. The Committee were reminded that the Joint Archives Committee was required to complete a "Small Bodies in England Annual return for the year ended 2011", but the return had not yet been received. Therefore it was agreed that the Small Bodies Return would be signed by the Chairman for submission as soon as it was received and completed.

RESOLVED – (a) That the report be received.

(b) That the sum of £25,000 be earmarked to progress preparatory work and associated costs for improvements to Stoke's basement strongroom.

(c) That approval be given for the Chairman to sign the completed Small Bodies Return for submission, as soon as practicable.

7. Date of next meeting - 22 November 2011

RESOLVED – That the next meeting of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Archive Committee be held on Tuesday 22 November 2011 at 10.30 am at the City Centre Library, Bethesda Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 3RS.

Chairman