

**Minutes of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Archives Committee
meeting held on 7 December 2011**

Present: Pat Corfield, Gwen Hassall, Liz Staples (Substitute) and Simon Tagg (Observer)

Apologies for absence: Ian Parry

PART ONE

8. Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16

None at this meeting.

9. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2011

The Committee noted that Ms. Ruth Rosenau had been identified as a second elected member, as substitute, to represent the Stoke-on-Trent City Council in the event that Mrs. Hassall was unavailable, but would only assume voting rights in Mrs. Hassall's absence.

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2011 be agreed and signed by the Chairman.

10. Predicted Outturn 2011-12

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Finance and Resources and the City Director of Central Services detailing the current predicted outturn for the Joint Archive Service for 2011/12 (Schedule 1 to the signed minutes).

Members noted that the latest revenue outturn forecast showed a predicted underspend of £6,777 which would be transferred to the General Reserve at the end of the financial year. The current balance on the General Reserve was £96,204 of which £64,000 had already been earmarked. In total the Committee were asked to agree earmarking £64,000 towards the following:

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| Alterations/Environmental Controls at Stoke | £55,000 |
| Staff reduction costs | £9,000 |

The Archive Acquisition Reserve had a balance of £63,814 towards the purchase of new collections.

RESOLVED – (a) That the report be received.

(b) That the sum of £64,000 be earmarked from the General Reserves for; alterations / environmental controls at Stoke; and staff reduction costs.

11. Review of Fees and Charges 2012-13

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director for Place and Deputy Chief Executive and the Director of Adult Social Care, Health and Communities (Schedule 2 to the signed minutes) detailing proposed amendments to the scale of fees and charges to be applied by the Joint Archive Service with effect from 1 April 2012.

The Archive Service fees and charges had been reviewed on an annual basis for a number of years to allow the Service to adapt its services according to demand and cost of provision. The review was intended to be a balanced approach which encourages use of the services whilst still ensuring that income was generated to support the running of such services. The Head of Archive Services detailed the key amendments to the fees and charges to the Committee.

The Committee noted that the standard sources for income generation for the Archive Service were: a range of copying services; the sale of photographic permits; research, transcription and certification services; sales of publications; donations; and fees for talks by and group visits to the Archive Service. Several new fees had been introduced to add a variety of options for the service and maximise resources.

The proposed fees and charges detailed in the report were recommended for approval as they represent a fair and reasonable increase.

RESOLVED – That the fees and charges detailed in Appendix 2 of Schedule 2 to the signed minutes be approved for introduction by the Joint Archive Service from 1 April 2012.

12. Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive Service Restructure

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director for Place and Deputy Chief Executive and the Director of Adult and Neighbourhood Services (Schedule 3 to the signed minutes) detailing the new staffing structure to be implemented from 1 April 2012 and the potential cost savings that will be achieved.

The Service had reviewed the senior management structure of its Staffordshire sites in December 2010 and realised significant savings and efficiencies. The purpose of the current restructure was to implement the results of a review of the structure and functions below this level. Changing patterns of public usage and demand had created an opportunity for the Archive Service to deliver further savings in addition to those identified in the MTFs by streamlining delivery of services and changing opening hours. It had also allowed the Service to remove duplications across services and identify synergies between Staffordshire Arts and Heritage and Staffordshire Library and Information Services.

The Committee noted the details of the restructure including a review of: staffing related to the opening hours reductions; and the functions across the service to identify savings and implement new working practices to continue to deliver services to meet user demand.

RESLOVED – that the new staffing structure be implemented from 1 April 2012 and the savings achieved be noted.

13. Designation of Collections

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director for Place and Deputy Chief Executive and the Director of Adult and Neighbourhood Services (Schedule 4 to the signed minutes), updating them on the successful achievement of receiving Designated Status.

In March 2010 the County Archivist brought a report to the Committee regarding the proposal to submit an application for Designated Status for the entire Archive Service collections to the Museum, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). The final stage two application was submitted in March 2011 and covered over 7,000 unique archive collections dating from the 10th to the 21st centuries, reflecting virtually every aspect of life in Staffordshire. These collections equate to approximately 5 miles and about 11,000,000 items. Taken together, the collections demonstrate an outstanding combination of range, depth and richness, reflecting past life in the County over 1000 years.

In August 2011 the MLA confirmed their decision that Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive Service Collections should be awarded Designated Status for their outstanding quality and significance. The news was announced in press releases by MLA and the County Council. The Archive Service is one of only three local authority services to hold this status for its entire collections, and it was noted that it was not removed unless the collections were split up.

The Chairman asked that the congratulations of the Joint Archive Committee be passed to all involved in the submission. The Head of Archives confirmed that a letter of congratulations' had already been sent to Mrs. Thea Randall, the former County Archivist who had retired in March 2010.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

14. Date of next meeting - 23 February 2012

RESOLVED – That the next meeting of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Archive Committee be held on Thursday 23 February 2012 at 10.30 am at the County Records Office, Eastgate Street, Stafford.

Chairman

Documents referred to in these minutes as Schedules are not appended, but will be attached to the signed copy of the Minutes of the meeting. Copies, or specific information contained in them, may be available on request.