

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

## **Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Joint Archive Committee 21 November 2013**

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### **Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service: Review of Fees and Charges 2014-2015**

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

1. That the fees and charges proposed in Appendix two to this report be approved for introduction by the Joint Archive Service from April 2014.

#### **Report of Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Place (Staffordshire County Council) and Director of Adult and Neighbourhood Services (Stoke on Trent City Council)**

#### **Reasons for Recommendations**

2. The Archive Service fees and charges have 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 proposed fees and charges are recommended for approval as they represent a fair and reasonable increase.

#### **Background**

3. The standard sources for income generation for the Archive Service are: 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. In addition from 2014 the Archive Service will benefit from income from its partnership with a commercial provider to make key archive collections available online. Each year the Service reviews its fees and charges based on the economic climate and take up of its services.

4. The review is intended to be a balanced approach which encourages use of services whilst still ensuring that income is generated to support the running of such services.

5. When the fees and charges were reviewed in 2012 some fees were held and others were increased where an increase had not occurred for some years. There was a substantial review of scanning and photography services and this has partly contributed to an increase in income of 50% for the first half of the financial year. Other factors were the legal requirements for landowners and churches to register certain property interests by October 2013. This

prompted several large photography orders. This year see some minor increases to some fees including:

- Introduction of a quick research fee
- Single marriage bond search fee
- Increase to the first copy price for the postal photocopy service
- Increase to the first copy price the postal micro print service
- Withdrawal of the duplicate parish register fiche service from 31 March 2014
- Increase to fees for talks and visits

6. A quick research fee is proposed to encourage more income from dealing with short requests to locate single entries in collections held by the Archive Service. This was considered as an alternative source of income to increasing the standard research fee. The research service struggled to meet its income target and it is hoped that this new quick service will encourage more orders. The same principle is being applied to the marriage bond search service.

7. The increase to the first copy price for the postal photocopy and microprint service is proposed to help cover increases to postal costs and staff time in dealing with the orders.

8. In line with the Joint Archive Committee's agreement last year the duplicate parish register fiche service will be withdrawn on 31 March 2014. The contract to digitise parish registers has been signed and so this service is no longer required as the information will be available online.

9. The talks and visits fees have been held since 2008 and this year an increase is proposed to take account of increased staff time and travel costs. The Service will retain discretion to reduce the fee where appropriate for certain groups.

10. The review has been carried out following a benchmarking exercise with neighbouring archive services and in consultation with frontline staff. In addition each year the Archive Service carries out a consultation forum with a mix of archive users, partners and stakeholders within the service.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Equalities implications:**

In reviewing its fees the Archive Service has continued to maintain its lower research fee for people with disabilities.

### **Legal implications:**

The content of this report complies with the joint agreement governing the work of the Joint Archive Service.

### **Resource and Value for money implications:**

Overall the Joint Archive Service has income targets of £48, 870 which breaks down to £7,550 for the City service and £41,320 for the County service.

This report introduces new fees which offer more choice for users of the service and also represent good value for money.

### **Risk implications:**

At this point in the year income is just under target for research and photocopying at Stafford. Income for photography and publications is above target at Stafford and income from photocopying at Lichfield Record Office is exceeding targets at the moment. This will be used to offset underperformance in other areas of income.

### **Climate Change implications:**

No significant implications.

### **Health Impact Assessment screening:**

No significant implications.

## **Appendix Two**

### **Review of Fees and Charges 2013-2014 – attached to report**

#### **Report author:**

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## List of Background Papers

Papers	Contact/Directorate/ext number
Joint Archive Service Scale of Fees and Charges, 2013/2014	Joanna Terry/Place/ x8370
Orders and income ledgers, 2013/2014	