

Local Members' Interest

N/A

**STAFFORDSHIRE AND STOKE-ON-TRENT JOINT ARCHIVES COMMITTEE
17 JUNE 2010**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES AND CHIEF
EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE AND THE DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE,
HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES**

**STAFFORDSHIRE AND STOKE-ON-TRENT ARCHIVE SERVICE:
ANNUAL REPORT 2009-2010**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To present to the Joint Committee the report on the work of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (Joint) Archive Service for the period April 2009 to March 2010.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The accompanying Annual Report provides an account and review of the work and performance of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive Service for the financial year, April 2009 to March 2010.
- 2.2 The Annual Report demonstrates a productive year for the Joint Archive Service in terms of its performance, achievements and other activity. The most notable successes have been: the Staffordshire Quarter Sessions cataloguing project, funded under the National Cataloguing Grants Scheme; the launch of Staffordshire Name Indexes Online; a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Children on the Move project; and the major 'Discovering the Past' exhibition, mounted at the Nicholson Institute in Leek.
- 2.3 The Service made good progress in all its core areas of activity: improving access to collections; the public services; cataloguing; learning; preservation; and conservation. It was a particularly successful year in terms of outreach working with some very positive outcomes for communities. An important new initiative was the implementation of an ongoing survey of records of sports organisations, developed as part of the 2012 Olympics Legacy.
- 2.4 Personal visits to the Service were down by 6%, a trend common to most archive services, although it is pleasing to note that new user numbers were maintained. However, despite recent upward trends, use of the Service's online resources also saw a downturn.

- 2.5 The Annual Report expands of all of this activity. Detailed progress against the targets set in the Service's Implementation Plan for 2009-2010 has already been reported to this Committee at its meeting on 16 March 2010.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the Annual Report for the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive Service, 2009-2010, be received as a record of the performance of the Service in the year under review.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The terms of the Joint Agreement for Archive Services between Staffordshire County Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council require an annual report on the work of the Joint Archive Service to be brought to the Annual Meeting in June. The Annual Report also provides the means by which the Committee can be presented with a full overview and be informed of the full range of activities, progress and performance of the Service over the whole of a year.

- 4.2 The main functions of the Archive Service are the location and acquisition of archive collections; their preservation and conservation; the provision of a wide range of public and learning services to enable the use of collections; developing and encouraging the use of collections; and the promotion of the service through a wide range of outreach activity.

- 4.3 The year 2009-2010 was the first in the current three-year planning cycle for the Joint Archive Service. The year's Annual Report shows both positive achievements and steady progress towards meeting the overall strategic objectives of the Archive Service within the current Forward Plan, 2009-2012. These objectives are:

- To put the customer at the heart of service delivery.
- To build upon our innovative online presence
- To engage with Staffordshire's communities to strengthen their sense of identity and place
- To engage people of all ages in activities which celebrate and discover Staffordshire's history
- To continue to build a well-managed and high performing service
- To improve and promote user access to collections
- To deliver high quality care of our irreplaceable archive collections

- 4.4 In terms of external assessment, there was no National Archives Assessment of Local Authority Archive Services in 2009, so the four-star rating for the Service, achieved in the 2008 assessment, is still in place. The Service will be reassessed in 2010/2011.

4.5 The Joint Archive Service produced good performance results against its local targets for public service delivery and achieved a 98% customer satisfaction rating in the national Survey of Visitors to British Archives carried out in June 2009.

4.6 It was a very active year in terms of online developments, notably the online publication of a major new name index site, and in outreach work. Other areas of notable progress included further inroads into the cataloguing and conservation backlogs. Volunteer and partnership working remained strong throughout the year and it is pleasing to record a total of 4,155 hours of volunteer activity across the Archive Service.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The final net revenue outturn for the Joint Archive Service is the subject of a report elsewhere on this agenda.

6. PERSONNEL AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the personnel and equal opportunities' policies of the County Council and the City Council.

7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The work of the Joint Archive Service, as detailed in the Annual Report, is carried out within the framework of existing archive and other related legislation.

Helen Riley, Director of Communities and Chief Executive's Office
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Background documents: Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive Service: accessions registers; cataloguing record sheets; public service and monitoring statistics, 2009-2010; results of public service surveys, 2009/2010; customer comment forms 2009-2010; conservation records, 2009-2010; Implementation Plan monitoring reports, 2009-2010.