

Local Members Interest
N/A

Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Joint Archive Committee – Thursday 03 March 2022

Review of Joint Agreement for Archive Services

Recommendation(s)

That the Committee approves:

- a. The proposed changes as set out in section 3 of this Report.
- b. The amendments to the agreement are made and agreed in writing by both local authorities.
- c. That the next review of the agreement will take place at the February meeting of the Committee in 2025.

Report of Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities (Staffordshire County Council) and Director of Strategy and Resources (Stoke-on-Trent City Council)

Reasons for Recommendations:

1. The Joint Agreement for Archive Services enables Staffordshire County Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council to discharge their functions with regard to archives through the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive Service. The Joint Archives Committee exercises delegated powers in respect of archive functions in the County and the City within an annual budget approved annually by both authorities. The Agreement prescribes those functions and lays down the standing orders and financial procedures to which the Joint Committee is subject.
2. The current Joint Agreement was reviewed by the Joint Archives Committee on 7 February 2019 and executed in July 2021. The duration of the Joint Agreement was for an initial three year period until 31 March 2022 and will automatically extend every three years unless the provisions of the Joint Agreement are followed to terminate the Agreement. There is provision for termination by either authority at three years' notice or by mutual agreement at any time.

Proposed amendments to Joint Agreement

3. Under clause 5 - Staffing, the job titles of officers in the two local authorities to be amended as follows:
 - a. For Staffordshire County Council, the "Head of Archive Services" to be updated to "Head of Archives and Heritage".
 - b. For Stoke-on-Trent City Council, "Strategic Manager – Museums, Archives and Culture" to be updated to "Strategic Manager – Customer Services and Communities".
 - c. For Stoke-on-Trent City Council, "City Archivist" to be updated to "Archive Services Manager".

4. Under clause 8 - Financial, the job titles for the relevant corporate directors for the two authorities concerning finance to be amended as follows:
 - a. Staffordshire County Council's director updated to "Director of Corporate Services"
 - b. Stoke-on-Trent City Council's director updated to "Director of Strategy and Resources"

5. In Appendix 4 of the agreement, the job title of the Archivist to the Committee to be updated to "Head of Archives and Heritage".

6. In Appendix 6, the job titles of the employee roles included within the core budget of the Core budget will be updated. For Staffordshire County Council this reflects the implementation of the new structure in May 2021 and includes: Head of Archives and Heritage, Collections Manager, Engagement and Access Manager and Conservator. For Stoke -on-Trent City Council this includes: Archive Services Manager.

7. The functions and operations of the Joint Agreement (sections 3 and 4) are unchanged. However, within the next three years Staffordshire Record Office will change to Staffordshire History Centre upon its completion.

Next steps and future review

8. The Joint Agreement is currently working well for both parties and at this time, save for as set out above, no further changes are required.

9. Subject to approval by the Committee of the changes set out above, the legal officers of both authorities will arrange for the changes to be made to the agreement. The legal officers for both local authorities have recommended a review every three years to ensure the agreement reflects current arrangements for both parties.

Legal Implications

The Joint Archives Agreement enables both local authorities to discharge their functions with regard to archives through the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive Service. The proposed changes have been reviewed by both authorities' legal officers.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

Under the Joint Agreement the Archive Service budget is agreed by the Joint Archives Committee. The joint service shares the conservation function and online catalogue providing value for money for both partners. Each authority funds the operation of its own sites within the agreement.

Climate Change Implications

The Joint Agreement does not specifically reference Climate Change. The provision of a joint service with a single online offer promotes a sustainable service.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Joint Archives Agreement

Contact Details

Assistant Director: Janene Cox, Assistant Director -Culture, Rural and Safer Communities.

Report Author: Joanna Terry
Job Title: Head of Archives and Heritage
Telephone No.: 01785 278370
E-Mail Address: joanna.terry@staffordshire.gov.uk