

Local Members Interest
N/A

Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Joint Archive Committee - 20 November 2014

Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service: Review of Fees and Charges 2015-2016

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 2015.

2. Report of Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Place (Staffordshire County Council) and Assistant Chief Executive (Stoke on Trent City Council)

Reasons for Recommendations

3. 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

4. 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 has benefitted 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.

5. 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.

6. This year the main change to the fees and charges has been the increase of the research fee. This fee is the basis for other charges and means there have been increases to other fees summarised below:

- Research fee
- Quick research fee and Hospital Records search fee
- Marriage bond search fee
- Certification fee
- Aligning photocopy and scanned images charges
- In house photography charge
- Publication fees

6. Take up of the quick research service has shown an increase in the number of orders. The research fee has not been increased for three years and comparisons with other archive services have shown scope for increasing the charge. This increase affects the other search fees and photography charges.

7. The photocopy and simple scanning service has been reviewed and the charges brought in line to ensure a consistent offer for users and simplify copy services. With the implementation of e-payments and improved copying equipment there is increasing demand for digital images rather than hard copies. A faster and more reliable service can be provided by emailing images instead of relying on the postal service, and reduces postal costs for the Service.

8. It is too soon to see what impact the digitisation income will make on existing sources of income but it is anticipated that traditional sources of income such as photocopies, printouts and some research requests will decline as people access material directly online. This will be monitored over the next year with digital income proposed to be used to offset these falls.

9. The publication fees have also been reviewed and increased this year. Requests to reproduce items from collections can be time consuming involving clearing permissions with document owners and often responding at short notice. The fees charged for commercial use have been increased to take account of these factors. The community publication fees have been held to continue to support local groups who use our collections to promote awareness and understanding of the history of the county.

10. The review has been carried out following a benchmarking exercise with neighbouring archive services and in consultation with frontline staff.

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 under target for research and photocopying at Stafford. Income for photography is on target at Stafford and income from photocopying at Lichfield Record Office is also on target. Other sources of income include the vending machine at Stafford, charges for storage of Public Records transferred early and for provision of conservation training for other archive services. These areas will help to contribute to income targets.

Climate Change implications:

No significant implications.

Health Impact Assessment screening:

No significant implications.

Appendix Two**Review of Fees and Charges 2015-2016 – 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, 2014/2015	Joanna Terry/Place/ x278370
Orders and income ledgers, 2014/2015	