



## Joint Archives Advisory Board

Minutes of the meeting held at Upton House, Upton,  
Poole, BH17 7BJ on Thursday, 25 January 2018

### Present:

Mohan Iyengar (Chairman)  
Marion Pope, Patrick Oakley, Hilary Cox, Richard Biggs and Toni Coombs

Officers Attending: Medi Bernard (Library Service Manager), Neil Goddard (Service Director - Community Learning and Commissioning), Sam Johnston (County Archivist), Paul Leivers (Assistant Director - Early Help and Community Services), Kevin McErlane (Head of Community Culture and Learning), Michael Spender (Museum and Arts Manager), Rachel Vincent (Accountant) and Denise Hunt (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

(Note: These minutes have been prepared by officers as a record of the meeting and of any decisions reached. They are to be considered and confirmed at the next meeting of the Board)

### Election of Chairman

- 1 **Resolved**  
That Mohan Iyengar be elected as Chairman of the Board for the remainder the year 2017/18.

Following his appointment, the Chairman expressed his thanks for the work of the outgoing Chairman, Hilary Cox.

### Appointment of Vice-Chairman

- 2 **Resolved**  
That Patrick Oakley be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Board for the remainder of the year 2017/18.

### Apologies for Absence

- 3 An apology was received from Christopher Rochester (Bournemouth Borough Council).

### Code of Conduct

- 4 There were no declarations by members of disclosable pecuniary interests under the Code of Conduct.

### Minutes

- 5 The minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2016 were confirmed and signed.

### Dorset History Centre - Capital Project Update

- 6 The Board considered a report that updated members on the capital project to expand the Dorset History Centre (DHC) that had been the subject of an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

The Board heard that the application to the HLF had been submitted in August 2017 and was subsequently refused in December 2017. The response by the HLF in rejecting the bid had been outlined in the report. Whilst the amount of planning and consultation that had been carried out was commended, there had been less risk and urgency with regard to the collections at the DHC when compared to other bids considered on the day. A further supplementary factor may have been the significant investment in Dorset by the HLF in recent years and the requirement for the National HLF Board to share its funding equitably across the country.

The HLF had advised against resubmitting a bid prior to the development of a new strategic plan to take effect in 2019 and had suggested that smaller 'Our Heritage' applications to test out elements of the proposed activity plan might be one way forward. However, this would not meet the costs of a capital scheme outlined in the original bid.

The County Archivist advised the Board that the bid had formed a major piece of work for the DHC team over a 6 month period and the documents would be repurposed for future bid applications. There had been other benefits arising from this work, including exploring other sources of funding and the establishment of a relationship with Bournemouth University that would continue into the future. He reported that, as a result of ongoing work to identify energy efficiencies, engineers had advised that relatively small mechanical units could be installed within the repositories to provide heat and dehumidification at a very small percentage of the energy that was currently used. This would allow removal of the original, much larger plant in the roof space as well as ducting throughout the repositories that would create additional storage space internally at a cost that was likely to be lower than that of extending the building.

Members discussed whether the match funding that had been set aside for the HLF bid could meet the costs of this proposal or whether further funding from the HLF or other national bodies might be applied for. It was suggested that, a contribution from Bournemouth Borough Council and Borough of Poole or crowd funding activity could be necessary.

Members were informed that accurate costings could be reported back to the Board and that the exploratory work would need to be completed soon as the match funding of £882k for the HLF bid was being held by Dorset County Council (DCC) for a period of 6 months. Referring to the example of successful crowd finding (which realised £8,000) outlined in the report, the County Archivist felt that the much larger amount of funding required for the capital project would make crowd funding prohibitive and that a new funding bid to the HLF or to other trusts and foundations would be preferable at this stage.

The Board expressed its thanks to the DHC team for the work involved in the bid and members recognised that it had been rejected as other bids considered by the HLF at that time were for projects that were more vulnerable and required urgent funding. Members were supportive of ways of increasing space in the existing building and considered that the general principle of looking at alternative sources of funding other than the HLF had a sound basis. They further suggested that use of buildings within the DCC estate could be explored, particularly in light of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and that future bids for community engagement could be made in conjunction with Bournemouth and Poole councils which would strengthen the Joint Archives Service (JAS) as a whole.

The County Archivist explained that previous investigation of commercial out stores in 2012 had proven worse value for money than extending the DHC building, but this could be revisited in future if required.

Members considered option 1 that had been recommended in the report and an amendment was made to remove the word "national" to allow maximum funding opportunities from the regional HLF committee. It was confirmed that the energy saving measures and reconfiguration of the internal floor space could be accommodated within this option.

The Head of Community Culture and Learning asked whether future storage needs could be reassessed in light of digitisation.

The County Archivist responded that it was not standard archival practice to create a digital record and then to destroy historic archives, as the original would always act as the authentic version for legal purposes. The current accession rate had not dropped in recent years and was unlikely to do so due to the likelihood of acquisitions generated as a result of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

### **Resolved**

1. That Option 1 in paragraph 4.2 of the report as amended by the Board be supported:- *“After seeking further advice from HLF relating to scale and timing and addressing their minor reservations about the original application, a new bid is put together which will be re-submitted to the Board of HLF at an appropriate time”*. to allow the Joint Archives Service (JAS) further time to establish the best way forward for this project following a full review of the HLF’s feedback and advice;
2. That a further report is submitted on the costs of a new energy system and conversion of the space used by the existing plant to create additional storage space is provided at the next meeting; and
3. That work is undertaken with relevant officers to identify any new properties that could be used for external storage in future, particularly as a result of LGR.

### **Reason for Decision**

To meet the reporting and decision making requirements of the Joint Archives Agreement, 1997.

### **Joint Archives Service (JAS): Volunteer Policy 2018**

- 7 The Board considered a report that sought the Board’s approval of a revised JAS Volunteer Policy that had been updated with the aim of acquiring “Investors in Volunteers” (IiV) accreditation by May 2018.

Improvements had been made to the policy including greater clarity on relationships, roles and responsibilities, equality & diversity, the involvement of younger people, the recruitment process, confidentiality and data protection.

The Board debated the issue of volunteer expenses which was an expectation of the IiV accreditation. There was no budget for volunteer expenses and the way in which this could be funded was currently being investigated. A survey would shortly be undertaken of the current volunteers in order to arrive at an estimated cost.

The County Archivist advised that approval of the policy at this stage would assist with the accreditation and assured members that, whilst understanding the concerns, payment of expenses was seen as best practice and was unlikely to be greater than £2-3k per year.

Members discussed whether to approve the policy having identified expenses as a budgetary risk, with some considering that a decision on the policy should be deferred until the volunteer survey had been completed. It was concluded that volunteer expenses could be appropriately managed according to the available budget and a further suggestion to review the expenses on an annual basis was supported by the Board.

The Library Service Manager suggested that the policy incorporated volunteers working in heritage across Bournemouth and Poole as a route for sharing skills and recruitment.

### **Resolved**

1. That the Volunteer Policy 2018 be approved as an important factor in providing consistent and professional service delivery and as a vital building block in the process of applying for Investors in Volunteers;
2. That the Board considers a report on the cost of volunteer expenses, following the

- volunteer survey, at its next meeting; and
3. That volunteer expenses are monitored by the Board on an annual basis in order to review any trends and budget implications.

Reason for Decision

To meet the reporting and decision making requirements of the Joint Archives Agreement, 1997.

**Joint Archives Service (JAS): Service Plan (2014-17) Monitoring Report and Service Plan 2018-2021**

- 8 The Board considered a report outlining developments within the JAS Service Plan since the last meeting on 31 October 2016.

The County Archivist outlined the report and the red and amber risks contained in the action plan.

Noted

**Joint Archives Service (JAS): Budget Monitoring Report and Budget 2018/19**

- 9 The Board considered a report on the outturn of the JAS in 2016/17, the current budget position including reserves and offered a suggested provisional budget for 2018/19.

The County Archivist outlined the impacts on the 2018/19 budget, the most significant arising from the rise in business rates and the 2% national pay award. A modest increase of 1.74% increase in the JAS budget was therefore proposed, equating to an overall increase of £9,400 across the 3 councils. Initial discussions with officers had indicated that this could be accommodated.

Resolved

1. That the current financial positions and budget strategies of the three councils going forward be noted;
2. That the efforts made by the JAS to reduce costs and to manage its finances to deliver the best outcomes for both funders and users of the service be noted; and
3. That the budget for the financial year 2018/19 be approved.

Reason for Decisions

To meet the reporting and decision making requirements of the Joint Archives Agreement, 1997.

**Date of Next Meeting**

- 10 A Board meeting would be convened in June 2018 to consider the following matters:-

- Evaluation of the costs of work to the DHC building to remove the existing energy system and to create additional storage space.
- The costs of volunteer expenses.
- To discuss any joint agreements that will be necessary due to Local Government Reorganisation.

Meeting Duration: 10.00 am - 11.30 am