



Joint Archives Advisory Board

Minutes of the meeting held at the
Dorset History Centre, Bridport Road, Dorchester
on Wednesday, 6 June 2018

Present:

Hilary Cox (Vice-Chairman in the Chair)
Marion Pope, William Trite and Peter Wharf

Officer Attending: Sam Johnston (County Archivist), Paul Leivers (Assistant Director - Early Help and Community Services), Michael Spender (Museum and Arts Manager, Borough of Poole), Rachel.Vincent (Accountant, Dorset County Council) and Helen Whitby (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

- 11 **Resolved**
That Councillor Patrick Oakley be elected as Chairman for the year 2018/19.

Appointment of Vice-Chairman

- 12 **Resolved**
That Councillor Hilary Cox be appointed as Vice-Chairman for the year 2018/19.

Terms of Reference

- 13 **Resolved**
That the Board's terms of reference be noted.

Apologies for Absence

- 14 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Challinor, Toni Coombs, Patrick Oakley and Christopher Rochester and from Medi Bernard (Library Service Manager, Bournemouth and Poole Libraries), Neil Goddard (Service Director - Community Learning & Commissioning, Bournemouth Borough Council) and Kevin McErlane (Head of Culture and Community Learning, Borough of Poole). Councillor Peter Wharf attended as a reserve member.

Code of Conduct

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

Minutes

- 16 The minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2018 were confirmed and signed.

Matters Arising

Minute 6 - Dorset History Centre - Capital Project Update

A member referred to the recent successful Heritage Lottery Fund bid by the Dorset County Museum and a recent bid from Durlston Country Park and suggested that any information arising from these processes be shared with the Joint Archives Service (JAS) in the hope of increasing chances of successful future bids. The County Archivist explained that steps were taken to ensure that any bid from the JAS did not compete against any other bid from Dorset and that he would contact officers at Durlston Country Park about their bidding process.

Minute 7 - Joint Archives Service - Volunteer Policy 2018

The County Archivist was pleased to inform members that the JAS had been accredited as "Investors in Volunteers" and offered to share the experience with others.

Dorset History Centre - Capital Project Update

17 The Board considered a report by the Transformation Programme Lead for the Adult and Community Forward Together Programme which gave an update on the work undertaken by the Joint Archives Service (JAS) towards a new and costed solution to the requirement for additional storage provision for archives following rejection of the Heritage Lottery Funding bid in December 2017.

The County Archivist highlighted the uncertainty around Local Government Reform and that there was only sufficient archive space for the next two to three years. Whilst lessons had been learned from the unsuccessful Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF) bid their strategic plan was currently being reviewed and any further bid would need to be made in light of this. He then explained ongoing work to identify ways of increasing storage space, reducing energy costs, maintaining preservation standards and the costs involved. Any HLF bid would need to be match funded and this would need to be progressed through the County Council's Managing Our Assets Group. The Board was asked to consider two options; either to carry out further work on the two possible schemes to increase storage at the Dorset History Centre (DHC) or abandon these schemes in favour of exploring options for commercial out-storage. The first option would provide the best long-term solution and involved least cost to the three authorities and provide more benefits for residents.

Currently approximately 1,000 storage boxes were received annually and the forthcoming changes to Local Government could increase this figure when councils ceased to exist in 2019. No assumptions were being made about the new Unitary Authority's stance on the JAS but members agreed that it was important for the newly elected councillors to be given information about the Service and its performance. It was suggested that this could be done as part of members' induction programme.

Members noted that work was progressing to ensure that the business plan was sound and that this would need to be considered by the Shadow Council's Executive.

Councillor John Challinor's support for the recommendations was reported.

Resolved

That Option 1 in paragraph 6.2 of the report be supported. This would allow the Joint Archives Service further time and resources to establish the best option to pursue that would deliver long-term, secure storage for archives on-site.

Reason for Decision

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

Joint Archives Service: Service Plan 2018-21 and Budget Monitoring Report

18 The Board considered a report by the Transformation Programme Lead for the Adult and Community Forward Together Programme which gave an update on developments within the Joint Archives Service (JAS) service plan since the last meeting. An updated service plan was included in the report.

Attention was drawn to: continuing pressure on accommodation for storage; uncertainties around changes to Local Government; the variety of work undertaken by JAS officers; increased used of Archive collections by academics and students in higher education; the progress with a partnership agreement for a digital preservation

platform which would reduce costs; volunteer contributions to the JAS; the completion of the Bankes Project in December 2018; the Bankes Conference was taking place in Wimborne on 16 June 2018 and the Chairman of the Heritage Lottery Funding south West was attending; the bid to the Wellcome Trust for £60k to work on the Herrison archive had proceeded to the second round; the JAS had received national accreditation from The National Archives and this would be reviewed in three years and a new application made in six years' time; and the summary of the budget position. Some of the current reserves of £163k would need to be used to undertake further work to the JAS building to deliver any changes and support Dorset Property to take any work forward. The Chairman highlighted that the JAS was within budget.

With regard to the Service Plan, of the 27 workstreams identified 24 were on track (Green rating), 2 had some minor slippage (Tithe map geo-rectification project and commissioning of archive services) (Amber rating) and one had delays, serious problems or was not being achieved (capital project; extension of the Dorset History Centre Building) (Red rating). Members acknowledged that the rejection of the Heritage Lottery Funding bid had led to the only red rating and were informed that the two amber rated projects were to be progressed. A brief explanation of the work involved in the Herrison Archives was given.

Councillor John Challinor's support for the recommendations was reported.

Resolved

1. That the implementation of the new service plan appended to this report as demonstrating the quality and value for money provided by the Joint Archives Service be supported.
2. That the range of positive and innovative collections, learning and engagement-related work undertaken by the Joint Archives Service be noted.
3. That the relatively small size of the Joint Archives Service staffing structure means that any future budget reductions will have a direct and clear impact on the service's ability to deliver the service plan be noted.

Reason for Decisions

Effective oversight of the regular service delivery element of the service plan by the Joint Archives Advisory Board was required under the terms of the Joint Archives Agreement 1997.

Meeting Duration: 2.00 pm - 2.45 pm

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