



Joint Archives Board

Date: Monday, 16 January 2023
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: A link to the meeting can be found on the front page of the agenda.

Members (Quorum: 2)

Laura Beddow, Richard Biggs, Simon Christopher, Lesley Dedman, Beverley Dunlop and Marion Le Poidevin

Chief Executive: Matt Prosser, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic Services Meeting Contact 01305 224710 - joshua.kennedy@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting, apart from any items listed in the exempt part of this agenda.

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Agenda

Item		Pages
1.	APOLOGIES	
	To receive any apologies for absence.	
2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
	To disclose any pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interest as set out in the adopted Code of Conduct. In making their disclosure councillors are asked to state the agenda item, the nature of the interest and any action they propose to take as part of their declaration.	
	If required, further advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.	
3.	MINUTES	5 - 10
	To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 November	

2022.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Representatives of town or parish councils and members of the public who live, work, or represent an organisation within the Dorset Council area are welcome to submit up to two questions or two statements for each meeting. Alternatively, you could submit one question and one statement for each meeting.

All submissions must be emailed in full to joshua.kennedy@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on Wednesday, 11 January 2023.

When submitting your question(s) and/or statement(s) please note that:

- no more than three minutes will be allowed for any one question or statement to be asked/read
- a question may include a short pre-amble to set the context and this will be included within the three-minute period
- please note that sub divided questions count towards your total of two
- when submitting a question please indicate who the question is for (e.g. the name of the committee or Portfolio Holder)
- Include your name, address and contact details. Only your name will be published but we may need your other details to contact you about your question or statement in advance of the meeting.
- questions and statements received in line with the council's rules for public participation will be published as a supplement to the agenda
- all questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

Dorset Council Constitution Procedure Rule 9

5. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

Councillors can submit up to two valid questions at each meeting and sub divided questions count towards this total. Questions and statements received will be published as a supplement to the agenda and all questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

The submissions must be emailed in full to joshua.kennedy@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk 8.30am on Wednesday, 11 January 2023.

Dorset Council Constitution – Procedure Rule 13

6. URGENT ITEMS

To consider any items of business which the Chairman has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The reason for the urgency shall be recorded in the minutes.

7. BUDGET 2023/24 AND SERVICE RESERVES

11 - 20

To consider a report by the Service Manager for Archives and Records and the Service Manager (Finance).

8. EXEMPT BUSINESS

To move the exclusion of the press and the public for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered.

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JOINT ARCHIVES BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2022

Present: Cllrs Laura Beddow, Richard Biggs, Simon Christopher, Lesley Dedman, Beverley Dunlop and Marion Le Poidevin

Apologies: Cllrs

Also present: Carola Campbell (Chairman Dorset Archives Trust)

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Lisa Cotton (Corporate Director for Customer and Cultural Services), Sam Johnston (Service Manager for Archives), Matti Raudsepp (Corporate Director Customer and Business Delivery, BCP Council), George Dare (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Joshua Kennedy (Apprentice Democratic Services Officer) and Paul Ackrill (Service Manager (Finance))

1. **Apologies**

There were no apologies.

2. **Appointment of Chairman**

Proposed by Cllr Dunlop and seconded by Cllr Biggs.

Decision:

That Cllr Beddow be appointed as Chairman.

3. **Appointment of Vice-Chairman**

Proposed by Cllr Beddow and seconded by Cllr Dedman.

Decision:

That Cllr Dunlop be appointed as Vice-Chairman.

4. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest to report.

5. **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

6. **Questions from Councillors**

There were no questions from councillors.

7. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

8. **JAS Service Plan (2021-26) Monitoring Report**

Members received a presentation from the Service Manager for Archives and Records regarding the monitoring report for the JAS Service Plan (2021-26). This report was the first update to the Joint Archives Board on the current and future work of the Joint Archives Service.

The service manager went through the key points from the report and presented them to the board, noting the particular successes of the Joint Archives Service. The service manager highlighted the large increase in public engagement with the service, both in person and through remote inquiries. Members attention was also drawn to the effectiveness of the use of social media and the newsletter to distribute information to the public. The increased community engagement was noted, specifically the success of the Kushti Bok application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the wide-reaching impact of the service, despite its small team of staff.

Members were made aware of the progress made around the use of digital preservation and the transfer of digital records from BCP Council into the Joint Archive Service's Preservica system, as well as the challenges of working across two different councils.

The service manager also highlighted the importance of the Dorset Archives Trust, which has allowed the service to purchase certain collections and improve the range of the archives.

A councillor raised concerns about whether the level of public engagement justified the costs of the service to the council.

In response to a question regarding concerns about the cost of the JAS, the service manager for archives and records reassured members that the cost of the service was becoming less strenuous as the service moved away from paper records and towards digital records, with the ultimate ambition to automate the service and therefore reduce the cost of staff considerably.

The service manager also responded to a question from a councillor about the different record keeping systems used by Dorset and BCP councils.

Proposed by Cllr Biggs and seconded by Cllr Dedman.

Decision:

That:

- a) The implementation of the 2021-2026 plan appended to this report as demonstrating the quality and value for money provided by the JAS, be endorsed;
- b) The range of positive and innovative work undertaken by the JAS be noted;
- c) The Board supported the JAS's ongoing work to ensure the safe and effective transfer of appropriate physical and digital records from both the BCP and Dorset Councils to ensure the preservation of the corporate memory and to deliver council efficiencies.

9. **Capital Project Update**

The Service Manager for Archives and Records delivered an oral presentation to members regarding an update on the capital project, consisting of the application to the National Heritage Lottery Fund, in order to expand the capacity of the Joint Archives Service following an unsuccessful application in 2017.

Members were made aware of the benefits of receiving lottery funding for the Joint Archives Service and the importance of expanding the services capacity to store more records, as well as the work being done regarding public engagement, which is needed in order to be eligible for the grant.

The service manager clarified for members that the project being undertaken is to extend the current site, rather than building a new site for storage.

The board noted the progress made towards developing an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and noted the deployment of the JAS reserves to support work on the Lottery application.

10. **Joint Archives Service: Fees and Charges 2023/24**

The Service Manager for Archives and Records delivered a presentation on the report for fees and charges, which provided a review of fees and charges in regard to new products and re-pricing together with recommendations for changes in Joint Archives Services fees and charges to take effect on 1 April 2023.

The service manager went through the key points from the report, outlining the 5% increase in line with Dorset Councils recommendation, however noted that the service wished to serve customers in an affordable manner, while still being able to fund the service sufficiently.

Members raised concerns about the rise in charges and the fact that some charges had increased more than 5% hoping this would not decrease public engagement with the service, however, were aware that due to financial pressures from inflation this was a necessary response. Members were also informed that increased charges had only been implemented, where there were inflationary pressures, or the service had been improved.

One member questioned what benchmarking the service had done to come to a final decision on the fees and charges and was informed that the service had used fees from Dorset Museum and other South West archive services as benchmarks for deciding on fees and charges for 2023/24.

Proposed by Cllr Biggs and seconded by Cllr Dedman

Decision:

That the implementation of the fees and charges 2023/24 (set out in appendices 1-2) be recommended to executive bodies of the two funding councils.

11. **Exempt Business**

Proposed by Cllr Biggs and seconded by Cllr Dedman.

Decision:

That the press and the public be excluded for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 4 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The Chairman closed the public part of the meeting and the live stream of the meeting ended.

12. **Budget Monitoring 2022/23 and Provisional Budget 2023/24**

The board received and considered a report of the Service Manager for Archives and Records regarding the 2022/23 budget and the provisional budget for 2023/24.

Members asked questions of the officers and made comments on the report.

Proposed by Cllr Dedman and seconded by Cllr LePoidevin.

Decision:

That:

- (a) The draft budget for 2023/24 be approved.
- (b) The budget pressures for 2023/24 and the options detailed in the report be acknowledged.
- (c) Option 1 be the preferred option of the Board.
- (d) The Board receives a further update and final budget in January 2023.
- (e) The Board notes the reserves budget and requests further options to be brought forward in the January budget report for retaining reserve amounts and options for returning a remainder amount to each council.

Duration of meeting: 2.00 - 3.29 pm

Chairman

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Joint Archives Board 16 January 2023 Budget 2023/24 and Service Reserves

For Decision

Portfolio Holder: Cllr L Beddow, Culture, Communities and Customer Services
Cllr B Dunlop, Cabinet member for Culture and Vibrant Places, BCP Council

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director: J Sellgren, Executive Director of Place

Report Authors: Sam Johnston
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Paul Ackrill
Service Manager (Finance)
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Report Status: Public

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Board:

- (i) Acknowledges the JAS budget pressure for 2023/24 of an additional £44,000 noting both councils' budget strategy statements in section 4 and approves the suggested uplift.
- (ii) Agrees a position in respect of the service reserve. Officer recommendation is for Option 2 – retention of £50,000 of the current reserve (**section 6**).

Reason for Recommendation: To meet the reporting and decision-making requirements of the Inter-Authority Agreement on Archives, 2022

1. Executive Summary

At the last business meeting of the Joint Archives Advisory Board (14 November 2022), the Board discussed the options for the JAS's budget in the financial year 2023/24. These were:

- (i) An inflationary uplift of £44,000 apportioned between the two funding councils
- (ii) A service review whose minimum saving would need to be £44,000.

Since the last meeting of the Joint Archives Advisory Board (14 November 2022), central government has published the local government finance settlement for 2023/24 (on 19th December 2022). There are no new implications arising that affect the proposed JAS budget for 2023/24. The financial implications for 2023/24 therefore remain as they were and are repeated below.

2. Financial Implications

The proposal for 2023/24 is for a net expenditure budget of £613.1k, in comparison to the current year (2022/23) JAS budget of £568.9k, an increase of £44.2k or 7.7%. The reasons for the increase (pay costs and energy inflation) are discussed below.

The apportionment of costs between Dorset Council and BCP Council is based on the respective population base of the two council areas. At the time of writing, official ONS population figures are unchanged, with BCP Council at 396,989 (51.11%) and 379,791 for Dorset Council (48.89%), with funding contributions based on these percentages for each council. These are as follows:

- The 2022/2023 BCP council contribution is £290.7k in the current year. If the increase in net budget for 2023/24 is agreed by the Board, the BCP contribution would increase to £313.3k, an increase of £22.5k.
- The 2022/2023 DC council contribution is £278.2k in the current year. If the increase in net budget for 2023/24 is agreed by the Board the DC contribution would increase to £299.9k, an increase of £21.7k.

3. Well-being and Health Implications

None

4. Environmental implications

None

5. Other Implications

None

6. Risk Assessment

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: **MEDIUM**
Residual Risk **MEDIUM**

The JAS has always operated within its budgetary means and will strive to maintain this position over a long period of standstill budgets. The demands on the budget, explored below, require that inflationary are costs are met either via an additional financial injection from partner councils or by identifying where to reduce staffing levels and service levels. The longer-term challenge for the service will be how to fund the revenue

cost of external storage for archives in the event that additional on-site accommodation cannot be provided via a capital scheme.

7. Equalities Impact Assessment

The JAS has completed a full EQIA. Areas for further consideration include working with younger people and with black and ethnic minority groups and religious minorities. Improved digital provision will also assist in providing greater access to collections for people living at some distance from Dorchester.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1: Joint Archives Service Budget Estimate 2023/24

Appendix 2: JAS reserves March 2022

9. Background Papers

None

1. Background

- 1.1 At its meeting in November 2022, the Board discussed a provisional budget for the JAS in the financial year 2023/24. In order to maintain the current service level an uplift of £44,200 would be required. The Board requested that a further consideration of the JAS's budget was undertaken once the local government financial settlement had taken place. In addition, the Board requested a short options appraisal in relation to the JAS's financial reserve. This is provided in **section 6**.
- 1.2 The current (2022/23) budget apportionments for the two councils are as detailed below:

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council	£290,748
Dorset Council	£278,152
Total	£568,900

- 1.2 The JAS has had standstill budgets for **seven** of the previous **nine** financial years. In real terms using RPI, this represents a reduction of budget of circa 26% since 2012 during that period. In addition, a full audit of the service's activities and costs undertaken in 2015 by South-West Audit Partnership acknowledged that the service had worked hard to examine and reduce every area of spend on the one hand and to increase income generation wherever possible on the other (e.g. room hire, car parking, leasing space, added value public services).

2. Value for Money and Service Capacity

- 2.1 It is difficult to say with precision where the JAS currently stands in terms of value for money relative to other archive services. CIPFA benchmarking services no longer operates, although it is likely that a version of this statistical comparator function will be taken on by The National Archives. In previous years, the service was consistently the cheapest service across the South-West and Hampshire in terms of net expenditure per 1000 population.
- 2.2 The JAS has worked hard to manage its costs and has managed through a combination of electricity generation via solar PV panels and a shift to passive strongroom management to reduce its overall energy costs by around 65%. Additional solar arrays have been fitted to the roof of DHC in 2022 funded through government renewable energy grants.
- 2.2 The staff establishment stands at 11.67 full time equivalent posts. The National Archives described the 2011 structure proposal as "very close to the minimum for a viable service". TNA's November 2021 accreditation feedback noted that "*the Panel were also impressed by the considerable achievements of the service relative to budget and staffing capacity*". The JAS has been operating at a relatively low staffing capacity for some years but has been able to appoint staff

to externally funded project posts as well as generate large quantities of volunteer capacity. The service has demonstrated its ability to innovate, generate (external) income and maintain customer satisfaction and quality of service.

- 2.3 In addition to its revenue contribution, Dorset Council has to date met all capital and improvement costs associated with the Dorset History Centre. This has amounted to more than £747,000 over the course of the last ten complete financial years. Most recently, the service has received £200,000 investment to create a largely passive repository preservation environment. Further capital investment will be required moving forwards to maintain a viable service. The JAS benefits from the leasing of space within the DHC building to two other services. This contributes £23,000 per annum to the archive service budget. Prior to Local Government Reorganisation, Dorset County Council invested £77,500 in solar panel (photovoltaic - PV) installation. The depreciation cost on the value of the DHC building is in excess of £100,000 per year.
- 2.4 Like all public services, the March 2020 coronavirus pandemic hugely impacted the JAS. In terms of income, throughout 2022 the service has continued to experience reductions in its income derived from room hire, photographic permits and parking. Remote orders for digital copies remained strong as people worked from home, although the service's ability to deal with them was limited by staff absence from the building.
- 2.5 Since 2010, the JAS has acquired nearly £765,000 in external grant aid to fund cataloguing and public engagement projects. Other funding applications are under consideration.

3. Current year financial position

- 3.1 The current forecast for 2022/23 is for the Joint Archives Service to have very minimal variance from the budget as set at the start of year. However, this headline position masks variances and uncertainty within the detailed budget lines as set out below.
- 3.2 The national pay award was budgeted at 2.5% and was agreed on 2 November as a cash uplift of £1,925 per post. This added an unbudgeted cost of circa £22k to the outturn.
- 3.3 The JAS budgets include expenditure lines for gas and electricity used at the Dorset History Centre. Dramatic increases in utility costs have been well documented in recent times. As of October, DC prices have increased significantly (although not reported here due to commercial sensitivity). The effect of any capping scheme from central government cannot be known with certainty due to very recent changes in central government, nonetheless, it is expected that JAS utility costs will be several thousand pounds higher than last year.
- 3.4 However, vacancies have created savings in the salaries budget, which are expected to broadly offset the overspends set out above.

- 3.5 Any underspend or overspend at year will be added to, or deducted from, the reserve, as appropriate.

4. Budget Strategies of the Two Funding Councils

4.1 **Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council:** BCP Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and 2022/23 budget setting process remains challenging with large scale funding gaps to close from the increase in demand for services and growing inflationary pressures, with the pandemic still having a significant impact on both. Uncertainty continues from the delay in the local government fair funding reforms and the council not yet receiving multi-year funding settlements. The local cost of implementing the government's 10-year vision to improve adult social care is also a significant unknown. Against this background, financial planning is an evolving process and the MTFP is regularly refreshed over a 5-year planning horizon to establish the size of the funding gaps each year and reflect the outcome from strategies developed to close them. These strategies include detailed base budget reviews as well as undertaking an ambitious programme of transformation to unlock significant savings and improve services through new corporate structures and more efficient ways of working.

4.2 Dorset Council: financial position for current year and outlook

As at quarter 2, Dorset Council is reporting a forecast overspend of circa £8m. A significant element of this overspend relates to general economic conditions, with pressure on wages, third party contractual obligations and direct purchases such as vehicle fuel all significantly higher than the budgeted position due to the national inflation situation. Many of these items are expected to continue to impact on the 2023/24 position in addition to pre-existing pressures in areas such as Adult Services and SEND within Children's Services. As such, services are expected to (as a minimum) absorb any in year financial pressures or growth, as there are expected to be insufficient funds for the corporate centre to allow growth beyond allowing for pay award and some minimal non-pay inflation.

5. Budget 2023/24

5.1 At the time of writing, there is much uncertainty which prevents setting a budget with complete certainty of costs:

- The 2023/24 pay award is not confirmed and any assumption could be considered as more risky than usual given the wider economic climate.
- For non-pay, general inflation is high with varying predictions for 2023/24
- The picture for utility costs is unclear

5.3 Nonetheless, the JAB will need to consider the 2023/24 budget proposal in light of the assumptions that we are using at the time of writing. The proposed budget is shown at Appendix 1.

5.4 It can be seen there is minimal allowance for inflationary growth other than pay and utility costs. There is also a corporate approach across DC that all fees and charges are increased by at least 5%.

- 5.5 The service will continue to examine all areas of spend, to minimise costs and to generate income wherever possible.
- 5.6 The budget shortfall can be met either through an appropriately apportioned uplift from the two funding councils or a service review leading to staffing reductions.

6. Reserves

- 6.1 The attached Appendix shows recent movements in the reserve and the current balance, which is just over £143k after commitments for initial consultancy work on the Dorset History Centre extension/redevelopment.
- 6.2 The reserve is held by DC but is jointly owned by both DC and BCP, with ownership being in accordance with the population percentages set out earlier. At its November meeting the Board requested a short options appraisal related to the reserve. This is provided below:
 - 6.2.1 **Option 1: Maintain the reserve at £20,000 and return the balance of £123,046 to the partner councils: £62,877 (51.1%) to BCP and £60,189 (48.9%) to DC.**
 - 6.2.2 **Option 2: Maintain the reserve at £50,000 and return the balance of £93,046 to the partner councils: £47,547 (51.1%) to BCP and £45,499 (48.9%) to DC.**
 - 6.2.3 **Option 3: Maintain the reserve at £100,000 and return the balance of £43,046 to the partner councils: £21,997 (51.1%) to BCP and £21,049 (48.9%) to DC.**
 - 6.2.4 **Option 4: Maintain the full reserve currently at £143,000 and do not return any funds to partner councils at this stage.**
- 6.3 When considering the options above, the JAB is asked to consider the relative levels of reserve in relation to the size of the overall operational budget and in particular the levels of risk and uncertainty in the current wider economic climate e.g. in relation to the pay award, general inflation costs and utility costs.
- 6.4 It is also the case that should the JAS's NLHF capital project application progress to the second (Development) phase it is certain that additional consultancy support will be required to help shape and build the case for funding. If the reserve is maintained then it will provide a vital resource to draw upon which will support and enable the project without further requests for project funding being necessary. Given the level of inflationary pressure and the potential demands of the capital project it is likely that much of the current reserve if it is retained by the JAS will be called upon to support the service.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The JAS provides excellent value for money, generates significant income and delivers high quality work and projects. Understanding the future funding scenario for the service is critical to its ability to best plan its future and to assess and prioritise its functions. In order to maintain this level of service and to

address the inflationary pressures faced by all services, a critical decision is required of the Board.

- 7.2 The Board's support and guidance in terms of the JAS's future funding in relation to the expectations placed upon it will be critical in how the service develops over the forthcoming years and in particular how it addresses its long-term strategic future. There are clear opportunities to improve the JAS and DHC through external funding but these are contingent upon having a stable core of professional staff to manage and lead the service. The JAS will continue to strive to provide excellent value for money combined with high quality service for the funding councils, the public and the collections it manages.

John Sellgren, Executive Director for Place

Aidan Dunn, Executive Director for Corporate Development

January 2023

Appendix 1

	Budget 2019/20	Budget 2020/21	Budget 2021/22	Budget 2022/23	Proposed Budget 2023/24
	£	£	£	£	£
Internal Charges (Expenditure)	80,900	53,300	59,900	62,300	62,300
Pay Related Costs	378,300	435,100	418,300	439,200	477,600
Premises Related Costs	142,300	139,300	139,700	141,800	146,700
Transport Related Costs	2,700	2,500	2,000	1,500	1,600
Supplies & Services	23,100	15,200	20,000*	26,000	29,600
Fees & Charges	-31,800	-48,400	-42,200	-56,800	-59,600
Internal Charges (Income)	-44,700	-46,200	-46,900	-45,100	-45,100
Net Budget	550,800	550,800	550,800	568,900	613,100

**JAS Reserves at 31 March
2022**

<u>2021/22 RESERVES</u>	GENERAL	REPAIRS & MTCE	DONATIONS	PROJECTS	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
<u>B/fwd as at 31/3/2021</u>					
Uncommitted	178,809	14,896			193,705
Committed			43,280	26,784	70,064
<u>Movement in Year</u>					
Revenue Surplus 2021/22	9,237			15,497.00	
Revenue Deficits 2021/22		-4,094		-20,190	
Donations Received					
Reserve Balance	188,046	10,802	43,280.00	22,091.00	264,219.00
<u>Less Commitments</u>					
Donations (ring-fenced)			-43,280		
Projects				-22,091	
Repairs & Maintenance		-10,802			
Capital Projects	-45,000				
UNCOMMITTED RESERVES	143,046	0	0	0	143,046

Footnote:

Issues relating to financial, legal, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.