



Joint Archives Board

Date: Monday, 5 February 2024
Time: 11.00 am
Venue: A link to the meeting can be found on the front page of the agenda.

Link to view the meeting: <https://youtube.com/live/PvqCJdASmSk>

Members (Quorum: 2)

Laura Beddow (Chairman), Richard Biggs, Simon Christopher, Lesley Dedman, Marion Le Poidevin and Andy Martin

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 - 8

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2023.

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 either 1 question or 1 statement for each meeting. You are welcome to attend the meeting in person or via MS Teams to read out your question and to receive the response. If you submit a statement for the committee this will be circulated to all members of the committee in advance of the meeting as a supplement to the agenda and appended to the minutes for the formal record but will not be read out at the meeting. **The first 8 questions and the first 8 statements received from members of the public or organisations for each meeting will be accepted on a first come first served basis in accordance with the deadline set out below.**

Further information read [Public Participation - Dorset Council](#)

All submissions must be emailed in full to Joshua.kennedy@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on Wednesday 31 January 2024.

When submitting your question or statement please note that:

- You can submit 1 question or 1 statement.
- A question may include a short pre-ambule to set the context.
- It must be a single question and any sub-divided questions will not be permitted.
- Each question will consist of no more than 450 words, and you will be given up to 3 minutes to present your question.
- 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.

5. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

To receive questions submitted by 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 by 08:30am on Wednesday 31 January 2024.

[Constitution - Dorset Council](#) – 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 AND UPDATE REPORT

9 - 12

To consider a report from the Service Manager for Archives and Records.

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 x 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.

There are no exempt items scheduled for this meeting.

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JOINT ARCHIVES BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2023

Present: Cllrs Laura Beddow, Richard Biggs, Lesley Dedman and Marion Le Poidevin

Present remotely: Cllrs Simon Christopher and Andy Martin

Also present: Carola Campbell (Dorset Archives Trust)

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

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

21. **Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence.

22. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

23. **Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 16 January 2023 were confirmed and signed.

24. **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

25. **Questions from Councillors**

There were no questions from Councillors.

26. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

27. **Joint Archives Service: Budget Monitoring and Budget 2024/25 Report**

The Joint Archives Service Budget for 2024/25 was presented by the Service Manager for Archives and Records. He explained that the current budget of

£613,107 would be retained for 2024/25 and that there would be a requirement to reduce outgoings by £50,000 to adhere to this budget. The cost saving would come primarily from the removal of a job position following the upcoming retirement of the Officer Manager. The duties of the Officer Manager would then be distributed among other areas to cover the work with buildings-related functions largely transferring to DC's Effective Property Management team. The Board were also informed that this was the 8th standstill budget in 10 years.

The Corporate Director Customer and Business Delivery, BCP Council delivered a verbal update on the budgetary position for BCP Council. He noted that it was in a similar position to Dorset Council, with heavy budgetary pressures and that it was necessary to support the standstill budget for the Joint Archives Service.

In response to a question from a member, the Service Manager for Archives and Records stated that, although it would be difficult to manage the workload of the Officer Manager after the post is removed, it would not have a detrimental impact on the services provided or the users of the service.

The board were supportive of the 2024/25 budget proposal and commended the Joint Archives Service for adhering to another standstill budget.

Proposed by Cllr Dedman and seconded by Cllr Biggs.

Decision: That the proposed budget for 2024/25 and savings as detailed in the report be approved.

28. **Capital Project Update**

The Service Manager for Archives and Records provided a verbal update on the Capital Project. Due to the service coming close to reaching its capacity, there is a need for further storage. It was determined that the most cost-effective solution was to extend the History Centre to create more space for storing archives and that an application would be made to the National Lottery Heritage Fund to secure partial funding for this project.

It was explained that in order to receive funding from the Lottery, that match funding would have to be approved by Cabinet in their January meeting. If this were unsuccessful then an alternative solution would be required.

Members expressed support for the Capital Project and hoped that funding would be approved by Cabinet in January, so that an application for Lottery funding could be made. This was likely to take the form of a commercial storage provider. A revenue budget would be required in order to fund an expanding quantity of material held off-site.

The board noted the Capital Project update.

29. **Joint Archives Service Development Plan (2021-26) Monitoring Report**

The Service Manager for Archives and Records presented the Development Plan (2021-26) Monitoring Report. He highlighted the key points from the report,

including the need to improve acquiring records from both BCP and Dorset Council.

Several members expressed concern over the current issues the Joint Archives Service was facing in acquiring records and it was determined that an update on this matter would be provided at the next Joint Archives Board meeting.

The Service Manager for Archives and Records also highlighted the proposed period of closure that would take place in January for two weeks, to allow the Service staff to carry out important work that they are unable to do when the History Centre is open to the public.

Members were supportive of the idea of a small closure period to allow the staff to carry out important work, in order to improve the Service and would monitor the success of the closure period.

Proposed by Cllr Le Poidevin and seconded by Cllr Dedman.

Decision: That the Board:

1. Endorsed the implementation of the 2021-2026 service plan appended to this report as demonstrating the quality, variety and value for money provided by the JAS;
2. Supported the JAS's ongoing work to ensure the safe and effective transfer of appropriate physical and digital records from both BCP and Dorset Councils to ensure the preservation of the corporate memory and to deliver council efficiencies.
3. Approved a two-week closure period for the JAS in January 2024 to allow for important collections-related work to take place.

30. **Joint Archives Service: Review of Fees and Charges**

The Service Manager for Archives and Records presented the proposed fees and charges for the Joint Archives Service to take effect 1 April 2024. It was explained that the fees and charges were set to increase broadly inline with the Dorset Council recommendation of 5% and some charges had increased more or less, where appropriate.

In response to a question from a member, the Service Manager stated that there had not been public consultation with users of the JAS, however many members of the public were happy to pay for the service.

Proposed by Cllr Beddow and seconded by Cllr Le Poidevin.

Decision: That the revised fees and charges be recommended to the executive bodies of the two funding councils for implementation from 1 April 2024.

31. **Joint Archives Service: Review of Policies**

The Service Manager for Archives and Records provided a verbal update on the review of JAS policies. He explained that the policies had last been reviewed 6 years ago and small changes had been made where necessary. The policies were

designed with keeping them free of too much technical language and were intended to be intuitive.

Several members of the Board commended the use of clear and plain language within the policies and the fact they were easily accessible. The Service Manager also confirmed that the policies had been approved by a Dorset Council Equalities Officer.

The Board endorsed the policies as set out within the report.

32. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 11.30 am - 12.14 pm

Chairman

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Joint Archives Board 5 February 2024 Budget and Update Report

For Decision

Portfolio Holder: Cllr L Beddow, Culture and Communities
Cllr Andy Martin, Customer, Communications and Culture, BCP Council

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director: A Dunn, Executive Director, Corporate Development

Report Author: Sam Johnston
Title: Service Manager for Archives and Records
Tel: 01305-228929
Email: sam.johnston@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary: The Joint Archives Board (JAB) met last on 8 November 2023. It was agreed that following further analysis of the councils' financial positions the Board would need to reconvene in the New Year in order to confirm the service's budget for 2024/25. In addition, an update on the status of potential capital match funding to support an approach to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) is provided along with developments in a few key areas of the Joint Archives Service's work since the last meeting.

It is recommended that the Joint Archives Board:

1. Support the JAS's 2024/25 draft budget for adoption by both funding councils. This is a cash standstill budget with contributions from the two councils remaining at the same level as 2023/24.
2. Notes the recommendation by Dorset Council officers of a match funding contribution of approximately 10% of the required project total (financial year 2026/27) opening up the potential for an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.
3. Notes the positive news relating to service delivery by the Joint Archives Service.

Reason for Recommendation:

To comply with the terms of the *Inter-Authority Agreement on Archives (2022)*.

1. Background

The Joint Archives Board last met on 8 November 2023. This report provides an update on two key financial matters as well as notable developments within the service.

2. Budget 2024/25

At its meeting of 8 November, the Joint Archives Board recommended a cash standstill budget, subject to further analysis of each council's budget position. This would, if approved by the two funding councils maintain the service's funding at the current (2023/24) level:

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council	£313,298
Dorset Council	£299,809
Total	£613,107

As detailed to the JAB in November, in order to achieve this, a saving of £50,000 will need to be made. Work has been undertaken and is ongoing to ensure that the service meets the required figure. Following further work within the Finance teams of both councils, it has been possible to confirm that the JAS budget can be maintained at the proposed level, i.e. a cash standstill. It is therefore suggested that the Board recommends this to both Councils for confirmation.

3. Capital project

At its November meeting, the Board was updated on the current status of the long-standing work to provide additional appropriate accommodation for archives. The current storage position is becoming extremely tight with c. 5% available space remaining for physical archives. Members were updated on discussions within Dorset Council relating to the allocation of capital match funding. The Council's capital programme is under huge pressure. However, following a separate but related discussion with the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), it was agreed that a minimum contribution of 10% from the Council (in the 2026/27 financial year) might be acceptable, if complemented by a significant fundraising programme led by the service.

The Council's capital programme board (CSAM – Capital Strategy and Asset Management Group) has endorsed this approach and has allocated the sum of £540k for the financial year 2026/27. At the time of writing the proposal still requires endorsement by Dorset Council's Cabinet on 30 January and Full Council on 13th February. If the Cabinet approves the proposal, the JAS will be in a position to re-visit the capital project scheme, review content, schedule and costs, and re-engage in meaningful dialogue with NLHF and its new strategic plan [Heritage 2033](#) by submitting a refreshed Expression of Interest.

4. Closure period

The JAB approved a two-week closure period (re-named 'Collections Weeks' to underline the key purpose) for the Joint Archives Service so that staff could focus on activities that were not possible whilst simultaneously delivering public service. This period (15-26 January) is still underway at the time of writing, but initial indications are that the time has proven hugely valuable to staff in addressing areas of work that had in some cases built up over many years. All JAS staff have been involved in one way or another. In addition, a significant number of volunteers have offered time and input to the work. To date (23 January) the following has been achieved:

- Boxes stock-checked and fully audited: 1,750
 - 25 boxes with contents that have been permanently re-housed or re-associated with collections
- New accessions processed: 80
- New accessions catalogued: 50
- Digital archives ingested/uploaded to digital preservation system: 1718 files, 76GB
- Volunteer hours: 234 hours contributed over the period
- C.1200 Ordnance Survey maps organised, sorted and checked
- Other jobs completed including:
 - organisation and consolidation of display materials
 - catalogue consolidation
 - work to add material to RONS
 - library audit work

A fuller report on the closure period will be provided at the JAB's next meeting along with any learning taken from it. Initial findings however suggest that this has been a hugely positive experience for both staff and volunteers. It has allowed the team to address backlogs which could not have been achieved in any other way. Most importantly, it means that the collections the public require the service to produce to them are now in a better order, so aiding that process. If the Board approves, it is suggested that this 2-week focus on collections becomes part of the service's annual programme of work.

5. Thomas Hardy archive project

Since the last meeting of the JAB, the service has successfully completed the fundraising (just under £70k) required to catalogue the archive of Thomas Hardy. A successful application to the Alice Ellen Cooper-Dean Charitable Foundation was complemented by a contribution of £9k from the National Trust. The JAS has formed a very useful partnership with the West Dorset National Trust which will outlive the life of the project and lead to a long-term mutually beneficial relationship where the archives will be used to support interpretation and exhibition at the Bockhampton Cottage and at Max Gate (now known as 'Hardy's House'). A member of the NT's paid staff will join the project for a day a week work alongside the archivist and conservator to learn about conservation and collections management.

An archivist has been appointed to lead the project and they will be taking up their post in early March. A stakeholder group made up of organisations with a key interest in the collection will be formed to support the project and to identify applications for the archive.

Sam Johnston

Service Manager for Archives and Records

January 2024