

# **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL CHESHIRE WEST & CHESTER COUNCIL**

## **SHARED SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE**

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**Date of Meeting:** 24 November 2017

**Report of:** Archives and Local Studies Manager

**Subject/Title:** Archives Update

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### **1.0 Report Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a progress update in relation to the Archives Project.
- 1.2 This report provides the information that the shared service is required to provide to the Shared Services Joint Committee and/or Joint Officer Board under the Shared Services Agreement.

### **2.0 Decisions Requested**

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the report and comment on its contents.

### **3.0 Update on the Archives**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The requirement to relocate the Archives and Local Studies Service has been recognised by both authorities and a new future service delivery model agreed. This model sees two new history centres being established in Chester and Crewe, alongside improved service delivery in libraries, extended online services and a more extensive activity and event programme. This paper sets out the current position and envisaged timeline for this project.

#### **3.2 Current position**

Both Councils' Cabinets have now approved the allocation of specific sites to the project as the location of the planned history centres in Crewe and Chester, namely the 'old Library' site in Crewe town centre and the site of the former Enterprise Centre in Hoole, Chester. Terms of reference for the project have also been agreed and will be reviewed following the first stage of the project.

At the September Shared Services Joint Committee meeting, it was reported that the Cheshire West and Chester Cabinet decision was subject to a Call-In. The call-in members stated that the Conservative Group remains fully supportive of the 10 year vision for CALS [Cheshire Archives and Local Studies], with the reasons for the Call-In being to challenge that the Enterprise Centre site

1. is the best and most suitable site to enable to delivery of the vision for the service;
2. offers the option best able to deliver value for money to the taxpayer;
3. provides the most effective and integrated outcomes within the wider policy framework of Cheshire West and Chester Council.

The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 9 October and made the following recommendations:

1. The Cabinet decision made 13 September 2017 proceeds
2. As the business case develops the Project Board
  - a. Undertakes a full evaluation of the Enterprise Centre site
  - b. That a reconciliation of a conflict with the Chester Transport Plan takes place
3. That a cross-party member working group be established for the new history centre
4. Capital costs for all [Chester] sites should be circulated to members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
5. The date when the Enterprise Centre site was identified as surplus should be circulated to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee members.

A cross-party member working group was considered by the project's Portfolio Board. As a result a member workshop will be held early in 2018 to update members on progress and consultants' work to date.

### **3.3 Development of external funding bid**

In order to progress this project the service will need to secure funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The service is currently in the process of recruiting external specialist support to progress the external funding bid. These commissions will be to

- a. Undertake the design work around the preferred sites
- b. Engage new audiences to understand their needs and develop an outline activity programme
- c. Develop exhibition and interpretation proposals to help to bring the collections to life and tell the story of the county
- d. Write an outline business plan to demonstrate the sustainability of the service delivery model
- e. Support the writing of the funding bid itself

From the list of commissions above, b-e have all been appointed and work is underway, including the formulation of an engagement plan to ensure that the service takes on board the views of as wide a range of people as possible prior to submitting the funding bid. A report on these commissions will be brought to Shared Services Joint Committee on their completion.

The recruitment of a design team is underway, this process taking longer owing to the larger value of the commission. It is anticipated that the commission will

begin in January and the approach taken will ensure consistent delivery of this strand of work in the future, subject to satisfactory performance and funding.

### **3.4 Financial position**

Funding is in place to deliver the commissions outlined in 3.3. It is anticipated that the project will be in budget at the end of 2017/18. Funding to match the development stage of the project (2018-2020) is in place within the Councils' capital programmes and permission to accept and spend a grant from HLF, should the application be successful, has been secured in both Councils.

### **4.0 Timetable**

4.1 A project plan has been developed and an indicative summary timetable is as follows:

Activity planning (procurement to completion)	July 2017 – Feb 2018
Interpretive planning	July 2017-Feb 2018
Funding bid development	Aug 2017-May 2018
Sites confirmed and allocated	Sep 2017
Building design work	Jan-Mar 2018
Business planning	Oct 2017 – Apr 2018
Cost plans developed	Jan-Apr 2018
Round One funding bid submitted	Jun 2018
HLF Decision	September 2018
Development phase	Winter 2018-Autumn 2020
Round Two HLF submission	Autumn 2020
HLF Decision	Winter 2020
Delivery phase	Winter 2020 – Autumn 2022

It is now anticipated that a funding bid to HLF will be submitted in June 2018. This has been pushed back three months in the light of procurement decisions in relation to the design work for the new facilities, which would enable to project to progress to delivery phase, subject to satisfactory performance of the appointed design team and future funding.

### **5.0 Wards Affected**

5.1 This report relates to Shared Services that operate across both Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester so all wards are affected in both Councils.

### **6.0 Local Ward Members**

6.1 Not applicable.

### **7.0 Policy Implications**

7.1 None.

## **8.0 Other Options**

8.1 None.

## **9.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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### ***Background Documents:***

*Documents are available for inspection at:*

*Cheshire East Democratic Services*

*Westfields*

*Middlewich Road*

*Sandbach*

*CW11 1HZ*