



# Joint Archives Committee

27 October, 2004

## Action Plan 2002 – 2007 – Storage

**ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (REGENERATION): TIM WHITE**

### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1 To advise Members on the proposals for additional storage resources to meet and to implement the recommendations of both The National Archive inspection and the NEMLAC external consultants report.

### **BACKGROUND**

- 2 At the meeting of this committee on 6 May 2004 it was agreed that projected costs would be identified and brought for members consideration.

The inspection reports identified three key issues to be addressed:

Staffing  
Storage  
Management

This report discusses the second of these - storage.

The inspection reports clearly indicate that storage levels are inadequate for the future development. Current storage capacity is at approximately 95 % with the recent acquisition from ICI (250 linear metres). There are currently 3000 linear metres of shelving with approximately 200 available for future requirements.

On average acquisitions total 105 linear metres per year. This means that capacity is likely to be reached within the next 2 – 3 years. There is therefore a need to identify and evaluate the two options:

- a) Install rolling stack shelving into existing building  
This could increase storage capacity by up to 50% per room retaining the current level of public access to records. This option is subject to the floor loading being suitable. A programme of installation could be agreed over a number of years thus spreading the capital costs. (paragraph 10 for costs)
- b) Investing in off-site storage  
This would release space in Exchange House thereby increasing capacity by 33%. Full costs would need to be found from the start, revenue growth would be required. (paragraph 11 for costs)

In considering the options a number of issues need to be taken into account. These are set out below.

- a) The storage of archives is regulated by BS 5454 in terms of environmental control and security.
- b) Compliance with Health and Safety requirements for staff accessing records.
- c) Access to documents for both staff and public in terms of speed of response to demand.
- d) Teesside Archives enjoys a national reputation for full access to public records (where permissible by law).

It would be possible to create an off-site store, there are currently 1278 linear metres of storage containing documents not consulted on a regular basis. These include a proportion of documents with restricted access, for example coroners reports, adoption records, court reports. However, staff access is required as the Courts / Coroner can call for these documents at any point during a hearing/case. There would be revenue budget implications in terms of staff time and transport costs to retrieve documents. There are also capital costs in the environmental and security requirements. Off-site storage would mean a reduction in service from that currently provided in terms of public access to records

### **OPTION APPRAISAL/RISK ASSESSEMENT**

- 3 The adoption of the Action Plan is in line with the requirements to retain the appointment of a place of deposit as delegated by The National Archives. The continuation of this appointment will rely on reasonable improvements and developments being in place in line with past recommendations. The withdrawal of the appointment means that the service would not be able to hold deposited public records under Section (I) of the Public Records Act 1958. These include records of local courts, hospitals and health Authorities and Coroners.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4 Indicative costs are presented to demonstrate the financial implications of increasing storage capacity.

a) Indicative costs for three rooms on the first floor storage areas are in the region of £60,000. This would be capital and apportioned as follows:

	£	%
Hartlepool	10200	17
Middlesbrough	15600	26
Redcar and Cleveland	14400	24
Stockton-on-Tees	19800	33
	60000	100

b) Indicative costs for rental of 'off-site' storage are in the region of £30,000 per annum, based on rental of £6 per square foot and a requirement of 5000 square feet. This would be apportioned as shown below. There would also be capital costs to ensure that BS5454 standards are maintained. An indicative cost would be the £70,000 recently spent installing a sprinkler system in Exchange House.

	£	%
Hartlepool	5100	17
Middlesbrough	7800	26
Redcar and Cleveland	7200	24
Stockton-on-Tees	9900	33
	30000	100

## **BUDGET SETTING PROCESS**

5 The projected costs will need identifying in the capital bid process for each authority.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

6 That members

- a) approve further investigation with final costs being brought to a future meeting
- b) note the potential financial implications and accept for consideration within each authority for implementation in 2005/07.
- c) approve the further research into identifying external funding sources.

## **REASONS**

6 The recommendation is supported for the following reason

- a) The adoption of the Action Plan is in line with the requirements to retain the appointment of a place of deposit as delegated by The National Archives.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**Appendix A Teesside Archives Action Plan 2002 – 2007**  
HMC report, PRO inspection

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