

**JOINT ARCHIVES COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Joint Archives Committee was held on Wednesday 6 March 2024.

**PRESENT:** Councillors S Nelson, P Brown and P Gavigan

**OFFICERS:** R Horniman, T Connor, G Kirby, J McNally and M Ramsey

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** R Hobbins, L Case, A Brook and P Storey

23/27 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Name of Councillor	Type of Interest	Item/Nature of Interest
Councillor Steve Nelson SBC	Non-Pecuniary	Agenda Item 4 & 5 Member of TVCA Overview and Scrutiny Board

23/28 **MINUTES OF THE JOINT ARCHIVES COMMITTEE - 19 OCTOBER 2023**

The minutes of the Joint Archive Committee held on 19 October 2023 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

23/29 **TEESSIDE ARCHIVES EXECUTIVE REPORT**

The Creative Programmes and Partnerships Manager was in attendance and presented the Executive report to the committee.

The report outlined the following:

- Collections
- Public Access and Outreach
- Conservation and Preservation
- Digital Preservation
- Marketing and Communication
- KPIs
- Future Development of the Service

The Creative Programmes and Partnerships Manager highlighted the following from the report:

**Public Access and Outreach**

The service continued to be very busy, and sessions had been developed to cover a wider area.

The Archivist is on the organising committee for the Assist Women's Network International Women's Day event on 1 March. This is part of the wider Sisterwood project the Archivist is heavily involved with. It was advised that collaborative projects are in development with Stockton ARC and Periplum.

The Community Engagement Officer and Conservator had a very successful 'Teesside Archives on Tour' event at Stockton Reference Library. It is hoped that this can be rolled out across the partner authorities with discussions already ongoing with Hartlepool.

Recent Heritage Hikes, delivered by the Community Engagement Officer and Archives volunteers, included a Black Path walk at the end of September 2023, a Story Stroll walk around Marske for the Carers Together charity in October and a circular walk around Stewart Park and Ormesby Hall.

## Conservation and Preservation

It was advised that work is ongoing with Restore to ensure the environmental storage and transportation is as safe as possible for records including environmental monitoring recorded both for the Dorman and Restore sites. The Conservator is continuing a programme of repackaging items that have been recalled where necessary to safeguard the long-term preservation of the archives.

## Digital Preservation

Members heard a meeting with Information & Governance Managers took place in December to discuss procedures for which appropriate records are transferred going forward to fulfil the duties of partner authorities under the Public Records Act. This included a discussion of what categories of records should be deposited, retention schedules and formats for deposit. It was advised that work is ongoing with records managers to agree a shared policy.

## Marketing & Communication

Members heard that work is progressing on the 'Treasures of Teesside Archives' exhibition at the Dorman Museum, which celebrates the services' 50th birthday this year. The service will be hosting a birthday party on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2024. A formal invite will be sent to elected members.

## KPI's

The Creative Programmes and Partnerships Manager advised that the KPI's were all moving in the right direction, there had been improvements in engagement activity across all of the local authority areas.

## Future Development of Service

Members heard that a response from Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) to the proposal for the Combined Authority to become a partner in the Archives Service had been received on 22 February 2024. The TVCA requested a proposed figure for an appropriate contribution from TVCA. Following discussions with the Lead Officers, two options were proposed, option one calculated as 10% and option two calculated as 15% of the Local Authority contributions respectively, plus a 1/5 share of the support costs. A decision is awaited.

Members were advised of the continued dispute with Restore regarding their proposal to increase charges mid-contract. Middlesbrough Council's Legal team had advised that there is no provision within the contract or the wider framework for Restore to increase costs within the 5-year contract period. This has been communicated in writing to Restore and we are awaiting an official response.

In terms of future planning, the Restore Contract ends 31 July 2026 and we have the following options:

- End the contract at 31 July 2026 – No notice period is required, but an exit plan will need to be in place. The contract makes provision for charges to be made by Restore for removal of our items.
- Extend the contract – option to extend the contract by 12 months at a time for up to a further 5 years.

This would require an agreement on terms and conditions for the new period and is almost certainly likely to result in fee increases. These options will be considered in more detail, alongside the outcomes of the Heritage Feasibility Study, to develop a plan for the Archives Service beyond July 2026.

## **AGREED: That the report be noted**

The report sought the approval of the 2024/25 budget for Teesside Archives. The Creative Programmes and Partnerships Manager explained that the proposal included a 3% pay award

06 March 2024

for staff and a 10% increase for charges from Restore, which had been included as a prudent measure based on the current dispute with Restore over charges. It was advised that the budget would be revised if Restore can not impose the increases in charges legally and if TVCA approves a contribution. For illustrative purposes, the paper included examples of the revisions to the budget should TVCA make either a 10% or 15% contribution to the Archives.

**AGREED-** that the proposed current budget for 2024-25 be approved.

23/31

**ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED.**

None