

Teesside Archives Budget Report – Appendix 2

Future Funding Options

Purpose:

At the request of Stockton Borough Council, to consider other potential funding models for Teesside Archives alongside agreeing the budget for 2026/27 and wider operating plans for the next three years.

Current Situation:

The current funding model for the Archives is based on population size, with partner authority contributions calculated on a per capita basis, as shown in the table below.

Local Authority	% Contribution
Hartlepool	17%
Middlesbrough	25%
Redcar & Cleveland	24%
Stockton	34%

In October 2023, the Lead Officers were asked by the JAC to look at other viable options for funding the Archives service. It proved very difficult to find examples of a joint Local Authority consortium like Teesside Archives, but we did find one similar example between Dorset, Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole. Having been asked a similar question, they had explored alternatives to the population-based approach, but could find nothing else that worked as well and continue to use population as the basis for their funding agreement.

It was agreed at the time to continue apportioning costs on a per capital basis. Partly in response to this, it was later agreed by JAC in October 2025 to agree action plans for engagement from 2026 onwards in order to attach some targets which, whilst not conditions of funding, would be set to reflect the per capita contribution and can be monitored.

We have also taken steps to bring other partners into the Archives Service including Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) and Teesside University (TU). Neither have accepted invitations to join the partnership to date. We have written to DCMS seeking guidance on the responsibilities of public bodies like TVCA in relation to their records they are creating, to help us make the case. However, despite following this up, we are yet to receive a response.

Alternative Options:

1. Equal Share

A simple option is for all four authorities to pay an equal contribution of 25% each. This will have a minimal impact on what Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland are already paying, but will essentially reduce Stockton's contribution and increase Hartlepool's contribution by a similar amount.

2. Collections Based Approach

A more complex option is to base the contribution on the volume of records held in the Archives from each Local Authority. Whilst there is a list of collections by borough, this is not broken down into standard quantities, but rather a mixture of things like e.g. number of boxes, volumes, rolls, envelopes, etc. It would require a separate piece of work to establish a more accurate volume of collections by local authority. Assuming this is done, there would also need to be an agreed approach to those records which belong to more than one authority and to those which have broader ownership e.g. Cleveland County records. For these shared records, we could follow the per capita or the equal share model.

ENDS