

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee/Panel:	Culture and Communities Select Committee
Date:	26 April 2018
Title:	Transformation to 2019: Hampshire County Council's Archives and Records Service
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Culture and Communities Select Committee note the content of this report and support the strategy to meet the Transformation to 2019 financial targets for the County Council's Archives and Records Service.

2. Conclusion

- 2.1 Hampshire County Council's Archives and Records Service has robust plans in place to deliver Transformation to 2019 (T19), through reducing costs and increasing income. Savings are planned to derive largely from further staffing reductions in addition to those already made to deliver previous budget cuts. Additional income is planned from increased charges to reflect actual costs and from extended and new income streams.
- 2.2 During 2017/18 approximately 23% of the overall T19 target of £154,000 was successfully delivered. In 2018/19 it is planned to deliver a further 34% of the overall target, with the remaining 43% to be achieved within 2019/20. Plans are also in place to exceed this target. While the identified savings are secure there is a heavy reliance on customer demand in order to achieve the income target, although the risk is spread due to the diversification of income streams. A contingency plan will be based on further staffing reductions and/or increased grant funding.

3. Summary

- 3.1 This paper informs the Culture and Communities Select Committee about the measures being pursued to sustain the Archives and Records Service in the context of T19 and beyond. It follows a visit to Hampshire Record Office on 12 February 2018 by members of the Select Committee.

4. Contextual information

- 4.1 Hampshire County Council's Archives and Records service incorporates two distinct but related functions: the archives and local studies service, which collects, preserves and makes publicly accessible the county's archives and local studies collections, and the corporate Records Management Service, which ensures the Council's vital information asset is effectively managed. The service is invaluable for both its unique role in the county's cultural life and its critical role in supporting accountability and evidence-based decision-making.
- 4.2 From parchment to digital data, over 10,000 collections span 1,000 years of history and local studies, including the County Council's own corporate memory starting in 1889. In 2006 the entire archive holdings received 'Designated' status, signifying them as outstanding and a world class collection, and in 2011 the celebrated Winchester Pipe Rolls were awarded a place on the UNESCO UK Memory of the World Register. The service also manages a regional film and sound archive (Wessex Film and Sound Archive) containing 38,000 recordings dating back to the 1890s.
- 4.3 Hampshire Record Office has just welcomed the news of its award of Archive Service Accreditation, the UK standard for archive services. The application was commended, the service was recognised as excellent, and the effective way the service had been able to respond to recent challenges was noted.

5. Finance

- 5.1 The service operates through a cash-limited budget. There is limited scope for generating income, so the strategy to meet the budget reductions of the last eight years has entailed significant savings in expenditure, largely through staffing reductions, and increased income, building on a long-established position of meeting a proportion of costs through charged-for services. This two-pronged strategy – reducing costs and increasing income – continues to form the basis of the service's T19 plans to meet the further budget reduction of £154,000 and to sustain the service going forward.

6. Staffing

- 6.1 Over the ten year period to 2019/20 staffing will have reduced by approximately 44%. This has already had a significant impact on the delivery of services, including the loss of the longstanding Archive Education Officer role and reductions in the archive conservation and customer services teams.
- 6.2 It has been possible to continue to deliver some – though a limited – degree of archive education work, such as introductory sessions for university students, and work with schools via the externally-funded Film Archive Officer post. A decline in the number of on-site customers – part of

a national trend, reflecting increased digital access – combined with new approaches to managing customers, reduced opening hours, and team restructuring to adapt more flexibly to demand, has enabled a highly valued customer service to be sustained, despite a significantly reduced team.

- 6.3 The planned further staffing reductions will, however, entail the cessation of the archive conservation service. Future such work will need to be funded externally. A grant to conserve medieval documents in the Winchester Cathedral archives was secured in 2011/12 and a further grant application in 2018/19 is being considered. Apprenticeships are also being explored.
- 6.4 The savings will also result in the cessation of the community archives and outreach post that has a successful track record in widening audiences for Hampshire's archives and building links across the county community. Measures are being developed to help mitigate the impact of this loss, such as the continued delivery of the popular Archive Ambassador scheme by the wider staff team, and increased volunteer support. The grant-funded Film Archive Officer will also continue to focus on audience engagement, including such innovative projects as a 'cinema in a tent', to screen local archive film across Hampshire communities, and support for reminiscence work through the County Council's Adults' Health and Care department.

7. Income

- 7.1 Income has significantly increased over recent years, largely due to the provision of copy certificates from civil registers. The development of other income streams and increased targets for existing ones is also contributing towards the delivery of T19.
- 7.2 In response to the pressing need to cover costs, the service has become increasingly entrepreneurial in recent years and now offers a range of services and continues to explore the potential to expand the offer, consistent with the resources available to supply demand.

8. Increased charges

- 8.1 During 2015/16 a full cost analysis led to some significant increases across the range of charged-for services, effective from July 2018, to reflect the actual costs of delivering those services. Similarly, in 2018/19 charges for the provision of civil register certificates – the largest income stream – will also increase.

9 Maximising assets: facilities

- 9.1 A key asset is the Hampshire Record Office building. The decline in on-site visitor numbers and the reductions in staffing create the opportunity to review the use of the building and to consider the scope for extending the use of facilities to accommodate wider needs which would help to defray or share running costs. Opportunities for sharing facilities could also have significant wider benefits in terms of collaborations and partnerships.

- 9.2 Since 2011/12 the Record Office cinema and more recently, the education room have been available for external hire. Momentum has gathered, largely via word of mouth. The facilities attract a range of organisations and a steady stream of repeat bookings. As well as income this raises the profile of the Record Office and introduces the service to non-users.
- 9.3 The service is in discussion with the University of Winchester regarding interest in the Record Office facilities. This has potential to build on the existing long-term relationship between the University and the Record Office and to create a springboard for a more extensive and exciting collaboration based on the natural synergies of archives and the academic world. Such collaborations are increasingly seen across the country, with innovative projects such as the building of a new record office for Suffolk on the University of Suffolk campus, and The Keep – a combined local authority and university archives service in East Sussex.

10 Maximising assets: staff expertise

- 10.1 Staff expertise and knowledge also forms a key asset. Archives and records management consultancy is supplied to a number of organisations on a service agreement basis, including the Chapter of Winchester Cathedral. Opportunities are being explored to increase take-up, for one-off projects or on a more sustained basis. This includes piloting a new initiative this year, for archives consultancy to military museums across the country.
- 10.2 The longstanding paid research service, which is particularly attractive to customers at a distance, is under review with a view to being extended. Staff knowledge is also shared through a skills development programme to help customers explore topics through the archival evidence, such as the history of houses, maps, or reading documents. The popular Archive Ambassador scheme responds to the need for training on caring for collections by community groups, museums and individuals, while training for parish officers provides practical support on looking after parish records. Extending this training, e.g. for parish councils, is being considered.
- 10.3 Group talks and visits have long formed a mainstay of the service's outreach, but a new initiative is behind-the-scenes tours open to individuals. Over-subscription of the first two tours suggests this will be popular. Special events showcasing archives, including film, on specific topics, often linked to anniversaries, generate income while also stimulating interest in the archives and extending audiences. The typical format is a talk by a guest speaker (usually at no charge to the service), or film screening, an exhibition of documents, and refreshments. In 2018 to mark the bicentenary of Jane Austen's death a sell-out event featured a talk, an extensive display of documents such as Austen's sister-in-law's diary recording her final moments, and live music from her music manuscripts.

11. Reprographics, copying and publication services

- 11.1 The collections held by the Record Office provide some scope for generating income, largely in relation to reprographics. Copying services are available to both remote and on-site customers and the latter are also able to digitally photograph unlimited numbers of documents on payment for a permit, which provides a useful way to create a resource for study off site at leisure. Where publication is requested, including filming for television programmes, facility fees are charged.
- 11.2 Plans are in place to strengthen the marketing of the digitisation service for material held externally, which has attracted a range of customers, such as the Austin Seven Clubs Association.
- 11.3 There continues to be worldwide demand for access to family history sources. The service is in the process of pursuing online access to popular archive sources by contracting with a commercial firm.
- 11.4 In 2011/12 the civil registers of birth, marriage, civil partnership and death were centralised from area offices and relocated in archive storage at Hampshire Record Office. From 2014/15 Archives and Records has been responsible for providing customers with copy certificates, on behalf of the Registration Service. This has created the largest income stream and made a very significant difference to sustaining the overall service.

12. Shop sales

- 12.1 A range of items can be purchased on site or via the County Council's online shop. The latter is also increasingly a route for customer payments for a range of services such as events bookings and copy documents. A growth area is the sale of digitised documents on CD – in part a spin-off from digitisation to increase access and protect the originals. Provision of digital surrogates also increases customer self-service. Funding for digitisation has derived from a number of external sources, such as grant funding, and local groups (in respect of their area tithe maps). Further external funding opportunities for digitisation of sources will be explored.

13. Stakeholder contributions

- 13.1 A programme is being developed to generate contributions from customers and depositors of archive collections. The initial steps have been to seek voluntary contributions from a number of depositors through direct targeting, and to encourage donations by customers.
- 13.2 Additional donations boxes have been sited at the Record Office and links to an online donations facility have been added to the website and to email sign-offs and promoted via the service's e-newsletter. Staff are gaining confidence in drawing customers' attention to the donations facility.

13.3 An appropriate charging policy in regard to deposits is being considered in order to meet costs and to sustain the service. This would be subject to appropriate communication with stakeholders.

14. Partnerships and grants

14.1 Partnerships remain important in sustaining the service. A key partner is Hampshire Archives Trust, the support organisation for Hampshire's unique archive heritage. The Trust's current review and reshaping of its operations will strengthen its role in supporting Hampshire's archives, including those in the care of Hampshire Record Office. It is planned to seek grant-funding from the Trust to support the service in delivering T19. Additionally, the proposed transfer of the Trust's role in the governance of Wessex Film and Sound Archive to the Record Office would result in new income streams for the latter.

14.2 The service will continue to work closely with Hampshire Cultural Trust in delivering engaging cultural experiences for the people of Hampshire and beyond, such as the major Jane Austen exhibition in 2017.

14.3 Archives and Records had a lead role in developing Archives First, a collaborative network of 11 local authority archive services, from Gloucestershire to East Sussex, enabling a consortium approach to tackling strategic issues. Funding from The National Archives is supporting important work to meet the challenge of digital preservation.

14.4 Other grants will continue to be sought to support the strategic objectives of the service. Currently the British Film Institute's Regional Film Archives Investment Fund is funding the Film Archive Officer role mentioned above, and a further application has recently been submitted. The BFI is also radically widening audiences for local archive film footage through its Unlocking Film Heritage project.

15. Marketing

15.1 Marketing is increasingly important, not just for promoting the service but also for generating income from services, events, sales and donations. In addition to other outlets, the service uses a range of social media, including a regular e-newsletter and blog, to reach out to audiences. Plans are being developed for a targeted marketing campaign for sold services.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Strategic Plan**

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

Equalities Impact Assessment:

Hampshire Record Office Archives and Local Studies T2019 Proposals (T19)

Copy Certificates: review of fees and charges, and service standards, 2018/19

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

There is no impact on crime and disorder.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption? No impact.
- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts? No impact.