

EXECUTIVE BOARD

30TH NOVEMBER, 2015

SUBJECT : Carmarthenshire Archive Service (CAS)

Purpose:

1. To provide an update on the status of the current Archive service
2. To consider future options for the service, including
 - A) the development of a partnership model for future archive service provision;
 - B) soft market testing for potential alternative providers of the service
3. To consider views on an acceptable base location for CAS.

RECOMMENDATIONS / KEY DECISIONS REQUIRED:

1. To note the update
2. That officers:
 - A) further examine and report back on the development of a partnership model with either UWTSD, or West Glamorgan Archives and Swansea University.
 - B) undertake a soft market testing exercise to consider potential alternative providers
3. That members support a prioritised view on an acceptable base location for the service i.e. in rank order of preference: Carmarthen Town; Carmarthenshire; then regional (e.g. within City Region).

REASONS:

1. To bring members up to date on the latest position. (Previous reports and background information have been tabled with CMT on the 3rd June 2014, 30th September 2014, 2nd June 2015 and 3rd November, 2015).
2. To ensure that members have the all the options available before making their final decision.
3. To assist officers in developing the preferred and final options appraisal to members.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee to be consulted: NO

Exec Board Decision Required YES - 30th November, 2015

Council Decision Required TBC

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

CLlr. Meryl Gravell (Regeneration & Leisure Portfolio Holder)

Directorate: Department for Communities Name of Head of Service: Ian Jones Report Author: Jane Davies	Designations: Head of Leisure Senior Cultural Services Manager	Tel Nos. 01267 228309; 01554 742180 E Mail Addresses: IJones@sirgar.gov.uk JaneDavies@sirgar.gov.uk
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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30TH NOVEMBER, 2015

SUBJECT:

Carmarthenshire Archive Service (CAS)

SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

1. To provide an update on the status of the Archive service

- Previous updates have been presented to CMT and these covered the development of the immediate action plan following the discovery of an outbreak of live mould in the strong rooms at CAS in Parc Myrddin.
- Resources have been secured to support the cleaning of the collection and the tender is out to advert. Projected timescales will see an award of contract by the end of November with the anticipation of the whole collection being removed for cleaning prior to Christmas 2015.
- Approx 6300 of the most badly affected items were cleaned in a separate exercise last year. Temporary storage for those items has been secured at Glamorgan Archives, which meets the appropriate standard for archive accommodation and will afford public access to the collection. Work is underway on a database of those items to describe to users the material that is available and that list will be uploaded to the CAS website.
- Over 70% of the requests within the service related to family history. Since October 2014, the Carmarthenshire Family History service has been operating well from Carmarthen, Llanelli & Ammanford libraries utilising staffing from the Archive service.
- Both The National Archives (TNA) and the Welsh Government's Museums, Archives, and Libraries Division (MALD) are satisfied with progress to secure, uplift, clean and store the records held by CAS
- Communication is ongoing via the press office and local groups such as the Friends of the Archives to keep depositors, users and the general public updated on progress.

2. To consider future options for the service, including

A) the development of a partnership model for future archive service provision;

B) soft market testing for potential alternative providers of the service

- The "Strategic Development Framework for Carmarthenshire Archive Service" dated September 2014 noted that the service should consider "possible alternative models for service delivery. In particular it should consider the potential for a partnership arrangement with a neighbouring authority.
- The key strategic document for the UK archival sector is 'Archives for the 21st Century'. The policy makes five recommendations to support an effective, relevant and sustainable archives sector, the first of which is 'Together, Bigger, Better' i.e. developing bigger and better services in partnership - working towards increased sustainability and resilience within the sector.
- There are currently 20 organisations operating archives in Wales. The majority are operated by local authorities, however, many work in partnership e.g. Glamorgan

Archives, Gwent Archives, and West Glam Archives, whilst others are / have considering regional partnership solutions e.g. the 6 North Wales LA's.

- MALD have funded some exploratory work looking at the feasibility of a West Wales Archive partnership, having been made aware of the issues at CAS, and the need for Glamorgan Archives to re-locate from their current base in Swansea, possibly in partnership with Swansea University who have the accredited Richard Burton Archive on their Singleton campus.
- University of Wales Trinity St. David (UWTSD) are also aware of the issues with CAS and have also approached the authority with a proposal to work together.
- Both partnership models would benefit from development to the next stage to establish the most appropriate option for CAS.
- A number of delivery models, are outlined in the detailed report. It is recommended that a soft market testing exercise is undertaken to assess the potential for any alternative delivery models.

3. To consider views on an acceptable location for CAS.

- The current CAS base at Parc Myrddin has been identified as inappropriate to house an archive collection, and has limited capacity for development.
- Members are asked to **support** a prioritised view on an acceptable base location for the service i.e. in rank order of preference: **Carmarthen Town; Carmarthenshire; then** regional (e.g. within City Region
- It is worth noting that the options being considered may be able to provide a shared base location, more digital solutions and accessibility, and community outreach hubs across the regions. Officers will further explore the concept of more than one location to deliver the service, albeit probably managed from one base.

A detailed report is attached, along with appendices highlighting:

- Appendix 1: Key questions about CAS e.g. do we have to provide the service?
Appendix 2: An appraisal of service delivery options (a) SWOT analysis; (b) Resourcing requirements & timescales
Appendix 3: Potential West Wales Archive Service partnership
Appendix 4: UWTSD proposal

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: Ian Jones

Head of Leisure

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	None at present	YES

Legal

The Local Government (Wales) Act 1994 (s.60) requires all unitary authorities in Wales to submit schemes for their proposed delivery of archive services, setting out 'their arrangements for the proper care, preservation and management of their records', including details of any shared arrangements. All schemes must be kept under review and modified if considered appropriate.

Finance

Finance has been secured for the uplift, cleaning and immediate term storage of the collection.

The existing resource that constitutes the annual budget for CAS will be required to deliver whichever future delivery model members wish to support.

Significant capital investment (£5m plus) would be required to develop a bespoke Archive and records office if members were minded to develop their own facility, managed by the local authority.

Physical Assets

Corporate Property are working closely with Leisure to review all options for future accommodation for the Archive Service, with no obvious, affordable solutions apparent within the County at present.

The existing location has a limited 5 year expansion capacity and is deemed to be not fit for purpose, with prohibitive costs and risks to bring up to standard

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Ian Jones

Head of Leisure

1. Scrutiny Committee

Position update provided via Annual Cultural Services report on the 16th January 2015. Further verbal update provided on the 9th November.

2. Local Member(s)

N/A as County-wide provision

3. Community / Town Council

N/A

4. Relevant Partners

MALD and TNA have been kept fully informed and are working closely with officers to manage the existing position and to explore future options for the service. Both organisation acknowledge and endorse the current position and work that is earmarked.

Senior Officers from the department met with the Friends of the Archives group and the Carmarthen Heritage Group on the 28th October 2015 to discuss the current position and to exchange views and ideas. The meetings were very positive, and ongoing communication will be in place with both chairs. Both groups held the very firm view that this was a critical service to Carmarthenshire, and that the authority had to prioritise and resource current and longer term support for CAS. Both groups confirmed their view that they would want to see the Archives remain in Carmarthen and have agreed to write in formally to support their views.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

N/A

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
CMT Report: 3 rd June 2014		..\..\Cultural Services\Archives\Reports including Audit\RE Report to CMT 3 6 14 - Carmarthenshire Archive Services.msg
CMT Report : 30 th September 2014		2014-09-30 Update To CMT on Future Options for CAS.docx
CMT Report : 2 nd June 2015		2015-06-02 CMT update on CAS.doc
Strategic Development Framework for CAS		..\..\Cultural Services\Archives\Strategic Documents & Policies\2014-09-08 Strategic Dev Framework for CAS.docx
Summary Paper - Partnership Models for West Wales Archive Service Delivery		
An Expression of Interest - UWTSD		
Archives for the 21 st Century in action: refreshed 2012 - 2015		http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/archives21centuryrefreshed-final.pdf
ARA Research Into The Benefits of Capital Investment In Archives		