

Report of Director of Community Services

Executive Board

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Future Options for Carmarthenshire Archive Service

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This report covers the progress to date of the working group established to produce an options report with costings for the long term provision of the archives storage as required following the last updates to CMT on the 2nd June and 3rd November 2015. CMT requested consideration of using an external specialist provider, collaboration with partner organisations, and conversion of property within CCC ownership. CMT also asked for modern records to be considered as well as the Archives, however, the bulk of this report is in relation to the latter.

Previous updates to CMT on Carmarthenshire Archive Service (CAS) are dated 2nd June 2015, 30th September 2014, 3rd June 2014 and 3rd November and these covered the development of the immediate action plan following the discovery of an outbreak of live mould in the strong rooms, commencing January 2014.

There have been no recent reports in respect of modern records.

1. Service area updates

a. CAS

i. Position statement

The initial priority for the service was to secure and protect the collection following the outbreak of mould. The following update was issued to members on Friday 25th September:

“Officers have been working closely with The National Archives (TNA) and MALD, the Museums, Archives & Libraries division of Welsh Government since active mould was identified in the collection. TNA are the body that grant “Place of Deposit” status to archives to house the public records appropriate to the locality. TNA are monitoring the

service against the requirement to maintain interim acceptable storage conditions, cleaning and mould treatment of the collection and the provision of public access to cleaned records. The latest correspondence from TNA, dated September 2015, confirms that

“Generally we (TNA) are reassured that the requirements for retaining place of deposit statusare being addressed constructively and measures are in place to meet the timescales put forward.”

The initial priority for the service upon identifying the mould was to secure the collection. This has been achieved using temporary measures. The second priority was to secure the delivery of a service for users. During the development of the “Strategic Development framework for Carmarthenshire Archive Service” dated September 2014 it was identified that 70% + of the requests for service related to family history, where there was a synergy with a basic service also being provided through the Libraries. In October 2014 The Carmarthenshire Family History service was launched from Carmarthen and Llanelli libraries utilising staffing from the Archive service. The service has since been extended to Ammanford library from April 2015.

Resources have been secured to support the cleaning of the collection and the tender has recently been returned. Projected timescales will see an award of contract by the end of November with the collection having been removed for cleaning before Christmas 2015. The period of the contract will be subject to confirmation through the tender exercise although a general indication of six months has been given to clean the collection.

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 website in the near future. It is anticipated that as elements of the collection are cleaned batches will be returned for incremental public access at existing accredited archives. Public access to the collection during the period over which Council decides on a permanent accommodation solution is a requirement of TNA. The availability of a list of collections publicised on the internet represents a significant development of the service.

In regard to long term accommodation Parc Myrddin has been identified as inappropriate in its current condition to house an archive

collection. Temporary measures have been put in place to maintain environmental controls appropriate to an archive but the fluctuations in temperature and humidity within the building fall outside the acceptable range. A report considering the options available for long term accommodation is underway and is to be presented through due process over the coming month.”

ii. Temporary service delivery

The Carmarthenshire Family History service is currently the public face of the service in the County. This however does not satisfy the demand of the remaining 30% of more serious researchers from academia and historians who research the collection for alternative purposes. The interim solution to the more serious research demand has been developed through the temporary public access arrangements secured with Glamorgan Archives. Access to public records is a requirement of TNA. Glamorgan Archives is in Cardiff.

iii. Future service delivery models

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. CAS could adopt established processes and procedures (such as existing websites, cataloguing approaches, conservation procedures) that may be more efficient and effective and quicker than seeking to establish all necessary elements anew and without previous experience.”

An appraisal of service delivery options is contained in Appendix 2, which considers:

- Option A – Development of CAS as a standalone service;
- Option B – The use of external specialist providers i.e. contracting out;
- Option C – Development of CAS in conjunction with internal partners such as modern records;
- Option D – Development of CAS in partnership with other organisations.

iv. Permanent Accommodation

The choice of service delivery option will drive the location and type of facility suitable as the permanent home for the archive. Consideration and potential costs are included in Appendix 2.

b. Modern Records

i. Position Statement

The Modern Records service provides for the orderly transfer of records from Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC) offices to high-density, low-cost storage when they are no longer required for frequent reference. The records are managed, not just stored. Records are assigned a shelf life with specific retention periods and some records, which are considered important enough for permanent preservation are transferred to the CAS to augment the archives of the County Council. There is a wide range of retention periods, for example, unsuccessful tenders are retained for 1 year and adoption records retained for a 100 years. On the whole modern records do not need such strict atmospheric conditions as archives, though buildings must be secure and in good condition. However about 50% of the 10,000 boxes in Modern Records have a retention period of longer than 12 years and the service also manages the Council's deeds that require permanent preservation.

An outbreak of live mould was also discovered in Strong Room LG46 in County Hall in January 2014, a strong room that houses property deeds. The mould did not appear to have affected the contents of boxes and the boxes were replaced. Remedial works were carried out on the front steps of County Hall to prevent water ingress. New de-humidifiers have been acquired and to date the mould has not spread. However there is fluctuation in the relative humidity levels in the strong rooms which does not bode well for preventing further outbreaks of mould.

The Modern Records service's records are stored on three sites: County Hall, Jobswell House and Parc Dewi Sant. The long term vision is to develop one suitable location for the central storage of all Modern Records held across the Authority. This could also be used as a centralised scanning location for the whole authority and would provide significant economies of scale.

There are also the on-going issues associated with Jobswell House and the long term goal of the authority is to sell this property. We have over a thousand boxes there that would also need to be re-located.

2. Legal framework and strategic context

Generally the responsibilities of the Authority for records are contained in section 60 of the Local Government (Wales) Act 1994, which requires that every principal local authority "shall make and maintain a scheme setting out their arrangements for the proper care, preservation and management of their

records.’ ‘Records’ relates to those records which ‘belong to the council or of which they have custody; and have been retained for reference and research purposes or because of their likely historical interest’ so that will include non-official records owned by the Council and records deposited with the Archives Service. The Act does not require a Council to maintain its own archive service but it must make proper provision for the care of its archives including regularly reviewing the scheme.

a. CAS

i. Legal Framework

CAS is a registered Place of Deposit for Public Records. Public records are the records of central government departments and agencies such as coroners and court records. Where a local authority has public records in its care the authority must make provision for safekeeping, preservation and access so that it reaches the Standard for Archives Service Accreditation. The Public Records Act 1958 requires “arrangements to be made for their inspection by the public comparable to those made for public records in the Public Record Office” (i.e. the National Archives). Furthermore, providing public access to public records or the information within those records, just as with local authority records, is obliged under Freedom of Information, Environmental Information Regulations, Public Sector Information Reuse Regulations, and Data Protection legislation, as well as the Local Government (Wales) Act 1994.

ii. Strategic Framework

The key strategic document for the UK archival sector is ‘Archives for the 21st Century’. This is the UK Government’s policy on archives published by the National Archives with the support of the major stakeholders. It was originally issued in 2009 (in Wales it was issued by the Welsh Government). The policy makes five recommendations to support an effective, relevant and sustainable archives sector:

- ‘Together, Bigger, Better’ Develop bigger and better services in partnership - working towards increased sustainability within the sector
- Strengthened leadership and a responsive, skilled workforce
- Coordinated response to the growing challenges of managing digital information so that it is accessible now and remains discoverable in the future
- Comprehensive online access for archive discovery through catalogues and to digitised archive content
- Active participation in cultural and learning partnerships promoting a sense of identity and place within the community

What this means for CCC is that:

- The option to share services either within the Council or with another Council will be welcomed by the Welsh Government and the National Archives
- Developing online services, which is a practical means of delivery to the rural community of Carmarthen and users beyond , is a suitable method of developing an archive service
- Learning and community involvement should be core outcomes of the Archive service.
- Collaborating with other services in MALD led initiatives is desirable to take advantage of WG support for the archive sector.

b. Modern Records

- Carmarthenshire will be looking for collaboration options with neighbouring Authorities and Pembrokeshire in particular who have a purpose built storage unit for modern records in place.
- Digital preservation of records is a key area that will need to be focused upon over the next 12 months to ensure that records that are only held digitally can be transferred over to the archives service when appropriate.

3. The Development of the Archive Sector in Wales

There are currently 20 organisations operating archives in Wales. The majority are operated by local authorities, with a further 5 operated by Universities, as demonstrated in the following table:

TYPE OF ORGANISATION	NUMBER	INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTIONS
University	5	Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff, Swansea & UWTSD
Independent organisations - Partnerships of Local Authorities	2	Glamorgan Archives (6 feeder local authorities) Gwent Archives (5 feeder local authorities)
Local Authorities individually	11	Including 6 North Wales local authorities, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Powys and West Glamorgan (which combines Swansea and Neath Port Talbot)
Libraries	1	The National Library
Royal Commissions	1	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales
TOTAL	20	

Of the individual local authority services it is understood that the six North Wales services are currently in discussions around a combined service.

Pembrokeshire Archives, in Haverfordwest, is a new build completed in the spring of 2013. When the need for temporary storage for the cleaned collection was identified we enquired whether Pembrokeshire had capacity to hold elements of CAS collection and were advised that this was not a possibility at the time as a result of the recent relocation of the local studies library to the venue, however, this is being reviewed by the authority. Ceredigion Archives is based in the former town hall in Aberystwyth. No discussions have taken place with Ceredigion due to the relative inaccessibility of the location using public transport links.

Both Glamorgan Archives and Gwent Archives have constitutions that are independent from the local authority areas that they serve and have achieved considerable success in key areas of the Archives for the 21st Century strategy such as developing strong leadership with a skilled and responsive workforce and developing digital capacity. One weakness however is that the majority of their funding is derived from a combination of local authorities all suffering from the same funding challenges. This has led to a natural progression of seeking partners able to tap into alternative funding streams and for whom research based activity is fundamental to the development of the organisation, the HE sector represents the ideal partner.

Of the Universities operating archives Swansea's Richard Burton Archives was the first university archive to achieve accreditation and can provide public access through existing systems and processes to CAS collection. UWTSO do not currently meet the same standards.

Through their oversight of the Welsh Archives sector MALD identify opportunities for sector providers to work together based on identification of need and to explore possible strategic partnerships.

4. Investment in an archive service

A research paper commissioned by the Archives & Records Association entitled "Research into the benefits of capital investment in Archives" records the benefits of investment for users, collections and depositors, staff, the parent organisation and other stakeholders.

The Service/Staff/Collection dependency model postulates that at the heart of a good service there are three elements: a relevant collection; appropriate types and levels of staff and appropriately designed and sufficient space. Following the principles of the sector strategy and based on case studies of joint working

in the archives sector the greatest benefits have been achieved where organisations have worked together for e.g. the Hull History Centre, a joint service between Hull City Council and the University of Hull and Archives + Manchester a shared service between six partners that opened in 2014.

The key points arising from the research are:

- Capital investment in archives has delivered a significant and broad range of benefits to users, the community, depositors including the parent organisation, and staff;
- Users benefitted the most;
- Benefits to the safety and longevity of the collections are profound;
- When new facilities opened demand increased significantly, routinely doubling or tripling;
- Investment in facilities must be matched by investment in staff in order to exploit the capital expenditure in full;
- Vision is needed to create compelling forward looking projects which extend beyond solving current problems and are truly transformational

The benefits for the parent organisation are a greater contribution by the archive service to parent body goals. Specifically in relation to the Corporate Strategy 2015 – 2020 archives can contribute towards each of the themes and in particular

- People in Carmarthenshire are Healthier;
Archive services are known to be good for mental welfare, they can be a resource for coping with personal issues e.g. adoption and also pleasurable use e.g. family history, school records etc.
- People in Carmarthenshire fulfil their learning potential;
Archives provide important resources for learning and skills development to help people reach their potential e.g. through volunteering schemes, educational research for higher qualifications;

A new archive building and partnership would also make a distinctive contribution to the Swansea Bay City region Economic Regeneration Strategy 2013-2030. It would be a key provider in developing the knowledge economy and supporting educational and skills attainment. A carefully designed building could also contribute to the sense of a Distinctive Place and provide a region specific visitor proposition.

5. Service Delivery Models

5.1 Service Delivery models

The service delivery models considered in this report are as follows:

Option A – Development of CAS as a standalone service;

Option B – The use of external specialist providers i.e. contracting out;

Option C – Development of CAS in conjunction with internal partners such as modern records;

Option D – Development of CAS in partnership with other organisations.

The table in Appendix 2 provides an overview of the characteristics of each model, estimated resourcing requirements and approximate timescales to delivery.

Modern records frequently need accessing within a very short turnaround period and a view has been taken that the opportunity to combine the services will be reviewed once a location for CAS has been established.

5.2 Securing sustainability – Partnership Models

The development of the archive sector in recent years has seen the expansion of partnership models to include service providers outside of local government in order to respond to current financial challenges.

The following extract from “Archives for the 21st Century: revisited 2012 – 2015 by TNA summarises the position on sustainability:

“Archives can be sustained only by being flexible and innovative in response to challenges dictated by the economic climate. The strongest organisations in the archive sector will continually adapt to the changing policy and funding landscape through partnerships and collaboration. Sustainability can be achieved in the sector through working together, building collaborative partnerships to open up opportunities and share resources effectively.”

5.3 Partnership proposals

5.3.1 The West Wales Archives Partnership Project

Previous reports to CMT have identified the emergence of a possible partnership in the Swansea Bay City Region and a summary paper of a report drafted by Elizabeth Oxborrow Cowan, Consultant Archivist on “Partnership Models for West Wales Archive Service Delivery” is attached at Appendix 3. This report was commissioned

with support from MALD and is wholly in keeping with the strategic document for the sector - Archives for the 21st Century.

The “next steps” are worthy of note. In particular “Options for local service delivery (online provision; local hubs; outreach work). The concept represents a significant change for the residents of Carmarthenshire in the way the archive service is delivered. The manner in which local access could be granted is yet to be developed, and it is proposed will be the subject of consultation to establish the exact nature of what archive service users in Carmarthenshire, current and future, require. The storage of the collection might ultimately be out of county; although consideration of a specific location is part of the next steps; however local access hubs could see key collections in exhibitions within the County, supported by the development of digital copies of collections. The library service is currently working on the development of the Heritage 6 website which will host digital images of County collections with likely implementation during mid 2016. The scope of this project is currently library service collections. A small working group of library and archive staff will commence work in the New Year to determine the suitability of some archive material for digitisation as a further temporary measure of public access. A partnership with an HE institution is seen professionally as necessary to provide the infrastructure and expertise necessary to develop both the capacity to store born digital material and also to deliver large scale digitisation projects for the longer term.

5.3.2 CCC & UWTSD

An alternative partnership option has been received from the University Of Wales Trinity St. David (UWTSD), dated 7th August 2015, and the detailed proposal is attached at Appendix 4. The proposal is characterised by an offer of assistance with temporary accommodation for the archive collections at the University’s archive in Lampeter and / or a long term solution to be developed in Carmarthenshire. Discussions with UWTSD have indicated that they would consider renovation of existing accommodation or a new build for the long term. Both schemes would require an external funding bid.

In regard to temporary accommodation we have engaged MALD to establish whether the University archive at Lampeter would provide a suitable solution for Public Records and key collections where public

access is a requirement of The National Archives (TNA). The key points arising out of this visit are as follows:

- The Roderic Bowen archive is on the University campus in Lampeter, Ceredigion;
- The service benefits from purpose built storage facilities, with environmental control (air conditioning) – the environment appears stable and within accepted parameters for PD5454 – and the storage areas appear well managed;
- The facilities at Lampeter are not currently approved for the custody of public records;
- There would be organisational requirements for UWTSD to achieve Place of Deposit status and put in place an appropriate system for public access;
- The service is not currently accredited.

In terms of temporary accommodation therefore the facility could provide closed storage but not public access at its current stage of development. As public access is a requirement of TNA further discussions with UWTSD would be required in order to establish whether appropriate arrangements could be achieved. Ideally the collection will be housed in as low a number of temporary repositories as possible in order to maintain and develop both physical custody arrangements and intellectual control of the collection during the interim arrangements. As the Lampeter location is also out of county and cannot currently afford appropriate public access arrangements further discussions with UWTSD on temporary accommodation have been deferred pending the outcome of this report.

The development of a long term strategic partnership with the University would require a scoping exercise and study by an independent Consultant Archivist, similar to that produced for the proposed West Wales Archive Service. If considered desirable funding for the study would be required in the region of £15k. MALD have a limited budget to support archive service development. As they have committed to the development of the West Wales Partnership Project it is unclear at this stage whether further support would be forthcoming for the development of an alternative model.

5.4 Summary

In conclusion the archive sector is increasingly characterised by collaborations of organisations where it is desirable to secure a partnership arrangement that extends beyond the realms of local

government in order to ensure a sustainable future for service delivery. Both partnership options under consideration involve HE Institutions with the former also potentially benefitting from a relationship with the City & County of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Council's.

6. Accommodation

The accommodation options are dependent upon the choice of service delivery model and are explored further in Appendix 2.

Both CAS and modern records are currently housed in administrative buildings with no controllable budget for property related costs.

CAS is located at Parc Myrddin which has been identified as unsuitable for future use as an archive building. Vacating the strong rooms potentially increases the capacity for staff accommodation at the site.

CAS collections currently amount to approx 310m³, with accruals assumed to be at a rate of 5m³ - 10m³ per year for 20 years storage space alone requires around 500m³ plus ancillary search room, meeting and staff facilities.

The maximum floor space required to house the modern records boxes on mobile shelving would be 480 sq meters. There is no need to allow for growth as the number of boxes will gradually decrease and this in turn can complement the need for growth for the Archives.

However the proposed location for the new premises is key to whether Modern Records could be housed with the Archives. Modern Records respond to requests for files and deeds on a daily basis and these are transported to Llanelli and Ammanford by the shared courier. On average 100 boxes are deposited each month.

It should be noted that CAS requires accommodation meeting the industry standard PD5454 and that is suitable for public access in an easily accessible location. The standard is necessary in order to achieve archive service accreditation required to continue to deliver the service. We are not aware of any available accommodation within the County that currently meets that standard and as such all accommodation options will require renovation as a minimum. The property options considered in Appendix 2 fall into the following categories:

- Existing County stock e.g. refurbishments of industrial units in Trostre, or accommodation at Parc Dewi Sant;

- Existing private sector/ externally owned accommodation e.g. privately owned industrial units, National Botanical Gardens of Wales;
- New build through developing external funding bids.

Upon agreement of the service delivery model the accommodation options associated with that model will be the subject of in depth analysis.

7. Summary and Recommendations

A service delivery model that supports a partnership with an HE institution appears to provide the most appropriate response to the Archives for the 21st Century strategy and is most likely to deliver a sustainable future for the service.

It is unclear at this stage which partnership would offer the best option for CAS and on that basis it is recommended that both partnerships be considered to the next stages of development. In relation to the West Wales Archive this would be to consider what options for local service delivery could look like and an appropriate location, and in relation to UWTSD this would involve development of a framework for the delivery of services and a proposed location.

Once a location has been identified for both we would then be in a position to consider the options for modern records.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Key questions about CAS

Appendix 2

Appraisal of service delivery options (a) SWOT analysis; (b) Resourcing requirements & timescales

Appendix 3

[2015-07 Summary Paper - Partnership Models for West Wales Archive Service Delivery.pdf](#)

Appendix 4

[2015-08 EOI UWTSD Carmarthenshire Archives.docx](#)

Appendix 1 - Key questions about CAS

1 Is there a statutory requirement for the Council to run an archives service?

There is not a statutory requirement for CCC to run an archives service. However, under S60 of the Local Government (Wales) Act 1994 every principal local authority 'shall make and maintain a scheme setting out their arrangements for the proper care, preservation and management of their records. The Public Records Act requires public access to public records in a manner comparable to the access provided by National Archives, which does have a full public service. Legislation such as Freedom of Information and Data Protection also require the public to be able to access the content of records. Running an archive service is the most effective way of fulfilling these requirements and enabling maximum utility of the records. It should also be noted that all enquiries into the Archives Service are defined as enquiries under Freedom of Information because they concern records within the Council's care. Thus these enquiries have to be answered. Again, this is most effectively and cheaply done by having a dedicated archives service rather than, for example, the Legal Department answering these FOI enquiries.

2 Why does the Council have to look after the records held in the Archives?

However, under S60 of the Local Government (Wales) Act 1994 every local authority is required to properly care and manage the records in its care. Under the Act 'records' means any documents which '(a) belong to the council or of which they have custody; and (b) have been retained for reference and research purposes or because of their likely historical interest'. Under the Public Records Act those 'Places of Deposit' appointed to hold public records must provide proper accommodation for and access to the records comparable with the provided by The National Archives (repository for the records of the UK government).

3 Can the Council digitise the records and dispose of the analogue originals?

No due to statutory restraints and costs. The Council is free to digitise any elements of the records in its care (assuming statutory requirements such as copyright and data protection are adhered to). However, the original records cannot be destroyed because they are deemed to have been selected for their long-term historical value and being the original record cannot be destroyed. However, large-scale digitisation of archive collections is prohibitively expensive and would also create such an enormous digital resource requiring such large infrastructure that it probably could not be managed at local level

and would of itself require considerable financial investment to ensure its long-term accessibility

However, digitisation of selected parts of collections is an important method of taking collections out to wider audiences in a cost effective manner online. It is recommended that digitisation be undertaken selectively either to produce a specific end product e.g. an online exhibition, or to maximise access to very heavily used records. This is the rationale behind The National Archives' initiative to digitisation school admissions records across the UK. CAS is taking part in this programme.

4 Can CCC charge archive users?

Local authority archive services already charge for some services e.g. delivering education sessions, undertaking research, reproduction. However, no local authority service currently charges for users to come on site to do their own research (and very few other types of archive services charge – one service that does is the Wedgewood Museum).

However, charging for onsite users has proven not to work. It has been considered in Plymouth and Warwickshire, and was attempted in Gloucestershire and Devon but withdrawn. There are numerous reasons why it is not an effective way of raising income:

The Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (SI 2004 No 3391) prohibit charging for on-site access to environmental information. Regulation 8(2) reads:

A public authority shall not make any charge for allowing an applicant –

- (a) To access any public register or lists of environmental information held by the public authority; or
- (b) To examine the information requested at the place that the public authority makes available for that examination

It would be very complicated to separate out environmental information to be exempt from charging.

- European legislation may prohibit charging residents of the European Union.
- It would render Carmarthen ineligible for certain grant programmes such as TNA's Cataloguing Grants Scheme.
- It creates a complexity of charges (e.g. with concessions, heavy use passes) that outweighs the small amount of revenue raised.
- Residents already pay for the archives through local taxes so could resent an additional charge (strangely given that the Council charges for other

services such as swimming baths). This has been the case where it has been tried elsewhere.

- The move would be seen to prohibit freedom of access to collections and would be probably be opposed by certain bodies such as Archives and Records Association and CyMAL.
- Donations and deposits of private collections are often made on the understanding that they will be freely available for public consultation.

5 Does it matter to CCC if the National Archives withdraws public records?

Public records are the records of central government organisations/departments such as the courts and hospitals.

Withdrawal of public records would have a major impact on CCC. Withdrawal is not simply a case of having a few records taken away. If TNA withdrew the records the Historical Manuscripts Commission would be obliged to inform private depositors. This may well result in a large number of private collections being withdrawn, such as those of the Cawdor family.

Such a situation would have several impacts, all of which would several undermine CCC's reputation. Firstly it would be a source of public outcry and hence embarrassment to the Council. Criticism may come from some influential quarters such as the Cawdor family or the Church in Wales. Supporters of local authority archive services have proven themselves to be concerted and articulate in their opposition. The archives service for Plymouth City Council faced a similar situation to Carmarthen. The imminent removal of public records led to a public protest and claims of 'incompetence' charged at the Council. This campaign had a considerable impact on the Council's decision-making and an alternative solution was found which ensured the public records stayed in Plymouth. Although several authorities have faced issues over public records only one authority, Salford, has ever had its public records removed.

Secondly, there would be considerable financial implications that may well result in costs greater than the cost of dealing with the mould infection now. CCC would have to pay the costs of removal of any records. TNA would require CCC to meet the costs of removing and cleaning public records and other depositors could make the same demands. There is also the possibility of depositors taking legal action for CCC's failure to fulfil its contractual and ethical responsibilities to look after the collections. Furthermore, withdrawal of records could trigger demands to repay previous grants e.g. £40,000 for the cataloguing of the Cawdor papers. Further, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) granted £116,000 for the move of the service from County Hall to its current location. HLF may be unwilling to provide further grants if it is not confident about CAS' track record on collection care.

Thirdly, loss of the public records would undermine the depth and utility of CAS when it really needs to be maximising its assets. The public records fill in a significant element of Carmarthen's history including the courts and hospitals. As such they can be important in a wide range of research such as tracing adoption, identifying hereditary illness, understanding an individual's family history and identity. They also add to the resources available to support other Council services such as museums, education, tourism and regeneration. Furthermore, if the public records removal triggered the removal of private records the historical record for Carmarthenshire would be further weakened and could result in some collections being lost forever.

Finally, even if the public and private records were removed the Council would still be responsible for caring for the remaining records. CCC cannot simply walk away from its responsibilities for archival collections.

6 Can the Council return deposited records?

The Council has a statutory duty to care for all the records for which it is responsible. Returning records that are on deposit with the Council would be a complex task requiring careful management and which could draw criticism of the Council. Some of the collections include town, community and parish council records where the originating bodies may not have the capacity or desire to take back these records. They would also still be generating new records requiring long-term accommodation.

7 What kind of building does the archive service require?

The building needs to enable an efficient and effective service. This requires sufficient and appropriate storage, work and public spaces in a well-designed layout. Basic requirements include:

- Controlled storage conditions to ensure the longevity of the collections and which meets PD5454 Guide for the Storage and Exhibition of Archival Material.
- Storage that is close by to enable easy staff and public access to collections – split storage sites are not ideal.
- Sufficient additional storage space to accommodate additional collections over the next 20 years.
- Sufficient space for staff to catalogue and manage collections.
- Space that is straightforward for the small number of archive staff to manage.
- Flexible space to encourage volunteers to engage with the service
- A searchroom for the public to consult documents in a secure environment.
- An education/meeting room to deliver education and outreach activities.
- DDA compliance in all areas.
- If possible an area for exhibiting original material or at least copies of material.

- Sufficient flexibility to accommodate future changes in service delivery, in particular in relation to ICT
- A building that is environmentally and economically sustainable.