

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20th JUNE 2016

Development of the new Carmarthenshire Archive Service (CAS)

To consider and comment on the following issues:

That the Committee:

- Notes the update.
- Notes the current position, plans for the re-vamped Archive Service, and proposals for a new base at the rear of Carmarthen Library.

Reasons:

- To outline plans for a new Archive Service and its collection as part of a £2m investment into the service.
- To update the Committee on the status of the collection.
- To update the Committee on the latest position (as reported to Executive Board on the 25th April 2016 and 30th November 2015), and to outline the exciting new plans for the Service.
- To assist officers in progressing with the delivery of these plans

To be referred to the Executive Board for decision: **NO**

Executive Board Member Portfolio Holder:

Cllr. Meryl Gravell (Regeneration & Leisure)

Directorate: Communities	Designations:	Tel Nos. / E-Mail Addresses:
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 20th JUNE 2016

Development of the new Carmarthenshire Archive Service (CAS)

Summary of purpose of report

1. To outline plans for a new Archive Service and its collection as part of a £2m investment into the service

- The authority has identified £2m of capital investment to provide a new Archive facility and service for the County.
- The current CAS base at Parc Myrddin has been identified as inappropriate to house an archive collection.
- Members and user groups have indicated a preference to replace the Archive as close as possible to its current Parc Myrddin location
- Property Services and Corporate Property have been involved in assessing potential site options and existing buildings, and agree with the view of Welsh Government's Museums, Archives, and Libraries Division (MALD) that a new build facility, for the strong-rooms in particular, was by far the best option due to the building (environmental) control systems that are required for an accredited Archive.
- Following an extensive desktop exercise where a number of potential sites were identified and assessed as possible locations for the CAS, shortlisted sites were assessed by internal officers with advice and input on the criteria from MALD and then with recommendations made to the Executive Board on the 25th April.
- The Executive Board endorsed the firm recommendation that an extension onto the rear of Carmarthen Library was the most obvious location for the new CAS.
- Officers are now progressing with detailed plans and costings for the site. Initial investigations indicate that the site has sufficient capacity to accommodate a new combined Archive & Library facility.

- The site at the rear of the Library allows for shared front of house services, along with multi-purpose rooms, and a new strong-room built at the rear. The sharing of facilities allows for potential savings on running costs across service areas and provides a joined up, high footfall, and easily accessible location for the public to use. The location also adds to the King Street 'Cultural Quarter' ethos and provides additional footfall to traders at this end of the town.
- Opportunities are also being explored with the Education Department with regards the possibility of combining community education functions into the new facility, as well as exploring the potential to move the customer service centre from the ground floor of 3 Spilman Street, which would in turn free up office accommodation and parking there.
- The options in development include one with all services accommodated (i.e. library, archives, community education centre, customer service centre, automated cash desks and Un Sir Gar and an alternative accommodating library and archives alone, depending on cost and benefits).
- Cost and schedule information is in development and should be confirmed in the next few weeks. The baseline requirement is to co-locate the new Archive Service within the £2m budget.
- The service is also exploring potential joint management solutions for the future, in order to maximise the potential of the fantastic Carmarthenshire collection. Joint management solutions would increase access to expertise and potentially reduce ongoing revenue costs. It may be that some specialist functions such as conservation, digitisation and outreach work could be co-ordinated regionally, with the public facing functions operated locally.
- The aim is to ensure that as many people as possible can access the collection, in person, on-line or by way of educational / outreach work, promoting the rich cultural history of the County.

2. To update on the status of the collection

- Previous updates have been presented to the Executive Board confirming that resources have been secured to support the uplift and cleaning of the collection, and a tender awarded to Harwell Document Restoration Services, based in Oxfordshire.
- The uplift of the whole collection was completed prior to Christmas 2015, and the documents are currently being cleaned and indexed prior to return to temporary storage at Glamorgan Archives and the Richard Burton Archive in Swansea University, both of which meet 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 these lists are being uploaded to the CAS website.
- Both The National Archives (TNA) and the Welsh Government's Museums, Archives, and Libraries Division (MALD) are happy with the progress made to date
- 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.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	NO
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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
NONE	YES	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE AT PRESENT	YES

2. 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.

3. 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.

£2m has been identified in the authority's capital programme to secure and develop a new base for CAS.

7. Physical Assets

Corporate Property has worked closely with Leisure to review all options for future accommodation for the Archive Service. Use of Carmarthen Library would align with current Asset Management Plan principle of co-locating services and not extending the number of properties used by the Authority.

Development of new facilities at Carmarthen Library would also provide the opportunity to review use of other parts of the building and potentially open up wider use of the building for a range of public-facing services.

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. **Local Member(s)** – N/A as provision is county-wide.

2. **Community / Town Council** – N/A

3. **Relevant Partners** – MALD and TNA have been kept fully informed and are working closely with officers to manage the existing position. Both organisation acknowledge and endorse the current position and work that is earmarked.

Senior Officers from the department continue to meet and correspond with the Friends of the Archives group and the Carmarthen Heritage Group to discuss the current position and to exchange views and ideas. The meetings have been 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 Town and have written in formally to support this view.

4. **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
Carmarthen Archive Services – Site options appraisal (Executive Board, 25th April 2016)	Cymraeg http://democratiaeth.sirgar.llyw.cymru/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=131&MIId=348&Ver=4 English http://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=131&MIId=348&Ver=4
Archives for the 21st Century in action: Refreshed 2012 – 2015	http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/archives21centuryrefreshed-final.pdf