

**Manchester City Council
 Report for Resolution**

Report to: Communities and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 15 November 2011

Subject: Archives+ - Manchester’s Archive Centre of Excellence

Report of: Vicky Rosin, Deputy Chief Executive (Neighbourhoods)

Summary

To outline the Archives+ partnership in Central Library, the Archives+ Heritage Lottery Fund project and the Greater Manchester Archives Feasibility Study.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note this report, the progress that has been made to date and the key milestones identified to ensure the successful development of the Archives+ Partnership and its key role within the refurbished and extended Central Library.

To note that a separate members visit can be arranged to the Greater Manchester County Record to enable members to view some of Manchester’s archive treasures and discover more about Archives+.

Wards Affected: ALL

Community Strategy Spine	Summary of contribution to the strategy.
Performance of the economy of the region and sub region	The report notes the major capital investment in the refurbished Central Library and the delivery of a new archives centre of excellence which will contribute to the performance and economy of the sub region. Archives+ and Central Library will become major visitor attraction of local, regional, national and international status and reputation. The report recognises the existing partnerships and shared archives services in the sub-region.
Reaching full potential in education and employment	This report recognises that Archives+ will provide a stimulating environment for individual, family and life long learning in formal education, personal research and outreach activities that stimulate an interest in people, places

	and our shared histories and experiences.
Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect	This report recognises that Archives+ will shape the shared sense of community, local and individual identity that gives the residents of Manchester a frame of reference for their place in society, and helps them to understand how their location, community and family have developed. It will allow residents of Manchester to feel a connection to their local community and can readily find out why their neighbourhood is the way it is.
Neighbourhoods of choice	This report recognises that Archives+ will create a strong sense of place rooted in welcoming the complexity and multiplicity of stories that together make the history of Manchester and shape the way we are today. It will create a strong sense of place rooted in welcoming the complexity and multiplicity of stories that together make the history of Manchester and shape the way we are today.

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

Equal Opportunities Policy – An equality action plan will be developed to ensure that Manchester’s rich and diverse communities are at the heart of the development of the Archives+ offer.

Risk Management - a risk management approach has been adapted for the Archives+ partnership outlined in this report.

Legal Considerations - are included within the report

Financial Consequences – Revenue

HLF stage 1 funding now available and the service is currently preparing round two submission.

Financial Consequences – Capital

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Greater Manchester County Record Office (GMCRO) is based in Marshall Street and is operated by Manchester City Libraries, Information and Archives on behalf of the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA), excluding Stockport MBC. GMCRO houses 4 miles of archives and seeks to identify, collect, preserve, and promote the widest possible public access to the documentary heritage of Greater Manchester.

1.2 MCC also provides its own citywide archives and local history service, Manchester Archives and Local Studies (MALS). As the two services are both located in Manchester city centre and are managed by the same service, there is a long established tradition of partnership working, to provide the best possible offer to residents and visiting archive customers. GMCRO also works closely with the other archive services across Greater Manchester.

1.3 In February 2009 Manchester City Council announced the redevelopment of Manchester Central Library as part of the wider Town Hall Complex Transformation Programme. As part of this redevelopment, it is proposed that the GMCRO relocate to Central Library as part of a wider archive partnership called Archives+.

1.4 The redevelopment of Central Library presents the opportunity to celebrate and showcase Manchester's original archive treasures, by bringing together two archive services based in the city centre and complementary partners into Archives+, a combined archive offer for Manchester and Greater Manchester.

1.5 Archives+ will offer a wonderful, purpose-built showcase and repository for the region's archive and family history. For the first time, thousands of the region's records will be together under one roof to create an unrivalled collection and first rate customer access and engagement services. This includes working in partnership with other archive and family history providers in the region and sign-posting residents and visitors to the rich cultural and heritage offer across Greater Manchester. The Archives+ partnership will create a destination of national and international significance and will build on the appetite and demand for accessible community history and personal heritage.

1.6 The main partners in Archives + are:

- Greater Manchester County Record Office (Association of Greater Manchester Authorities).
- Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives (Manchester City Council).
- North West Film Archive (Manchester Metropolitan University).
- Race Relations Resource Centre (University of Manchester).
- Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust.
- Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society.
- British Film Institute (Mediatheque).
- Manchester Registration Service (Historic Registers).
- Familysearch International.

1.7 The creation of Archives+ will see the addition of over 500,000 archive items added to the collection.

2.0 Archives+ Governance

2.1 As a first step towards creating the new archive partnership, the Archives+ Governance Board was established in January 2011 and includes representatives from the Archives+ partners. The partners have also signed a Memorandum of Understanding which establishes the principal terms and conditions agreed, and the next steps required, towards the creation of Archives+.

2.2 Since the closure of Central Library in June 2010 an interim joint archives service for customers has been provided by GMCRO and MALS at two city centre sites: Marshall Street and the Manchester Room, City Library, Deansgate. However the management and staffing of GMCRO and MALS has remained separate.

2.3 The current service re-design of Neighbourhood Services and the creation of the new Community and Cultural Services will allow the incorporation of the GMCRO staff and the staff within the City Council's own city-wide archive and local studies service (MALS) into a combined new structure. The proposed new structure is a step towards achieving the exciting Archives+ vision. It will also enable Archives+ to be delivered city-wide.

3.0 Archives+ Heritage Lottery Fund Project

3.1 Manchester City Council submitted a Round 1 application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in April 2011, to obtain additional funding for Archives+ at Manchester Central Library. This Round 1 application has been successful in securing initial support for a £1.6m Heritage Lottery Fund grant, including £72,500 development funding to enable the project to be developed in more detail. Match funding of £500,000 has been provided by Manchester City Council for the project.

3.2 The elements of Archives+, for which HLF funding is sought, will raise awareness of and provide easy access to our histories for the broadest possible audiences, including existing and new ones. The project will make archives more accessible by creating exciting interpretive exhibition spaces to provide new ways for more people to discover the richness and relevance of archives, share their own stories and have a personalised experience of the City Region's history. A new learning programme will help people learn about and enjoy this nationally important collection comprising 10km of items dating from the 12th century, including parchments, leather-bound volumes, photographs, glass negatives, film archives and over 50,000 rare books.

3.3 The development of this project has been strongly influenced by the Manchester Histories Strategy. During the autumn of 2009, cultural and heritage partners from across the City, including the Archives+ partners, prioritised the need to make better sense of the rich, dispersed histories of Manchester and the City Region, in order to strengthen how these stories are told and to engage more residents and visitors with them. In March 2010, Renaissance North West commissioned work to create a strategy that would stimulate new and wider

engagement with Manchester and the City Region's histories and strengthen a distinctive sense of place. One of the key outcomes of this work is 'Manchester Manifest: Towards a Sense of Place', which identified a set of principles and main story lines to better enable the interpretation of the history of Manchester for residents and visitors.

3.4 Obtaining funding on this scale from the Heritage Lottery Fund is a two-part process, and a successful outcome to the Round 2 application next year will be needed to secure the full £1.6m. In the meantime, work on the detailed Development Phase of the project has begun and a specialist exhibition designer has been appointed to enable detailed design of archive exhibition areas to commence.

4.0 Sense of Place and Community Engagement

4.1 Archives+ and the Manchester Histories Strategy will make a significant contribution to the sense of place agenda and the Community Strategy. It will:

- Gives the residents of Manchester a sense of community, local and individual identity that helps them to understand how their location, community and family have developed.
- Allow residents to feel a connection to their local community and can readily find out why their neighbourhood is the way it is.
- Empower Manchester's communities to collect and share their stories to inspire, inform and entertain.
- Create a strong sense of place rooted in rich and diverse stories that together make the history of Manchester and shape the way we are today.
- Provide a stimulating environment for individual, family and life long learning in formal education, personal research and outreach activities.
- Allow people of all ages and abilities to explore their personal identity by finding out about aspects of the past, such as their family history.

4.2 The Archives+ partners have a successful track record of engaging with communities. For example MALS is a partner in the Manchester Chinese Archive project. The project won the National Archives Volunteer Project in 2011 and was praised by the judges for having a "highly diverse and energetic volunteer group. The effect on some members of the Chinese community was profound: 'Lots of people come up to me and tell me that this is the best thing that's ever happened in the Chinese community' (Jenny Wong, Manchester Chinese Centre)." Both MALS and GMCRO have also had considerable success in collecting and sharing the stories of Greater Manchester's Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Transgender community.

5.0 Major Visitor and Cultural Destination

5.1 Archives+ and Central Library will become major visitor attraction and cultural destination of local, regional, national and international status and reputation,

attracting over 2m visitors each year, making a material contribution to the Manchester brand and tourist offer.

5.2 It will provide the missing piece of the jigsaw for Manchester's cultural and heritage offer, by creating opportunities to discover, share and celebrate the stories of Manchester's history and communities.

5.3 Archives + will make a major contribution to the City's Major Events Strategy, particularly where these are heritage or culture related and specifically by adding to the City's substantial infrastructure of celebratory spaces.

6.0 The Virtual Archive and Social Networking

6.1 The development of Archives+ is integral in the context of the Manchester's wider Cultural Ambition, particularly an innovative approach to using digital technology to create a really democratic approach to the making, sharing and engaging with history across the city and beyond.

6.2 Archives+ is embracing digital technology tools such as Flickr, Twitter and Historypin to enable people to engage with the collections and the stories that they tell. The Archives+ Flickr collection contains over 5000 images and received over 600,000 image views in the last 12 months. Archives+ also has over 2000 followers on Twitter.

6.3 Archives+ is undertaking large scale digitisation of its most popular resources in order to create a virtual archive that can be accessed by customers 24 hours a day. Examples include:

- The Manchester Local Images Collection (www.images.manchester.gov.uk) contains over 80,000 old photographs of Manchester. The web site receives over 600,000 visits per annum.
- The Manchester Collection was launched on www.findmypast.co.uk in September 2011. This is a rich series of 1,300,000 records which give details about how Manchester ancestors lived, particularly in the Victorian period. It includes apprenticeship records, private cemetery records, industrial school records, prison registers, school admission registers and workhouse records from the archive collections. In the first month after launch over 300,000 images have been viewed on the Manchester Collection. Archives+ is intending to work in partnership with various family history publishers to digitise further family history resources.

6.4 Archives+ is playing a key role in ensuring that Manchester's digital heritage is not lost. There is a rapidly increasing volume of information which exists in digital form. Local authority archives services in Greater Manchester have traditionally received material in formats such as paper, but are now increasingly being offered material in a digital format.

6.5 Archives+ have been working in partnership with the UK Web Archive (British Library) and the National Archives to archive the web sites of local authorities,

community groups and other organisations in the region. For example in May 2011 the UK Web Archive archived the Commonwealth Games Legacy web site for prosperity.

7.0 Greater Manchester Archives Feasibility Study

7.1 This merger of MALS and GMCRO also presents a timely opportunity to review archive provision across Greater Manchester.

7.2 Not all Greater Manchester districts are part of the County Record Office joint-service arrangement (Stockport MBC is not part of the arrangement), and the nature of the current arrangement lacks clear and relevant service level agreements, presenting risks both for sustainability and for ensuring that contributing districts receive value for money. Value for contributing authorities is key, as the districts are also responsible for making provision for their own district-wide archives. In effect, there is a two-tier system of archive provision in Greater Manchester.

7.3 While some districts have made significant investment in their archive services and embedded archive provision within a broader district-wide cultural offer, there are common challenges faced by all of the archive services, and finding partnership solutions to these challenges may offer the most effective and sustainable way forward.

7.4 In June 2011 AGMA approved the commissioning of a feasibility study by Manchester City Council, on behalf of AGMA, to assess archive provision across Greater Manchester and explore options for partnership working, improved service provision and sustainability.

7.5 Funding of for the study has already been secured at that time from the North West Regional Improvement and Efficiencies Programme and The National Archive with further funding is being requested.

8.0 Next Steps

- November 2011-May 2011 – Develop Archives+ Round 2 Heritage Lottery Fund bid.
- December 2011-April 2012 – Carry out Greater Manchester Archives Feasibility Study.
- December 2011-April 2012 – Develop Service Level Agreements for Archives+ partners
- June 2012 – Submit Round 2 bid to Heritage Lottery Fund.
- September 2012 – Response from Heritage Lottery Fund on Round 2 bid.

9.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

9.1 The Committee is asked to note this report, the progress that has been made to date and the key milestones identified to ensure the successful development of the Archives+ Partnership and its key role within the refurbished and extended Central Library.

9.2 A separate members visit to the Greater Manchester County Record Office can be arranged to enable members to view some of Manchester's archive treasures and discover more about Archives+.