

ELY HUB AND CAMBRIDGESHIRE ARCHIVES

To: General Purposes Committee

Meeting Date: 20 October 2015

From: Director of Finance; Executive Director, Economy, Transport and Environment

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: 2015/036 Key decision: Yes

Purpose: To seek the approval of the Committee to a reduction in scope of, and a small increase in the budget for, the Ely Hub project.

Recommendation: The Committee is asked to agree to:

- a) the scope of the project to be restricted to resolving the longstanding accommodation requirements of Cambridgeshire Archives and county registration records;**
- b) the capital budget for the scheme to be increased to £4.2M; and**
- c) the project to be progressed through planning and acquisition to completion.**

<i>Officer contact:</i>	
Name:	Christine May
Post:	Head of Community and Cultural Services
Email:	Christine.may@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel:	01223 703521

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the 6 October meeting of the Highways and Community Infrastructure (HCI) Committee, Members were advised of an increase in the costs to convert a property in Ely for Council services, and asked to agree which option should be recommended to the General Purposes Committee. The report is attached at **Appendix A**.
- 1.2 HCI Members unanimously agreed to Option A in the report, reiterating the original purpose and focus of the project, which was to address the very longstanding accommodation needs of Cambridgeshire Archives.
- 1.3 Option A would continue the scheme just for the purposes of accommodating the archives and county registration records. The Cambridgeshire Collection (complementary library local studies collection, housed in Central Library), Ely Registration Office and staff working at Noble House could not be accommodated in this option.
- 1.4 This option would bring the costs closer to the original budget for the project, by not including a mezzanine floor and the requirements of other services. Sufficient capacity would be created for the archives on one floor by installing taller shelving, providing sufficient capacity for at least 20 years.
- 1.5 The cost of Option A (based on a recent, more detailed study) is expected to be £4.2M. This represents a £69k increase in the current capital budget in the business plan which totals £4,131k.
- 1.6 This project would address the Council's statutory duty of care for the archives in its care, in a fit for purpose building that is well located for public access. However, some revenue savings planned for future years (from integrating staff teams and from disposal of leased buildings) may be more difficult to achieve.

2.0 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

Archive and local studies services draw visitors from a wide distance; around 50% of visitors come from beyond the county and some from overseas, so convenient access by public transport and to a range of other services is important. Studies have shown that archive users make a contribution to the economy of the local area (using restaurants and local accommodation) and this is even more likely in an area that is attractive to tourists. Use at Huntingdonshire Archives and Local Studies has increased significantly since the services were combined in fit for purpose new accommodation in 2009; the same can be expected in Ely.

2.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

Archives help people to develop their personal identities and collective memories; they are used as tools to develop community identity, engagement and cohesion through a wider understanding of the history and values of others. They offer a way for citizens to "give back" to the wider community and to future generations of their own community, through the deposit of their own records and photographs, or through the cataloguing and indexing of

other historical documents, and they act as a source of inspiration for new ideas and activities. Nationally some 99% of visitors agree that archives contribute to society by preserving written heritage and culture, and the same proportion strongly agree that archives strengthen family and community identity. [Source: National Council on Archives survey of visitors to British Archives 2006]

2.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Resource Implications

The report above sets out details of significant implications in paragraphs 1.5 and 1.6.

3.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

These are set out in the original report in Appendix A and at paragraph 1.6 above.

3.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

3.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

If this approach is agreed, there will no longer be any need to consult on the Registration Office.

3.5 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

3.6 Localism and Member Involvement

The local Member for Ely fully supports the relocation of the archives to Ely.

Source Documents	Location
Agenda and Minutes of the HCI meeting on 6 October 2015.	http://www2.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/CommitteeMinutes/Committees/AgendaItem.aspx?agendaItemID=12167