

PAPER E

Isle of Wight Record Office

The Leader, and Councillor Hobart, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment and Heritage, and the Chief Executive, met with Dr Valerie Johnson and Isobel Hunter from the National Archive (TNA) on the 6 April. They were seeking to establish what progress is being made towards the provision of a Record Office meeting the requirements necessary for the office to be appointed as a Place of Deposit for Public Records.

It was agreed to commission a feasibility study, reporting in the next 3-6 months looking at the practicalities of establishing a Record Office meeting these standards, on a new site (currently proposed as the area previously occupied by Waltzing Waters in the Westridge centre, Ryde) with an outline of costs and a likely timeline, which could be shared with the National Archive. As the development is likely to be driven by current proposals to regenerate Newport Harbour it would be brought within the main regeneration plans, integrating its future with that wider scheme.

The National Archive expressed its willingness to continue to support the Council, and have asked for an updated project plan before the Feasibility Study is complete, giving them the opportunity to review and comment on the milestones.

A meeting will be held at the start of May which will

- Agree the scope of the feasibility study
- Agree who will draft the formal feasibility study document
- Agree how this will be procured
- Discuss the formation of a project board, and if agreed, who will sponsor it and the required attendees

The scoping document will be shared with the National Archive for their suggestions on possible contacts / expertise to tap into.

In the meantime, the National Archive will move to complete its inspection of the existing record office as soon as possible, working with their colleagues from their Collection Care Department to monitor conditions, to ensure that there is no significant deterioration that might pose an unacceptable risk. This will provide us with useful data and evidence to support future funding bids.

At the same time the Record Office will be applying for Archives Accreditation in August, which will help the service to plan for its future and to demonstrate its commitment to meeting the standards that are necessary for the running of a successful archive service.

Richard Smout

23rd April 2016