

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO GENERAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 29 NOVEMBER 2019

Question 1

Mr A Walker – Hereford

I applaud this public recognition that any additional cuts to the archives service's budget are impossible to deliver without a severe negative impact on service levels and associated community benefits. Can the Council assure me that the proposed review process will acknowledge the Council's statutory responsibility for provision of an archives service and the obligation to meet the licensing requirements of The National Archives?

Response

Thank you for your question and your support of the archives service. The proposed review will take account of all statutory obligations placed upon the Council in the provision and/or licensing of Archive services in the County. Furthermore, staff, stakeholders and the public will be pivotal to the review.

Question 2

Dr J Adams – Kingsthorpe

I commend the administration for their proposal to withdraw any further savings target for the museum and archives services in the 2019/20 budget and the recognition that this is an essential first step in designing and delivering a sustainable model for delivery.

Given that an HLF-funded review of the museum service which recognised the urgent need for new investment in staffing and public gallery space for the museum and art gallery has been in Herefordshire Council's hands for almost two years, can the council assure me that the promised project to consider positive options for development will commence before the end of the current financial year 2019/20?

Response

Thank you for your question and your support of the museums service. Council intends to engage with staff and stakeholders as early as possible in commencing an inclusive and informed evaluation of how we might sustain and enhance the delivery of a high quality Museum, Libraries and Archives service into the future. The budget will be finalised in February therefore a cultural services summit shall be convened in March. This will bring together a cross section of sectors as cultural services is a fundamental thread to many aspects of the council including health and wellbeing and tourism.