

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	Digitisation of the Ross Gazette newspaper
Date of decision:	26 January 2018
Decision maker:	Assistant director communities
Authority for delegated decision:	The chief executive's scheme of delegation
Ward:	Ross east and Ross west.
Consultation:	<p>Consultation was undertaken with the Heritage Lottery Fund, the council's museum, libraries and archive service, local history and community groups, and key stakeholders in the development of the project plan.</p> <p>The Ross Gazette also conducted an online public consultation with the local community. Along with local schools and community groups.</p>
Decision made:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To partner the Ross Gazette newspaper to deliver the Ross Gazette archive project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. • To host the Ross Gazette Archive on the Herefordshire History website: www.herefordshirehistory.org.uk. • Herefordshire library service to manage the digitisation of the Ross Gazette newspaper as part of their Herefordshire History digitisation programme, utilising existing partnerships with the British Library digitisation team and Townsweb Archiving.
Reasons for decision:	<p>An award of £70,600 has been made from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to the Ross Gazette Archive Project. The project run by the Ross Gazette with partners Herefordshire Libraries, Herefordshire Lore and mediaSHYPP will include digitising the 150 year newspaper archive as well as photographs that have appeared in the paper, and making them available for the public to access on Herefordshire Libraries' Herefordshire History website: www.herefordshirehistory.org.uk.</p> <p>The digitisation of the Ross Gazette archive is a significant development for the Libraries' Herefordshire History project because it will greatly expand the newspaper holdings on the website. This will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide unique source material on Herefordshire for students, researchers and the wider community; • make this material accessible to a much wider audience and preserve it for future generations; • enhance the development of the Herefordshire History website as a one-stop digital platform for local history material; • contribute to the sustainability of the digitisation programme through income generation; • set a positive precedent for future funding bids.

	<p>Herefordshire library service runs the Herefordshire History project which digitises local material on Herefordshire and makes it publicly available online. The Herefordshire History website: www.herefordshirehistory.org.uk was launched on 11th November 2014 with support from the Heritage Lottery Fund. It now contains nearly 50,000 newspapers, photographs, maps, posters and eBooks on Herefordshire from the libraries' own collection, as well as material from Herefordshire archives, museums, and other public and private collections. Items are free to view. Prints and downloads are available for a charge. There is also a developing publications programme.</p>
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>£62,496 of the Ross Gazette project grant will be spent on digitisation and hosting costs for the website.</p> <p>Match funding of £3000 will be contributed to the project as part of existing revenue budget from the library service' Herefordshire History project; £1000 will be contributed by Fastershire; £800 will be contributed by the Ross Gazette, the Ross Library Development Group and public donations.</p> <p>The Ross Gazette is responsible for all reporting and financial management of the Heritage Lottery Fund grant.</p> <p>There is a risk of claw back from the Heritage Lottery Fund if the funding is not used in accordance with the offer letter and contract.</p> <p>This has been mitigated by setting up a project team which includes experienced officers in the council's museum, libraries and archive service who will support the reporting process.</p> <p>All digital outputs must remain usable for a minimum of five years from project completion. This is a requirement of the grant and in-line with other Herefordshire History projects.</p> <p>All digital outputs are archived and may be used if the website becomes inaccessible. Income from sales and other projects are also providing funding to support the future hosting of the website.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>Alternative options for in-house digitisation were considered. It was concluded that these were too costly in terms of staff capacity.</p> <p>The council could have submitted an independent grant application. This would have required the appointment of additional staff to deliver and would not have demonstrated the wide community support that this project requires.</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>n/a</p>

Signed..... Date: