

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**MEETING WITH CABINET MEMBER, HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES**

**03 March 2015**

**Report of the Strategic Director, Health and Communities**

**WELLCOME TRUST FUNDING**

**1 Purpose of the report:**

To inform the Cabinet Member, Health and Communities about a successful bid to the Wellcome Trust for a grant to catalogue the archive of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) Derbyshire Area; to request permission to spend the grant; to agree to the recruitment of a project archivist and archives assistant to deliver the project.

**2 Information and analysis:**

- 2.1. In the 1990s, the NUM Derbyshire Area deposited a substantial archive at Derbyshire Record Office. The archive occupies approximately 190 shelves and its size is such that it has not been possible to catalogue and make the archive accessible within existing Record Office resources.
- 2.2. The particular strength of the archive is its value to the study of occupational ill health within the mining community. A large proportion of the archive consists of case files dating principally from the 1940s to the 1990s relating to benefit appeals and compensation claims by miners as a result of occupational disease or injury. As well as supporting miners to gain benefits or compensation, the NUM also ran rehabilitation centres and holiday homes for disabled miners.
- 2.3. An assessment of the archive by academics at Strathclyde University determined that it is *'an outstanding collection of major interest to medical history... containing probably the most extensive collection of material on any miners' rehabilitation centre in the UK'*. As such, it is a resource that will allow for significant new understanding and reinterpretation of the impact of coal mining on the health of the individual and the community. In addition to its value to the academic community, the archive has the potential to influence public health understanding of, and approaches to, Derbyshire's former mining communities.
- 2.4. In order to make this important archive accessible for the first time, the Record Office has successfully applied for a grant of £135,469 from the Wellcome Trust's 'Research Resources' funding strand. Research Resources awards fund the cataloguing of collections that are of

importance to the study of the medical humanities. The grant will cover the total cost of:

- one full-time archivist (grade 10) for 24 months
- one full-time archives assistant (grade 5) for 21 months
- preservation materials for repackaging the collection
- IT development of a database for listing the case files

2.5. The project staff will be employed from autumn 2015 and will be managed at the Record Office by the Archives & Local Studies Manager. Repackaging of the collection will continue for a further year, and will be carried out by existing staff alongside current duties.

2.6. In addition to detailed cataloguing of the case files and health-related records, the remainder of the collection, which dates back to 1880, will also be catalogued. This will allow people to learn more about the activities of the NUM in Derbyshire from its inception to the miners' strike and the closure of the local pits.

2.7. Once the project is under way, the Record Office intends to apply for further funding from the Wellcome Trust to carry out community engagement activities. Wigan Archives has also been successful in gaining funding for a similar project, and a joint academic symposium to disseminate the results of both projects is being explored. There are also potential opportunities to contribute material to a planned 2016 exhibition on miners and health at the National Coal Mining Museum in Wakefield.

2.8. The project is the first step in a long term ambition to catalogue and make accessible the complete coal mining collections for Derbyshire. The Record Office also holds an extensive collection of National Coal Board (NCB) records. As part of their work, the project archivist will carry out a scoping exercise on the NCB archive, with the intention of submitting a further bid to the Wellcome Trust to catalogue this material, once the NUM catalogue has been completed.

2.9. the Wellcome Trust funding will contribute towards the following Council priorities:

- A healthy Derbyshire

A database will be created that will allow detailed analysis and mapping of medical conditions. This will enable public health and other bodies to gain a better understanding of the long-term implications of the coal industry on communities in Derbyshire, and could feed into prioritisation of public health work.

- A safer Derbyshire

Cataloguing the archive opens it up for community engagement. The Record Office and other agencies will be able to develop further projects that use the NUM archive to engage the former mining communities with their heritage and contribute to the regeneration of these areas.

### **3. Financial considerations:**

No match funding is required by the Wellcome Trust. The Record Office is providing in-kind support in managing the overall project and repackaging the collection. This can be accomplished within existing staffing resources.

Redundancy costs arising from the completion of the project have been factored into the bid and are reflected in the total grant award.

### **4. Human Resources considerations:**

The project will create two full time equivalent jobs for a maximum period of 24 months. The job gradings are in line with existing posts based at the Derbyshire Record Office:

One full time Archivist at Grade 10 for up to 24 months (£26,301-£29,190, exclusive of oncosts at 20.6%, per annum)

One archives assistant at grade 5 for up to 21 months (£15,664 - £16,680, exclusive of oncosts at 20.6%, per annum)

Recruitment to these fixed term positions will be undertaken in accordance with existing County Council policies.

### **5. Other considerations:**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

### **6. Background papers:**

None

### **7. Key Decision:**

No

**8. Call-in:**

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report? No

**9. Officer's Recommendation:**

That the Cabinet Member, Health and Communities:

- I. Notes the report.
- II. Approves the expenditure of the Wellcome Trust grant as outlined in the body of the report.
- III. Agrees to the recruitment of the project staff as outlined in the body of the report.

**David Lowe  
Strategic Director  
Health and Communities**