

BARNSELEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is not a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has not been included in the relevant Forward Plan

**Report of the Executive
Director - Communities**

LIBRARIES REVIEW CONSULTATION

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of the report is :

- To update Cabinet on the finding from the Library Review engagement activities
- To seek feedback from Cabinet on the draft Library Strategy
- To seek Cabinet approval to commence public consultation on the proposed model for the Library Service.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Members:

- **Note the findings in the report from the engagement activity**
- **Approve the Library Strategy for consultation**
- **Approve a 3 month period of formal public consultation on the proposed model for Library Services.**

3. Introduction

Barnsley Council is proud of its Library services. The draft Strategy reflects our ambition and commitment to continue to unlock the huge potential that library services have to impact positively on individuals' lives while at the same time delivering local priorities.

Whilst acknowledging that this is a particularly challenging time for library services, it is also clear that they are highly valued by local communities and stakeholders alike. The next few years are crucial for the long-term sustainability and success of public library services in Barnsley.

Our statutory responsibility :

Local authorities have a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 'to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons' in the area that want to make use of it (section 7). In considering how best to deliver the statutory duty each library authority is responsible for determining, through consultation, the local needs and to deliver a modern and efficient library service that meets the requirements of their communities within available resources.

In providing this service, local authorities must, among other things:

- have regard to encouraging both adults and children to make full use of the library service (section 7(2)(b))
- lend books and other printed material free of charge for those who live, work or study in the area (section 8(3)(b)) Note that there are exceptions for example for the notification of the availability of reserved items and library overdue charges, and for the lending of audio visual material.

The Council also has statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 and section 149: Public Sector Equality Duty in shaping policy, in delivering services, and in relation to their own employees.

The Library Strategy

The draft Library Strategy is attached as Appendix C. The strategy is set in the context of the council's overall strategic outcomes :

- Create more and better jobs and good business growth
- Increase skills to get more people working
- Develop a vibrant town centre
- Strengthen our visitor economy
- Create more and better housing
- Every child attends a good school and is successful in learning and work
- Reducing demand through access to early help
- Children and adults are safe from harm
- People are healthier, happier, independent and active
- People volunteering and contributing towards stronger communities
- Protecting the borough for future generations by recycling and using renewable energy
- Customers can contact us easily and use more services online

This strategy sets out our vision for libraries to be community hubs and a vibrant part of their communities. To do this we have to work in partnership with others to support people to live healthy, resilient and fulfilling lives and create hubs that inspire young and old to be the best they can be.

In developing the strategy we reviewed examples from other local authorities and the national strategy for public libraries, 'Libraries Deliver: ambition for public libraries in England 2016 – 2021' (DCMS, 2016). The key outcomes from this, linked to council priorities are:

- Cultural and creative enrichment
- Increased reading and literacy
- Improved digital access and literacy
- Helping everyone achieve their full potential
- Healthier and happier lives

- Greater prosperity
- Stronger, more resilient communities

The objectives of the Library Strategy are :

- **Development of the Library@theLightbox** – as the heart of our network. A vibrant community hub and key town centre destination, supported by a modern and dynamic network of local libraries with a consistent brand and offer.
- **Reading** – We will promote literacy and reading for pleasure supported by stock that more customers want in order to increase our audience.
- **Digital** – We will have the right equipment, learning sessions and demonstrations showing customers the benefits of technology.
- **Learning** – We will provide space, ideas and support to help people back into employment, volunteering or education.
- **Information** – Fighting fake news and biased information we will be the trusted source for impartial information from primary sources, helping people to make the right choices.
- **Health** – We will provide health promotion information, activities and events supporting our communities to be the healthiest they can be.
- **Early help and prevention** – We will play our part in identifying people who need help and giving support or signposting to early information and advice and access to universal services.
- **Children and young people** – We will promote people and family friendly activities creating services relevant to young people.
- **Culture** – We will build a variety of local and cultural experiences.
- **Safe community spaces** – refreshed to meet local needs and co-designed with the community.
- **Activities and events** – We will offer these for all ages and relevant to the local community
- **Customer focussed** – We will be agile and responsive in meeting customer needs, and ensure staff and volunteers have the right skills to help you.
- **Funding** – We will be proactive in sourcing new funding to supplement and enhance our offer to communities.

We will measure the success of this Strategy through the achievement of the following measures:

- our social media following and engagement will increase
- increased number of visits, activities and groups
- Increased use of IT and percentage of IT usage
- Increased grant funding
- Keep offering new things to keep customers interested and engaged
- The change in young people's perceptions
- ROI from our marketing activities
- Increased self-service take up such as online renewals
- Number of new partnerships created

These will be consulted upon during the next period of public consultation and amended in light of public feedback.

About the Service

The Library Service now forms part of broader customer services in the council comprising of the following :

- the contact centre that is the front door to council services
- the web development team which includes digital champions
- the service development team which supports business change

It is helpful to provide some context in terms of the changes in the Library Service since 2012 and the proposed path over the coming years

As part of the Medium Term Financial plan and austerity Customer Services had a financial saving of £872K to be achieved by 2019/20 from which it was estimated that £165K would be derived from the Libraries Review, the balance coming from a broader review across Customer Services.

Phase 1 of the changes in the Library service occurred in 2013 whereby the opportunity to merge the Library service and Barnsley Connects (who provided customer services) enabled us to rationalise the operational structure by 21.77 FTE, create a more integrated skills mix, revise opening hours, review the mobile library provision and implement an alternative delivery for Monk Bretton Library. This Review achieved a financial saving across both service areas of £719K (Cab.19.12.2012/10.2).

A subsequent report also approved the cessation of the Mobile Library Service (Cab.11.3.2015/8.1) with a total KLOE saving of £100K.

Our current position :

Current Phase (2) – relates to the current Libraries Review which commenced with a period of public engagement in October 2016 and a further period in October 2017. Reports on the feedback from this engagement, along with a Local Needs Assessment can be found at Appendix D and Appendix E.

The intention of this Review was to seek more insight from our communities, blend this with harder data on the usage of libraries and consider how we may be able to both improve the offer whilst also achieving a further financial saving of £165k.

The Review also includes the development of a new Library Strategy (Appendix C).

If we are going to be sustainable we cannot stand still. We know that in creating a fabulous Town Centre offer with all that the Library@theLightBox will bring this creates a risk for the district libraries. We cannot create an inconsistent brand and different ways of working between the LightBox and the districts, this will be confusing for the customers and workforce alike – some consistency has to be achieved.

It is also important to note that the district libraries have received little capital investment in them since Hoyland Library opened in 2010, with only maintenance activities delivered. It is for this reason that a further phase is defined below.

Post implementation of Phase 2

During this period we will seek to implement a consistent brand through the district libraries that better synergises with Library@theLightbox. This will require capital investment and business cases to be developed.

We will continue to develop our models of working at a neighbourhood level with a particular focus during 2018 / 2019 on developing integrated working with our health partners. As part of this work we will conduct a review of the total public estate to identify the potential for further co-location of services enabling a better use of the total assets across the borough. Business cases developed may create opportunities for libraries to be co-located with other public sector services or indeed other community organisations where it makes sense from a customer and financial perspective to do so.

More co-design work will be undertaken working with both Digital Media Centre and the Digital Leadership team to realise the potential of the district libraries as digital hubs.

However, even with all of these activities the risk of continuing austerity measures remains real hence a further phase may well be required should the council's resources reduce again. It is in this context that this report strongly recommends the continued strengthening of community action and leadership, the strengthening of collaboration between the Library service and other departments within the council and our public sector partners.

4. Proposal and justification

The hierarchy of provision described below does not set out to close any existing library, but it does recognise that the Council will need to prioritise where it provides financial support.

Taking the outputs from the activities in Phase 2 an option paper has been produced for each library within which a recommended option is proposed. These individual options papers are available on request from the Service. In bringing the recommended options forward we have:

- Considered the preferred options following the community engagement - it was clear from the engagement that at this point in time (whilst we were not publicly stating that closure may be a possibility) there was little appetite for fully community managed libraries.
- Recognised that members of the public value their local library and the staff delivering the Service and that those who use the Service are very satisfied with it.
- Considered how we might best achieve the Libraries Review savings of £165.000 within the context that whilst the traditional use of libraries is declining a much broader offer is being delivered with the libraries already operating as community hubs.

The proposed model :

A tiered model is proposed, based on size of libraries and current performance levels to develop a consistent offer across the borough.

Key performance trend data for the service is listed below however more information can be found link Appendix F.

	2013	2017	% Change
Visits	746,464	823,244	+10.3%
Active Borrowers	26,510	16,366	-38.2%
Issues	581,820	426,993	-26.6%
ICT Hours Used	78,960	63,176	-20.0%
% ICT Take Up	22.9%	34.0%	+11.1%

Online developments mean that it is now easier to access a range of library services without actually visiting a library. This includes renewing and requesting items and accessing a selection of online resources, plus newer services such as e-books and e-magazines. While the use of these remote services is increasing, there has generally been a corresponding reduction in the number of physical visits to libraries and in the use of library computers.

The number of total loans will also have been affected by the wider availability of discounted paperbacks in supermarkets and from online retailers, and the library bookfund, whilst maximised due to participation in the Yorkshire Book Consortium, has remained unchanged for many years, but the costs of books has increased. The Service is exploring opportunities for shared procurement with other authorities in other areas such as the library management system to maximise value for money.

Summary of Recommended Options:

Library	Proposal	Current Hours	Proposed BMBC funded hours	ESFA funded hours	Saving
Central	Reduce opening hours – supported by Open+ self-service technology	49.5	47		£105,351
Tier 1			37		
Cudworth	No change	44.5		44.5	0
Goldthorpe	Reduce opening hours	42.5	37		£28,018
Hoyland	Reduce opening hours	45	37		£28,797
Mapplewell & Staincross	Reduce opening hours	45	37		–£4,993
Penistone	No change	40.5		40.5	0
Royston	Reduce	45	37		£3,139

	opening hours				
Wombwell	Reduce opening hours	42.5	37		£19,070
Tier 2			24		
Darfield	Reduce opening hours	31	24		£9,681
Dodworth	Reduce opening hours	31	24		£8,471
Grimethorpe	No change	39.5		39.5	0
Priory	No change	32.5	32.5*		-£5,500
Roundhouse	Reduce opening hours	41.5		39.5	0
Thurnscoe	Reduce opening hours	31.5	24		£6,155
Worsbrough	Reduce opening hours	31	24		£9,681
Totals (excl. Silverdale)		592.5	360.5	164	£207,870
Overall Totals			524.5 (-11.5%)		
Closure					
Silverdale	Discontinue book collection	9	0		0

The Executive Summary (Appendix G) provides the rationale and detail for each library,

The tiers primarily relate to the number of opening hours staffed by BMBC employees but implicit in this is the opportunity for a wider range of activities to be delivered from the larger and busier buildings. This includes an ability to have extended opening hours whereby community groups can access the building on closed days on a trusted key holder basis to use the building for meetings and activities, thus extending access to a community building. (This already happens in some libraries)

The impact on our customers is further mitigated by broader accessibility to our existing online services, such as e-books, e-audio books, online requests and renewals and reference resources.

Decisions on when the staffed opening hours are will be cognisant of both the performance information and also community group usage – this will be included as part of the public consultation. A proposal for recommended staffed opening hours is included at Appendix H.

Penistone, Cudworth, Roundhouse and Grimethorpe Libraries

These libraries have been allocated to the relevant tier based on performance however it should be noted that these libraries host Adult Skills activities (organised via the Place Directorate) and receive ESFA funding to deliver this.

This enables the opening hours to be enhanced in these locations however it should be noted that if ESFA funding is reduced or lost then the opening hours will need adjusting accordingly. The Council would need to conduct a full review of the library opening hours at all sites and Adult Learning provision.

Priory Library

This library is delivered by Priory Campus under a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) and whilst currently this is run at no cost to the library service, to continue this provision in the future will require a rental contribution for the space utilised. It is recommended that this provision continues, with a revised MOU.

5. Consideration of alternative approaches

Alternative approaches to achieve the KLOE savings have been considered as follows :

a) Closure of some libraries :

The Councils Strategy described an outcome of creating Strong & Resilient Communities. Libraries contribute to this outcome in many ways whether through supporting health & wellbeing, skills, reading for pleasure or personal development and many more. Given the value that the community place on their libraries we felt that this course of action should be a last course after all other avenues had been explored and discounted.

b) Use of self-service technology

The use of self-service access technology was explored during the engagement activity and whilst there was some interest, given the capital investment required to retrospectively install the infrastructure, it was felt that this was not a viable option at this stage. There is still the opportunity on a case by case basis to invest in self-service kiosks which will enable staff to focus on development activities in line with the draft Library Strategy.

c) Community managed libraries

Community managed libraries were investigated and explored during the two rounds of engagement and it was clear that whilst community groups valued their libraries and recognised them as community hubs that they worked with there was not the appetite to take on the responsibility for managing a library at this point in time.

Whilst the second round of engagement cannot be used as statistically valid, the majority of respondents supported reducing opening hours.

6. Implications for local people / service users

A local needs assessment has been produced as part of the review and is available at Appendix I.

Implications for local people, both individuals and groups using the library, revolve around rationalised access to their local library due to less opening hours. However, the intention is to create a hybrid offer where library and community groups can access the building on closed days on a trusted key holder basis to use the building for meetings and activities – this may well enhance access to libraries noting that this offer already operates successfully in some libraries.

The public consultation will seek to determine if and how library users and groups are significantly affected by the proposals and what mitigations can be implemented.

The proposed recommendations will enable the continued provision of all current libraries in line with the 2 tiered approach, based on the evidence of usage and cost. Under this model, no library will be open for less than 24 staffed hours.

7. Financial implications

There are no financial implications from the request to proceed to formal public consultation as the running costs will be minimal and contained within the Customer Services budget.

There is an expectation that the proposed reduction in opening hours will achieve the Libraries review KLOE saving of £165K with any additional saving being re-invested back into the Service.

8. Employee implications

There are no employee implications from the request to proceed to public consultation, but it is acknowledged that the future organisational structure which will be subject to a further report following consultation will result in a reduction in posts alongside changes to job profiles to reflect a revised operating model.

All employees affected would be dealt with in accordance with HR policies and procedures and in consultation with Trade Unions. It is anticipated that any compulsory redundancies will be mitigated through vacancies and SVER requests.

9. Communications implications

A communications and consultation plan has been produced for the public consultation and is available at Appendix J.

The public consultation will be actively promoted via libraries, council website, media, social media, council and community buildings and schools throughout the 3 month period.

Whilst there is a low base of active borrowers and users across the Service, there is the potential for a strong public reaction to any perceived negative change.

Similarly, the Library@theLightbox project is on the same timeline as the Libraries review and presents another potential conflict in terms of message and the false perception that the new library is drawing resources from the community libraries.

10. Consultations

HR, Performance & Communications:

Alison Brown

Sue Sleight

Equality & Diversity:

Jules Horsler

Faith Ridgwick

Finance, Assets & Information:

Mark Bell

Legal & Governance:

Andrew Frosdick

Garry Kirk

Trade Unions:

April Pepper, Unison

Ann Gallagher, GMB

Others:

Diana Terris, Chief Executive

Matt Gladstone, Executive Director - Place

Rachel Dickinson, Executive Director - People

Wendy Lowder, Executive Director, Communities

Phil Hollingsworth, Acting Service Director – Stronger, Safer, Healthier Communities

Dave Robinson, Service Director – Customer Information & Digital Services

Graham Terry, Programme Lead, Provider Services

11. The Corporate Plan and the Council's Performance Management Framework

The work of the public library service contributes to a wide agenda around:

- raising educational attainment through language development
- reading and learning
- supporting people into employment through free access to ICT and Wi-Fi and assistance in Job Clubs
- volunteering opportunities
- improving health and well-being both through access to information and self-help materials
- reducing social isolation and loneliness through groups and activities
- supporting community cohesion.

12. Promoting equality, diversity, and social inclusion

The public consultation will include specific opportunities for the Equalities Forums to participate and will be supported with any required interpreters or access to the translation service.

The public consultation will seek to determine if there are any equalities implications not yet identified or mitigated.

An Equalities Impact Assessment summary is available at Appendix K, and this will be updated for the report on the results of the public consultation.

13. **Risk management issues**

Risk	Mitigation
Judicial Review, reputational damage, legal costs.	Two previous rounds of public engagement; formal public consultation on the proposed model
Failure to meet statutory duty under the 1964 Public Libraries & Museums Act	Council is not proposing the closure of any libraries and will consult fully on the opening hours.
Failure to meet statutory duty under the Equalities Act 2010	Two previous rounds of public engagement; formal public consultation on the proposed model
Risk of negative perception from DCMS from failure to inform them of public consultation	DCMS informed of plans for public consultation on proposed model.
Negative perception from public and staff regarding enhanced opening hours at libraries supported by ESFA.	Further review of provision would be required if ESFA funding ceased.
Continued decline of performance of Library Service due to maintaining all current service points and lack of investment	To re-invest any identified savings over and above the KLOE back into the organisational structure and marketing of the Service.
Library@theLightbox could draw customers from community libraries	Capital investment in the physical infrastructure of the community libraries and the development of a consistent brand and offer across the network.
Failure to address issues raised in staff risk assessment	To re-invest any identified savings over and above the KLOE back into the organisational structure.

14. **Glossary**

ASCL Adult Skills and Community Learning
 EFSA Education and Skills Funding Agency
 KLOE Key Lines Of Enquiry
 MOU Memorandum Of Understanding

15. **List of appendices**

Appendix A Not applicable
 Appendix B Not Applicable

Appendix C Draft Library Strategy
Appendix D Libraries Review Engagement Report October 2016
Appendix E Libraries Review Engagement Report October 2017
Appendix F Key performance trend data
Appendix G Executive Summary – Options
Appendix H Proposed opening hours
Appendix I Local Needs Assessment
Appendix J Communications and Consultation Plan
Appendix K Equalities Impact Assessment

22. Background papers

15 individual Library options papers are available upon request from the Service.

If you would like to inspect background papers for this report, please email governance@barnsley.gov.uk so that appropriate arrangements can be made

Report author: Kathryn Green

Financial Implications /
Consultation

*(To be signed by senior Financial Services officer
where no financial implications)*

