

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has been included in the relevant Forward Plan

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES TO CABINET ON 12th DECEMBER 2018

FEEDBACK FROM THE LIBRARIES REVIEW PUBLIC CONSULTATION

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to feedback to Cabinet the outcomes from the 3 month public consultation on proposed library opening hours and the draft Library Strategy. The report seeks final approval for changes to Customer Services, including libraries, to achieve the KLOE saving of £840,562, including £165,000 relating to libraries.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Members:

Consider the outcomes of the public consultation and subject thereto:

- **Note the recommendation that the original proposal to reduce opening hours and introduce a tiered model is supported by the outcomes of the public consultation, with the exception of changes at Hoyland and Library @ the Lightbox.**
- **Note that there is a requirement for a revised Customer Services operating structure;**
- **Approve the proposed revised opening hours for libraries with effect from 1st April 2019;**
- **Approve the proposed Library Strategy with effect from 1st April 2019;**
- **Discontinue the Silverdale Book Collection from 1st January 2019.**

3. INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 The council recognises the need to re-shape the public library offer to attract more people and different demographic groups to use the libraries and reverse the decline in usage in recent years. The draft Library Strategy sets out the areas for development and this is demonstrated by the new offer being developed for Library @ the Lightbox and supported by the council's investment in the infrastructure of the community libraries.

In addition, as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, Customer Services has a financial saving of £840,562 to be achieved by 2019/20 from which it was estimated that £165,000 would be derived from the Libraries Review, the balance coming from a broader review across Customer Services.

- 3.2 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 delivering 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.

- 3.3 The Libraries Review commenced with a period of public engagement in October 2016 to understand customer views on improving the service and a further period in October 2017 to capture views on the most appropriate approach to the future operating model and to achieve the KLOE saving. In June 2018, Cabinet approved a 3 month period of public consultation (Cab.13.6.2018/12) on proposed library opening hours and the draft Library Strategy. This report provides the results of that public consultation and recommendations for opening hours from 1st April 2019.

4. PROPOSAL AND JUSTIFICATION

- 4.1 The proposal agreed for public consultation did not set out to close any existing libraries, but it did recognise that the Council needed to prioritise where it provides financial support, so a tiered model was proposed, based on size of libraries and current performance levels to develop a consistent offer across the borough.
- 4.2 The original proposal was to reduce staffed opening hours by 68 hours per week across 12 libraries and to discontinue the book collection at Silverdale. Four libraries host Adult Skills and Community Learning (ASCL) activities (organised via the Place Directorate) and receive ESFA funding to deliver this, so the current opening hours were unaffected by the proposals. It should be noted that if ESFA funding is reduced or lost then the opening hours will need adjusting accordingly. In that eventuality the Council would need to conduct a full review of the library opening hours at all sites including Adult Learning provision. Priory Campus delivers library services on behalf of the council under a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU).
- 4.3 The analysis of responses from members of the public aged 14 years and over during the 3 month public consultation can be found at Appendix B. 1,299 responses from members of the public aged 14 and over were received between 21st June and 21st September 2018 and overall 46.9% of respondents agreed with the proposals and 18.6% were not affected by them (65.5% in total), 32.9% didn't

agree and 2% gave no response. This overall percentage includes higher agreement from libraries where there was no proposal to change the opening hours and some individual libraries did not agree with the proposal for their library. 92.5% of respondents had used a library or library services in the last 12 months. The number of respondents equates to 0.6% of the population of Barnsley aged 14 and above.

- 4.4 A survey was also available for children under the age of 14 years. 567 responses were received for this survey; however 242 children did not want to comment on any library. Of those who did, 50.6% agreed with the proposed changes and 27.3% were not affected. 22.1% did not agree with the proposals and of these 24 children felt it would make it a lot harder to use the library (Appendix C).
- 4.5 A total of 49 comments were received explaining why changes in staffed hours will make it harder for respondents to use the library, 51% of these were related to different views about opening hours and 18% were due to work or family commitments. As the numbers who felt it would make it a lot harder to use the library were low across the borough the conclusion is that the level of impact is not significant enough to warrant a change to the proposals.

Whilst some respondents to the Children's Survey at Darfield, Hoyland, Mapplewell and Thurnscoe would have preferred longer opening hours on evenings and Saturdays the numbers were very low and only 19 respondents across these sites felt they would be affected a lot or a little by the proposals.

On this basis, we believe the original proposal to introduce a tiered approach and reduce opening hours across libraries is fundamentally correct and supported. There were some negative responses received during the consultation in relation to certain libraries and these are detailed below with mitigations or amendments to the proposal.

- 4.6 The outcomes from both public consultation surveys highlighted that the libraries with the highest areas of disagreement were:
- Dodworth
 - Mapplewell
 - Royston
 - Thurnscoe

For these libraries, the numbers who disagreed with the proposals ranged between 26 and 49 people over the age of 14 years. This is summarised below:

Dodworth:

The majority of respondents stated that they would prefer to have a late night or longer opening hours to allow people who are unable to use the library during the day to use it. The inability to use during the day was for people who work or are unable to attend for other reasons such as child care.

Response:

Access to Dodworth Library for library and community groups is available during the proposed closure periods via the trusted key holder scheme that is currently used in

Dodworth Library each Wednesday. Staffed hours have been retained on Saturday mornings to assist people who work to access the library.

Mapplewell:

Respondents identified that Mapplewell Library has a luncheon club and a regular community event on the proposed closure day.

Response:

Access to Mapplewell Library for library and community groups will continue to be available to people on the closure day via the trusted key holder scheme. The proposed closure day has the least number of activities taking place within the Village Hall.

Royston:

Respondents identified that Royston Lifelong Learning Centre is used by Adult Skills and Community Learning, a nursery and the Learning Disabilities Team on the proposed closure day.

Response:

Access to Royston Lifelong Learning Centre when the library is closed has been agreed with all affected parties. The Service have liaised with library and community groups at all sites to extend the current trusted key holder scheme where they can access the building on closed days to use the building for meetings and activities.

Thurnscoe:

Respondents stated that they would like the library to be open earlier in a morning and on proposed closure day.

Response:

Access to Thurnscoe library for when the library is closed has been agreed with all current groups including DECV and Big Local who are current trusted key holders. Any other library and community groups who would like access to the library on the proposed closure day can become trusted key holders.

Similarly all affected groups in other libraries have agreed a plan to either continue on a trusted key holder basis or change their meeting day.

The current scheme is working successfully at various libraries, but there will now be a formal process with agreed terms and conditions to ensure adequate protection for all parties. The process and documentation has been co-produced with advice from Legal, Health and Safety, Insurance and risk management. The new process will be shared with any current groups and future requests for Trusted Key Holder access.

- 4.7 There are two libraries where it is proposed to amend the opening hours following the public consultation.

Hoyland Library (54 respondents disagreeing with the original proposal)

Respondents (21 people) indicated a preference for the late night to remain on a Monday compared to 8 people on Thursday. Other factors supporting this are CAB sessions currently taking place on Monday evenings and the availability of a caretaker for the LIFT building on Mondays.

Response:

Based on the consultation responses and given this has no impact on the financial saving it is recommended that the current late night on a Monday is retained.

Central Library (63 people) indicated that they would like the library to be staffed on Saturday afternoons up to 4pm (the current hours).

Response:

In the context of the wider town centre development and to enable the Library @ the Lightbox to fully support a town centre activity plan, it is recommended that additional staff hours be allocated to the Library @ the Lightbox to enable maximum use of the facility and that the additional expenditure (£34,913) be considered as part of the Council's wider Medium Term Financial Strategy.

- 4.8 A revised list of opening hours to take effect from 1st April 2019 can be found at Appendix D. The revised proposal is to reduce staffed hours from 592.5 to 528 hours per week, a 10.9% reduction of 64.5 hours per week.
- 4.9 Whilst Customer Services has a financial saving to achieve as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, the Libraries Review is also an opportunity to re-shape the offer to the public line with the council's strategic plans and priorities, re-energise the Service to increase usage and create an operating model aligned to delivering a proactive service offer to meet community needs. To achieve this a draft Library Strategy was also produced and the consultation sought the public's views on this (Appendix E). 57.6% of respondents agreed with the Strategy.

From the comments 24% of respondents did not want a reduction in library services or funding and other comments related to the importance of staff, IT and groups in libraries, all of which form part of the Library Strategy and future operating model. Another concern was that the Strategy lacked detail on how it would be achieved. The annual Business Unit and Service plans produced over the period covered by the Strategy would contain these detailed actions. It is recommended that the Strategy be approved.

- 4.10 In delivering the Library Strategy we will seek to implement a consistent brand through the community libraries that better synergises with the Library @ the Lightbox. Capital investment has been identified to support this and to engage with local communities on creating flexible spaces and reducing the 'gap' in service provision between community libraries and the Library @ the Lightbox. The combination of a new strategy, revised roles with a stronger focus on engagement, digital support and promotion within the operating structure and the investment of capital budget to refresh the physical space in community libraries and enable them to embrace and deliver new services will provide an opportunity to re-brand the Service and reach out to wider demographic sectors who have not previously engaged with the Service.

- 4.11 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 the Community Building Review and Principal Towns initiative 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.
- 4.12 More co-design work will be undertaken working with both Digital Media Centre and the Digital Leadership team to realise the potential of the community libraries as digital hubs, alongside the strengthening of collaboration between the Library service and other departments within the council and our public sector partners.

5. CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

- 5.1 Alternative approaches to achieve the KLOE savings were considered as part of the 2017 public engagement, and the outcomes detailed in the previous report (Cab.13.6.2018/12):

a) Closure of some libraries :

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

Whilst there was some interest, given the capital investment required to retrospectively install the infrastructure retrospectively, 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.

c) Community managed libraries

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.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE/SERVICE USERS

- 6.1 A local needs assessment was completed prior to the public consultation and this has been updated for this report (Appendix F).
- 6.2 The implications for local people are considered minimal due to the following points:
- Only 0.6% of the population participated in the public consultation
 - 65.5% of respondents either agreed with or were not affected by the proposals
 - There are no plans to close any libraries. The Silverdale book collection will cease, but only 2 people responded in relation to this service.
 - All libraries will be staffed for at least 24 hours per week.

- Late night or weekend access has been maintained at all libraries.
- The Library @ the Lightbox will be staffed for 50.5 hours per week (an increase of 1 hour per week) and will also have self-service access outside these hours.
- A trusted key holder scheme will be implemented to enable local groups to access the library on closed days/non-staffed times for meetings or activities.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Consultations have taken place with representatives of the Service Director Finance (S151 Officer).
- 7.2 The proposed restructure will help to support the delivery of KLOE BU7 E1 (Remodelling Customer Services) by providing cost savings of £805,649 against a savings target of £840,562.
- 7.3 The shortfall of £34,913 is as a result of staffing the Saturday afternoons at the Library @ the Lightbox. The shortfall for 2019/20 will be considered as part of the Council's wider Medium Term Financial Strategy. Work is however currently underway to identify how we can sustain this from 2020/21.
- 7.4 The table below provides a summary of the savings profile of the proposals along with a comparison of expected savings against the KLOE target.

	2019/20 £	2020/21 £	2021/22 £	Later Years £
Revenue Effects				
Current Structure Costs	3,687,747	3,687,747	3,687,747	3,687,747
Proposed Structure Costs	2,882,098	2,882,098	2,882,098	2,882,098
Reduction in Costs	-805,649	-805,649	-805,649	-805,649
KLOE Target BU7 E1	-840,562	-840,562	-840,562	-840,562
Further Savings Required	-34,913	-34,913	-34,913	-34,913

8. EMPLOYEE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 In achieving the KLOE saving for Customer Services and revising the library opening hours it is acknowledged that a new organisational structure will need to be implemented by 1st April 2019. The staff consultation period commenced on 8th October 2018 and a separate delegated report will detail the new structure which will result in a reduction in posts alongside changes to job profiles to reflect a revised operating model.
- 8.2 All employees affected are being supported by HR 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. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 As outlined in 3.1 the authority has a statutory obligation to provide a comprehensive and efficient public library service under the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act, and to meet Equalities duties set out in legislation.
- 9.2 It is considered that the proposals recommended in the report properly discharge the Council's legal obligations.
- 9.3 The recommendations do not involve the closure of any libraries or a different delivery model and the tiered approach to financial support based on size of libraries and current performance levels represents a coherent and rational approach which is consistent with the Council's statutory obligations under the 1964 Act.
- 9.4 The process followed by the Council in relation to engagement and public consultation is consistent with general public law obligations with regard to consultation and the need to act fairly. Proper consideration has been given to the consultation responses as summarised in section 4 of the report and in the relevant appendix.
- 9.5 The approach to compiling a local needs assessment and an Equalities Impact Assessment has been robust and with the benefit of that exercise proper consideration has been given to the equalities impact of the recommendations as summarised in section 14 of the report. In doing so the Council has properly discharged its obligations under Equalities legislation.
- 9.6 Overall therefore the risk of either a judicial review or an inquiry by the Secretary of State is considered to be limited and any such challenge could be effectively rebutted.

10. CUSTOMER AND DIGITAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 As part of Customer Services and Digital Information the new Library Strategy and operating model have been designed to enable the Service to support and deliver both the Customer Services Strategy and Digital First.
- 10.2 The new job profiles have a strong alignment to digital skills and supporting customers to self-serve, in conjunction with engagement with customers, partners and communities to build a strong and diverse programme of activity to re-energise libraries within communities.
- 10.3 Libraries will be community and digital hubs for customers to learn, use and exploit technology, access digital services and engage in activities to deliver our outcomes and commitments in the Library Strategy.

11. COMMUNICATIONS IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The libraries review has enabled the service to work with Communications and Marketing to revitalise the Library service's brand, bringing it in line with the Library @ the Lightbox look and feel. Communications and Marketing will be working with the service to cross promote their services and activities.
- 11.2 Communications and Marketing are working with the Library Service and the town centre redevelopment team to make sure that the Library @ the Lightbox is an integral part of future town centre events and activities.
- 11.3 Previous reports have raised the potential for a public reaction to any proposed changes and this remains, although reduced as there are no plans to close any libraries.
- 11.4 Its key that we are clear with the public that the development of the Library @ the Lightbox is not taking resources away from the community Libraries. Community Libraries will receive capital funding so they can benefit from new ways of working developed for the Library @ the Lightbox and create flexible spaces to increase the use of libraries and potential for new activities.
- 11.5 If this report is approved, the outcomes of the public consultation will be communicated with Members and the public.

12. CONSULTATIONS

12.1 Human Resources and Business Support

Alison Brown

Sue Sleight

Malachi Rangecroft

Business Improvement and Communications

Michael Potter

Jules Horsler

Faith Ridgwick

Malachi Rangecroft

Katie Rogers

Finance, Assets & Information:

Mark Bell

Legal & Governance:

Andrew Frosdick

Garry Kirk

Employment and Skills:

Tom Smith

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, Service Director – Stronger, Safer, Healthier Communities

Dave Robinson, Service Director – Customer Information & Digital Services

Graham Terry, Programme Lead, Provider Services

13. THE CORPORATE PLAN AND THE COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

- 13.1 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.

14. PROMOTING EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

- 14.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment summary has been produced and is available at Appendix G.
- 14.2 During the public consultation the Service worked with Barnsley's network of equality forums to encourage people from diverse groups to complete the survey.

The responses to the survey have been analysed by the Equality and Inclusion Manager to understand if diverse respondents had broadly similar or significantly different views about the opening hours and the impacts these would have on them.

- 14.3 The respondents to the library consultation survey were, from a diversity point of view, broadly representative of the library users and/or the local community. The consultation highlighted areas where there is the potential for a degree of inequality of impact in respect of gender, age and ethnicity. However given the small sample size for ethnicity we will need further work to engage with this community to better understand the reasons behind this. Further monitoring of library usage after implementation should enable any differentials in impact to be assessed and therefore addressed at an early stage.
- 14.4 The consultation comments suggested that Saturday afternoon openings are important at Central Library for people with children and for people who work full-time during the week. The recommendation to retain staffed hours at the Central Library on Saturday afternoon addresses this concern.
- 14.5 The following mitigating actions have been taken to ensure that those affected by the proposed changes to opening hours can still access library services during non-staffed hours:
- Trusted key holder status: leaders of community groups and activities will be able to apply for trusted key holder status which means they will continue to be able to use the library for community group meetings and activities when the library is closed.
 - Open Plus: approved individuals and groups will be able to access the ground floor of the Library @ the Lightbox outside of main opening hours to use a wide

range of library services including book borrowing, use of Wi-Fi, printing facilities etc.

- 14.6 Public libraries are available for all and the Council will ensure that the usage of the library continues to be diverse following the implementation of the proposed opening hours by improving the quality of the diversity data held on library user records.

15. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 15.1 The risk register relating to the Libraries Review has been updated following the public consultation.

Risk	Mitigation
Judicial Review, reputational damage, legal costs.	Two 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 has consulted fully on the opening hours.
Failure to meet statutory duty under the Equalities Act 2010	Two 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 @ the Lightbox 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.
Impact on community groups using libraries as a result of reduced opening hours.	Trusted key holder scheme to be formalised and rolled out.
Reduced involvement of Library @ The Lightbox in planned town centre activity.	To retain staffed hours on Saturday afternoons to maximise potential for organised activity to support the redevelopment of the town centre.

16. GLOSSARY

ASCL – Adult Skills and Community Learning
ESFA – Education and Skills Funding Agency
MOU – Memorandum Of Understanding
KLOE – Key Line Of Enquiry

17. LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Financial Implications
Appendix B: Analysis of adults' public consultation survey
Appendix C: Analysis of children's public consultation survey
Appendix D: Revised opening hours
Appendix E: Library Strategy 2018 – 2021
Appendix F: Libraries Review Local Needs Assessment Executive Summary
Appendix G: Equalities Impact Assessment Summary

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Libraries Review Needs Assessment
- Libraries Review Public Consultation original data

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

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