

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside
<b>Date:</b>	30 October 2015
<b>Title:</b>	Library Service Transformation – Draft Strategy to 2020
<b>Reference:</b>	7020
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

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#### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide a summary of the Library Service’s Transformation - Draft Strategy to 2020 to ensure that the Library Service is sustainable and relevant to the diverse and changing needs of people who live, work or study in Hampshire.
- 1.2 This paper seeks approval to enter into a public consultation regarding proposals for the future delivery of the Library Service to 2020, as set out in the Draft Strategy attached to this report as Appendix 1.

#### 2. Contextual information

2.1 Hampshire’s Library Service is currently delivered through a network of:

- 48 Libraries (including 3 Discovery Centres),
- 5 Community Libraries
- 4 Mobile Library routes serving 250 stops
- 1 Prison Library
- a range of online, specialist and outreach services

2.2 The annual revenue budget for the Library Service in 2015/16 is £12.4 million and the Service generates a further £1.5 million of income. Approximately 525 staff (325 full time equivalent) work in the Library Service, which also receives 40,000 hours of support a year from volunteers to deliver a broad range of services.

2.3 Under Section 7 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, each Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide a ‘*comprehensive and efficient*’ Library Service for local people; although it does not define what is meant by ‘comprehensive and efficient’, leaving it open to local interpretation.

### **3. Financial Considerations**

- 3.1 As part of the wider Government reduction in funding for Local Authorities, it is anticipated that the Library Service will need to make a further 14% reduction in its budget of about £1.7 million between 2017 and 2020.

### **4. Summary of the Draft Strategy to 2020**

4.1 The Strategy sets out the challenges, considerations and direction of travel over the next five years that would ensure the Library Service is run efficiently and positioned to meet the changing demands placed on it. The Strategy demonstrates a commitment to the delivery of a broad range of modern, affordable library services that would meet people's needs in reading, information, learning, literacy, health and wellbeing, business and leisure.

4.2 The main proposals can be summarised as follows:

- Place our libraries into four different tiers to provide a standardised approach to services
- Invest £500,000 every year for four years from the £2 million Book Fund to make our libraries modern and vibrant, making best use of new technology and digital systems.
- Permanently reduce the Book Fund by £500,000 from 2020 onwards
- Replace the expensive Mobile Library Service with modern alternatives
- Review the future viability of static libraries, using an agreed set of criteria
- Increase the use of trained volunteers to support the work of paid Library staff
- Rebrand our busiest libraries as Discovery Centres
- Develop our library staff
- Share library buildings with partner organisations for several services to be accessed in one visit
- Phase a withdrawal of poorly used library collections (e.g. CDs, games, and DVDs) and transfer other specialist collections to other providers

4.3 The ambition is to demonstrate innovation, modern thinking and business leadership to provide comprehensive, high quality but affordable library services that are suitable for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **5. Consultation**

5.1 There are three main audiences proposed within the public consultation:

- Library Service workforce – including Library staff, Trade Unions and Volunteers
- Library Service customers – including active Library Members and non-users
- Stakeholders – including County Councillors, District, Borough, Town and Parish Councils, adjacent local authorities, Members of Parliament and local community partners.

- 5.2 For Library staff there will be a briefing of Library Managers, followed by a series of workshops in eight libraries during November to discuss the draft Strategy with front line staff. Library customers will be consulted via an on-line questionnaire which will be emailed to every Library member. Printed copies of the questionnaire will also be available in every library for customers who do not wish to complete the questionnaire online and copies of the questionnaire will be given to every Mobile Library customer. Stakeholders will be approached individually and asked to complete the questionnaire on behalf of their organisation.
- 5.3 In addition the Library Service will be commissioning an independent research company to undertake telephone surveys with over 1,000 Hampshire residents, selected to reflect the make up of the population of Hampshire.
- 5.4 The public consultation questionnaire will ask whether people are supportive of the principle that the Library Service has to deliver savings, but also has to invest to ensure the future of the Service. The more detailed questions will be around the future viability of under used static libraries and the proposed closure of the Mobile Library Service.
- 5.5 To encourage as many people as possible to respond to the consultation, a media plan has been drawn up to include press releases and social media. Posters will also be put up in every library to publicise the consultation.

## **6. Mobile Library Service**

- 6.1 The Mobile Library Service is the most expensive part of the Library Service. The mobile vehicles are nearing the end of their leases and new vehicles would cost more to lease or purchase. The service costs £360,000 a year to run, but it is only used by around 2,230 people (less than 1% of Hampshire's library customers) and demand continues to decline with over 100 of the 250 mobile stops having fewer than four customers. The Strategy sets out a number of alternative options for residents who currently use the service, a quarter of whom already visit static libraries. The consultation on the Draft Strategy to 2020 will, in the case of the Mobile Library Service, be the final consultation on this part of the Library Service, with a decision being made on the future of the Mobile Service in April 2016.

## **7. Equalities**

- 7.1 Equalities Impact Assessments have been drafted for the potential changes to the Mobile Library Service and the impact of reducing the number of static libraries. These will be reviewed and updated as a result of the consultation and used to inform the final decision on the Strategy by the Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside.

## **8. Consultation Timetable**

- 8.1 It is proposed to run the consultation from 2 November 2015 – 16 January 2016 (11 weeks) to give people the opportunity to make representations on the proposals and to offer alternatives for consideration. The feedback from

the consultation will be collated and, where appropriate, amendments will be made to the existing proposals. Any alternatives put forward will be assessed before the final Strategy to 2020 is submitted to the Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside for a decision in April 2016. The implementation of the changes to the Library Service will follow afterwards.

8.2 The proposed consultation timetable is:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Estimated date</b>
Start of Public Consultation	2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2015
End of the Public Consultation	16 <sup>th</sup> January 2016
Detailed analysis of consultation responses	Jan – Feb 2016
Revision to Library Service Transformation – Draft Strategy to 2020	March 2016
Executive Member Decision	April 2016
Implementation of approved Library Service Transformation - Strategy to 2020	From Summer 2016

**9. Recommendation(s)**

That the Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside:

- i) Notes the aims and objectives of the Library Service Transformation – Draft Strategy to 2020.
- ii) Approves entering into public consultation regarding proposals for the future delivery of the Library Service to 2020.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:****Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes/no
Maximising well-being:	yes/no
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes/no
<b>OR</b>	
<p><b>This proposal does not link to the Corporate Strategy but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:</b></p> <p><i>NB: Only complete this section if you have not completed any of the Corporate Strategy tick boxes above. If it is not applicable, please delete.</i></p>	

*NB: If the 'Other significant links' section below is not applicable, please delete it.*

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

None

## IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

### 1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

**Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:**

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

#### **Equalities Impact Assessment:**

See guidance at <http://intranet.hants.gov.uk/equality/equality-assessments.htm>

*Inset in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state*

- (a) why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or*
- (b) will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions*

### 2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

There is no impact on crime and disorder.

### 3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?
- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?