HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Culture and Recreation
Date of Decision:	14 January 2010
Decision Title:	Outline Proposal for Future Static Library Provision in Hampshire
Decision Reference:	1147
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Rural Affairs

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1. Executive Summary

1.1. This paper sets out a set of new customer pledges to improve the level of library service provision across Hampshire, subject to funding being available. It also categorises Hampshire's static libraries and Discovery Centres into five different types including community-run libraries and library pods. The paper seeks agreement from the Executive Member to this proposed way forward for the provision of static libraries in Hampshire.

2. Contextual information

2.1. One of the main recommendations of the Library Scrutiny Panel (and endorsed by the County Council's Culture and Communities Select Committee in January 2008) was for a Vision and Strategy for the Library and Information Service which itself was approved by Cabinet on 29 June 2009 [1].

2.2. This then lead on to a framework for improving the Library and Information Service which was approved by the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation on 10 September 2009 [2].

2.3. The framework set out the following commitment to Hampshire residents, based on the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's 2009 definition of what constitutes a 'comprehensive and efficient local public library service':-

[1] http://www.hants.gov.uk/decisions/decisions-docs/090629-cabine-R0622095013.html

[2] http://www.hants.gov.uk/decisions/decisions-docs/090910-emccra-R0904114320.html

Hampshire's Library and Information Service (LIS) aims to provide access to library services for everyone in Hampshire, regardless of age and income and within reasonable travelling distances. 'Reasonable' is defined in relation to travel cost, time taken, frequency of timetabled routes for public transport or degree of physical difficulty involved. This service will be provided through the appropriate mix of static and mobile libraries.

Static libraries will offer the following:

- *Books and other materials*
- *Information of all kinds*
- *Signposting of other services available to local people whether provided in the library or elsewhere*
- *Access to public IT*
- *Range of library/reading linked activities for children, adults and special needs groups*
- *Where available, fast track service (self service for issuing and returning books and digital stock management)*
- *Access to learning and skills development programme*
- *Spaces for community use (where available)*

Where appropriate, there will be a charge for some of the services.

2.4. The recent consultation document from the Department of Culture Media and Sport about the modernisation of public libraries[3] includes an article about Hampshire's Library and Information Service and its commitment to Hampshire residents.

3. Static Libraries

3.1. LIS is committed to improving the offer in the static libraries and, in response to the feedback received from library users, LIS is making the following **customer service pledges,** subject to funding being available:

- We will offer more consistent opening hours to agreed standards for each type of static library, with the on-going aim to increase access to library services.
- We will not close at lunch time
- We will improve the quantity and quality of stock available in our libraries
- We will initial real dialogue with our customers and local communities in order to understand and respond to their needs wherever possible
- Our staff will be motivated and trained to meet our customers' evolving needs

[3] Empower, Inform, Enrich, December 2009 DCMS
http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/consultations/6488.aspx

4. Future library types

4.1. In the future it is proposed to categorise Hampshire's libraries into the following types:

- Discovery Centres
- Large libraries
- Medium libraries
- Small libraries
- Neighbourhood libraries
- Community-run libraries and/or pods

4.2. Appendix 1 lists the libraries currently in each of these categories. The minimum standards for each type are outlined below.

5. Discovery Centres (3)

5.1. Discovery Centres are located in major towns and will provide:

- Full library service
- Access to e-resources and e-books
- Provision of a wide range of community/performance/museum/visual arts activities and events
- Public IT access
- Provision of and signposting to full range of County Council services and activities
- Access to a range of learning opportunities
- Facilities for partner services
- Spaces for community use
- Local studies and family history materials and facilities
- Opening hours – 55+ hours a week
- Open on Sundays where appropriate

5.2. There are currently two Discovery Centres, Winchester and Gosport, with a third planned for opening in late 2010 following the renovation of the Basingstoke library.

5.3. All are open for 55 or more hours per week and two are open on Sundays. Discussions need to be had with Gosport Borough Council and others about the viability of opening Gosport Discovery Centre on Sundays.

5.4. The range of additional activities, performance, museum provision varies widely across the three Discovery Centres and is very much dependent on the space and facilities provided.

5.5. In broad terms all three Discovery Centres do or will meet the minimum standards set.

6. Large libraries (9)

6.1. Large libraries are located in towns and urban areas and will provide:

- Full library service

- Access to e-resources and e-books
- Space for community activities and events
- Public IT access
- Provision of and signposting to learning activities
- Range of informal activities and clubs
- Access for partner services (where possible)
- Local studies and family history materials and facilities
- Opening hours – 40+ hours a week
- Open Saturdays and Sundays where appropriate

6.2. The 12 large-scale libraries are currently open for between 41 and 52 hours per week including Saturday with 2 currently open on Sundays. They all meet these standards.

7. Medium Libraries (15)

7.1 Medium libraries are located in small towns and large villages and will provide:

- Full library service
- Access to e-resources and e-books
- Limited space for community activities and events
- Public IT access
- Signposting to learning activities
- Range of informal activities and clubs
- Opening hours 35+ hours a week
- Open on Saturdays

7.2. The 13 medium libraries meet these standards.

8. Small and Neighbourhood Libraries (26)

8.1. Small and neighbourhood libraries are located in villages and urban areas and will provide:

- Limited library service i.e. fewer books and reduced range of books etc.
- Access to e-resource and e-books
- Limited space for community activities and events
- Limited public IT access
- Signposting to learning opportunities
- Limited range of informal activities and clubs
- Opening hours based on local demand but the aim would be to open at least 20 hours a week
- Open on Saturdays

8.2. This is a significant increase in opening hours compared to the current provision and currently only nine out of 24 small and neighbourhood libraries meet this standard.

9. Community-run libraries and/or pods (1)

9.1 LIS is committed to improving access to library services across the county and involve local communities in the provision of libraries services in their areas.

9.2. Where it is not possible for LIS to provide and staff a static library LIS is eager to reach agreement with communities to enable them to run and manage their own library, using self service technology and operating within the terms of a management agreement with LIS. Community libraries are likely to vary significantly dependent on the location, space available and support provided by organisations and volunteers within the community. It is really important that the quality of service is consistently high in the community-run libraries and this will be woven into every management agreement with LIS providing training and regular professional advice, support and visits.

9.3 There is currently one community run library in Hampshire in Botley where it is managed by the Church Committee.

9.4. In addition LIS will create new Library Service access points located in non-traditional settings, such as sports or community centres and managed by the staff at that location, within the terms of a management agreement with LIS. These will be called library pods. Library pods offer a more limited range of books that customers could issue and return themselves, using self-service technology.

9.5. Very preliminary discussions have recently been held with two District Councils and the Manager of a non-traditional setting about the possibility of setting up a community-run library and/or a pod. Other partners in different locations will also be sought during 2010/11. It is still very early days and the earliest that anything could happen would be 2011 and that would be after a period of public consultation.

10. Library Performance

10.1 Following an audit of every library and Discovery Centre during 2009 it has become apparent that some libraries are performing better than others. Performance is measured in a variety of ways, including numbers of visits/issues, net cost per issue/visit and the % of the population in a library's catchment area that use the library.

10.2 A simple performance template has been devised for every library which is being piloted at the moment. Targets will be set for every library for 2010/11 and a report will be bought to the Executive Member in about 12 month's time on library performance.

11. Financial Implications

11.1 These proposals do have financial implications. For now it is assumed that community run libraries and pods would be financed by the local

community/parish/district council and would cost from £30,000 upwards. This includes the cost of the self-service units.

11.2 The proposed increase in opening hours for the small and neighbourhood cannot be afforded by LIS at the moment. But the Management Team is helping the situation under view and any opportunity to increase opening hours by staff working more flexibly will be taken.

12. Recommendation(s)

12.1 That the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation agrees the proposed way forward for future static library provision in Hampshire.

Integral Appendix A

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Corporate Strategy

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	No
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	

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.)

Document	Location
None	

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

1.1. The proposals will enable greater public access to library services.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. No discernable impact.

3. Climate Change:

a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

Not known at this stage.

b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

N/A

Categorisation of Hampshire's Libraries **Appendix 1**

Discovery Centres
Basingstoke
Gosport
Winchester

Large Libraries
(over 200,000 issues a year)
Andover
Chandlers Ford
Fareham
Farnborough
Fleet
Hythe
Lymington
Romsey
Waterlooville

Medium Libraries
(over 100,000 issues a year)
Aldershot
Alton
Chineham
Eastleigh
Havant
Hedge End
Leigh Park
Lockswood
New Milton
Petersfield
Portchester
Ringwood
Stubbington
Tadley
Totton

Small and Neighbourhood Libraries
Alresford
Bishops Waltham
Blackfield
Bordon
Bridgemary
Elson
Emsworth
Fair Oak
Fordingbridge
Grayshott
Hayling Island
Horndean
Kingsclere
Lee-on-Solent
Liphook
Lyndhurst
Milford-on-Sea
Netley
North Baddesley
Odiham
Overton
South Ham
Stanmore
West End
Whitchurch
Yateley

Community-run libraries/pods
Botley