

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Executive Decision Record

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Member for Culture and Recreation
<b>Date:</b>	21 July 2010
<b>Title:</b>	Transformation of the Library and Information Service – Restructure Phase 1
<b>Reference:</b>	1793
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Culture, Communities and Rural Affairs

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#### 1. The decision:

- a) That the proposals for Phase 1 of the Library and Information Service's restructure, as set out in the report, be approved.
- b) That a bid is made to the Executive Member – Policy and Resources for “Invest to Save” funding of £900,000 to meet non recurring redundancy and pension costs arising from Phase 1 of the restructure.

#### 2. Reason(s) for the decision:

- 2.1. If all posts were filled within the current staffing structure of the Library and Information Service it would be unaffordable and this has been the case for several years. To manage this, the Service's budget has been balanced most years by a series of short term measures such as freezing vacancies and holding back on purchases from the Materials Fund. In order to manage the Service more effectively, within the Library and Information Service's Vision and Strategy, a restructure of the Service is proposed; the first phase of this is outlined in the report.
- 2.2. The aim of the restructuring is to reduce the annual running costs of the Library and Information Service by £2m to eliminate the underlying budget deficit and to position the Service to continue to innovate and try to meet further financial pressures in the medium term. The first phase will save approximately £1.5m. In order to fund the likely redundancy and pensions costs resulting from the first phase of the restructure, the Executive Member is also asked to approve an “Invest to Save” bid to the Executive Member – Policy and Resources of £900,000, to be repaid over three years.

**3. Other options considered and rejected:**

3.1. Other options considered were:-

i) Do Nothing.

The Service could keep on using the Materials Fund and freezing vacancies. This would not provide the best service to the public and is also not sustainable in the long term.

ii) Closing Libraries.

The annual running costs of the smallest libraries are around £25,000 - £30,000 each. Closing one or some of the smallest libraries would result in a diminished service to Hampshire residents and does not achieve the required level of savings.

iii) Reducing Opening Hours

The Service could reduce opening hours, but this would only achieve significant savings if it was done in the biggest libraries, which are also the busiest. It would also result in a diminished service and would not realistically achieve the required level of savings.

iv) Increase Funding from the County Council.

The County Council is investing over £18m in the Service this year. In 2008/09 Hampshire's net expenditure per 1,000 population was ranked 17 out of 33 County Councils. Whilst the County Council's Cabinet has made it clear that it is committed to providing a high quality public library service, it has also made it clear that additional funding is not a realistic option in the current financial climate with over £14m cuts already announced for Hampshire in 2010/11 and more to follow.

**4. Conflicts of interest:**

4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker: None.

4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted: None.

**5. Dispensation granted by the Standards Committee: none.**

**6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: not applicable.**

**7. Statement from the Decision Maker:**

7.1. The Executive Member for Culture and Recreation placed on record her appreciation of the contribution made by the Director of Culture, Communities and Rural Affairs, his staff and the trade unions in this review.

<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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<b>Executive Member for Culture and Recreation Councillor Mrs M Snaith-Tempia</b>	