

Summary Sheet

Council Report

Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting – 12 September 2016

Title

Library Strategy and future service offer for Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

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Ward(s) Affected

ALL

Executive Summary

The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide “a comprehensive and efficient” public library service “for all persons desiring to make use thereof” (Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964). The Act states that the local authority has a duty to provide facilities for borrowing books and other materials and that it should encourage both adults and children to make full use of the service.

This report summarises consultation undertaken on the Library Strategy 2016-19, the future service offer for Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs, and a range of savings proposals connected to the implementation of the Strategy and service offer.

The Strategy sets out the vision, key principles and core offer for the Service. It has been developed following an analysis of local need for the service and informed by feedback received during recent consultation.

The assessment of local need identifies a role for the Service in supporting employment opportunities, developing and improving key skills, including literacy, improving mental health, community cohesion and enabling access to digital information and services.

The report gives details of the feedback received and proposed revisions to the original savings proposals. It recommends adoption of the Strategy and core service offer and implementation of revised savings proposals. The 2016-17 revenue budget related to the area of Libraries and Customer Services considered by this report is

£5,034,590. This includes property budgets of £1,220,333. Proposed reductions in expenditure across the review area total £474,000 across 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Specific proposals include the retention of library provision in all existing static locations, the implementation of further self service, online and assisted digital options for service delivery and changes to the Mobile Library and Book Link services.

Recommendations

1. That the results of the public consultation on the draft Library Strategy, future service offer for Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs and associated savings proposals be noted.
2. That the Library Strategy 2016-19 and future service offer be endorsed and recommended for approval by Council on 19 October 2016
3. That implementation of the revised savings proposals be endorsed and recommended for approval by Council on 19 October 2016, including the adjustment to the MTFS as described in paragraph 7.5.
4. That it be noted that further and more detailed analysis of local need will continue to inform and drive the future service offer.

List of Appendices Included

1. Library Strategy 2016-19
2. Assessment of local need 2016

Background Papers

1. Consultation questionnaire – Library Strategy and core service offer
2. Consultation questionnaire – Mobile Library
3. Consultation questionnaire – Book Link Service
4. Consultation questionnaire – Customer Services
5. Consultation questionnaire – Maltby Library
6. Consultation questionnaire – Children and Young People
7. Consultation questionnaire – Non-users
8. Consultation feedback – Library Strategy and core service offer
9. Consultation feedback – Withdrawal of Mobile Library
10. Consultation feedback – Removal of Book Link walk on service
11. Consultation feedback – Customer Services
12. Consultation feedback – Relocation of Maltby Library
13. Consultation feedback – Children and Young People's views
14. Consultation feedback – Non-users
15. Equality Analysis – Library Strategy and core service offer
16. Equality Analysis – Mobile Library Service
17. Equality Analysis – Book Link Service
18. Equality Analysis – Closure of the face to face cashiering service at Riverside House
19. Equality Analysis – Appointments Booking System
20. Equality Analysis – Electronic Claims and Risk Based Verification
21. Equality Analysis – Merger of Maltby Library and Customer Service Centre

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 2 September 2016

Council Approval Required

Yes

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Title:**Library Strategy and future service offer for Libraries & Neighbourhood Hubs****1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 That the results of the public consultation on the draft Library Strategy, future service offer for Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs and associated savings proposals be noted.
- 1.2 That the Library Strategy 2016-19 and future service offer be endorsed and recommended for approval by Council on 19 October 2016
- 1.3 That implementation of the revised savings proposals be endorsed and recommended for approval by Council on 19 October 2016, including the adjustment to the MTFS as described in paragraph 7.5.
- 1.4 That it be noted that further and more detailed analysis of local need will continue to inform and drive the future service offer.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Library Service has recently undertaken consultation on:
 - The Library Strategy 2016-19
 - The future service offer for Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs
 - A range of savings proposals connected to the implementation of the Strategy and service offer
- 2.2 Rotherham's existing Library Strategy ended in 2015 and the Service has developed a draft Library Strategy for the period 2016-19, which now requires consideration by Council. The Strategy shapes how the Library Service will be delivered, taking account of reductions in local government funding; the changing expectations of current service users and non-users; the changing nature of reading and information delivery; Rotherham's local demographic profile and the continuing role of libraries in enabling local delivery of a range of Council and partner services. It has been developed following an analysis of local need for the service and informed by feedback received during the consultation.
- 2.3 The Council completed public consultation to enable its overall budget to be set in March 2016. This included a range of savings proposals (EDS5) relating to the future service offer for Libraries and face to face Customer Services delivery.
- 2.4 Those proposals were approved, subject to a requirement to undertake further consultation in order to allow an informed decision to be made. (Report to Council: Revenue Budget Setting Process 2016-17, Section 5.6, 2nd March 2016).
- 2.5 In line with the Council's emerging Digital Strategy, the proposals include the implementation of further self service, online and assisted digital options for service delivery.

- 2.6 The adoption of a Risk Based Verification Policy and Electronic Claims Policy was approved by Cabinet on the 11th April 2016. This will support a more efficient, streamlined and customer centric Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction claims process and is related to two specific savings proposals included in this report (Section 4.6, items 5e and 5f).
- 2.7 A report to Cabinet on 14th March 2016 gained approval to consult publicly on the Library Strategy, future service offer and associated savings proposals. Consultation on the Library Strategy and future service offer began on 17th March 2016. Consultation on the Library Strategy, changes to Customer Services, the proposed closure of the Mobile Library Service and changes to the Book Link Service ended on the 13th June 2016. Consultation on the merger of Maltby Library and Customer Service Centre ended on the 27th June 2016.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide “a comprehensive and efficient” public library service “for all persons desiring to make use thereof” (Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964). The Act states that the local authority has a duty to provide facilities for borrowing books and other materials and that it should encourage both adults and children to make full use of the service.
- 3.2 Other than the statutory duty, there are no longer national standards for library provision. As a result, library services across the country are being delivered in different ways and services are being shaped by local policy, customer need and available resources. The definition of the statutory responsibility is being challenged and explored nationally. In the meantime, authorities considering making changes to the provision of their library service are advised to notify the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Locally, there is a requirement to ensure that the decision making process is clear, transparent and robust, that decisions are based on an approved Library Strategy and that the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations in terms of service delivery.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1 The draft Library Strategy, service offer and associated savings proposals have been considered on a number of occasions, firstly during the budget setting process for 2016-17, at Members’ seminars (March and May 2016) and at Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (May 2016).
- 4.2 The Library Strategy 2016-19 (Appendix 1) sets out the vision, key principles and core offer for the Service and includes an initial action plan covering the period 2016-18. The overarching vision for the Service is that:
 - Our libraries are well used, cost effective and responsive to changing customer needs, available technologies and resources;

- The services we offer and enable will reflect the needs and make up of Rotherham’s communities;
- We will inspire Rotherham’s children, young people and their families to enjoy reading and develop their knowledge and skills, so that they are able to improve their quality of life and have an opportunity to realise their full potential;
- Located in the heart of Rotherham’s communities, our libraries will be recognised neighbourhood hubs, offering welcoming spaces and providing access to modern digital technology;
- Our staff will bridge the digital divide by supporting Rotherham communities to get on line and explore all the benefits that being online brings.

4.3 The Strategy and core service offer have been developed following an analysis of local need for the Service (Appendix 2) and take account of the recent consultation.

4.4 The assessment of local need identifies a role for the Service in supporting employment opportunities, developing and improving key skills, including literacy, improving mental health, community cohesion and supporting the growing digital agenda.

4.5 A range of savings proposals related to the Service were approved in principle by Council on 2nd March 2016, subject to a requirement to undertake further consultation in order to allow an informed decision to be made.

4.6 Table 1 provides details of these original savings proposals:

Table 1: EDS5				
	16/17 £'000	17/18 £'000	18/19 £'000	Total £'000
5a: Creation of a centralised team - merger of Schools Loan Service, Stock, Libraries on the Go and the Customer Access team to gain economies of scale	37			37
5b: Closure of mobile library service: Estimated potential number of affected customers = 473 (274 aged 0-17, 40 aged 18-49 and 159 aged 50+). Service could be replaced with a range of alternative service delivery models, including “deposit collections” within communities, “click and collect/click and delivery” services, home delivery service, e-readers for loan.	57	25		82
5c: Consolidation of Book Link service and delivery van: Changes to services delivered to nursing homes, residential homes, sheltered accommodation, day care and customers in their own homes who are unable to access services in other ways. Customers would no longer be able to visit the Book Link vehicle, but would receive items chosen by/for them based on preferences. Would implement alternative service delivery models, including e-readers for loan. Impact on the frequency of delivery.	23			23

5d: Replace face to face cashiering service with payment kiosks at Riverside House: Closure of the cashiering facility at Riverside House and move to alternative service offer of payment kiosks, in line with locality services at Aston, Rawmarsh, Swinton, Dinnington and Maltby. Provide "floor walker" to assist customers in making payments via the kiosks. Continuation of paypoint, post office, direct debit, recurring card payments and online payment methods.	22	22		44
5e: Introduction of online benefit claims and Risk Based Verification at Riverside House: Will reduce the need for face to face interaction with many customers. Will simplify the benefit application process, removing the need to see original verification evidence for approximately 50% of customers. An appointment based service will be introduced for those customers who do need to speak to a customer service officer face to face. An assisted digital process will be implemented to support those customers who need extra help.	21	80		101
5f: Introduction of online benefit claims and Risk Based Verification - Joint Service Centres: As above	31	22		53
5g: Relocation of services from Maltby library: Relocation of library services from the current building into the adjacent Joint Service Centre, offering a revised service and merged staffing in line with locality services at Aston, Dinnington, Swinton and Rawmarsh. Relocation of Schools Loan Service to Bailey House. Relocation of Library vehicle parking to Bailey House. Dependent upon overall property business case.		29		29
5h: Alternative service delivery - community supported model: Retains library provision in all existing static locations. Moves to single staffing in 7 libraries across the borough. Would extend library self service facilities. Would extend some customer service provision to Mowbray Gardens and Wath libraries. Would encourage and support further community/partner involvement in services, including internships, student placements, apprentices and volunteers and Parish & Town Councils.	59		46	105
Total	250	178	46	474

4.7 Table 2 gives details of proposed revisions to the savings proposals, taking into account consultation, suggested mitigation, revised service offer and timeline.

Table 2: EDS5 (revised)				
	16/17 £'000	17/18 £'000	18/19 £'000	Total £'000
5a: Creation of a centralised team – no change to original proposal	3	34		37

5b: Closure of mobile library service: Customers who live more than a 2 mile radius from a static site to receive a limited service from the replacement Book Link vehicle. Customers unable to use those services to be offered delivery to their home, or assisted to use community transport to access a static site. Deposit collections placed within communities	5	77		82
5c: Consolidation of Book Link service and delivery van: Replacement of current Book Link and delivery vehicles with a multi-purpose vehicle which would retain the “walk on” service, make deliveries to libraries and to customers unable to visit static sites, as well as providing a limited mobile service to those customers more than a 2 mile radius from a static site. Reduced frequencies of deliveries to customers and to library sites	3	9		12
5d: Replace face to face cashiering service with payment kiosks at Riverside House: No change to original proposal	4	40		44
5e: Introduction of online benefit claims and Risk Based Verification at Riverside House: No change to original proposal	8	93		101
5f: Introduction of online benefit claims and Risk Based Verification - Joint Service Centres: No change to original proposal	5	48		53
5g: Relocation of services from Maltby library: No change to original proposal. <i>Dependent upon overall property business case from Asset Management.</i>		29		29
5h: Alternative service delivery - community supported model: Retains library provision in all existing static locations. Make more effective use of staffing resource across the borough, reducing or increasing staffing levels as appropriate, dependent upon the core service offer. Implement single staffing where appropriate and safe to do so. Would encourage and support further community/partner involvement in services, including internships, student placements, apprentices and volunteers and Parish & Town Councils.	9	107		116
Total	37	437		474
Note: the total amount of savings remains the same but is profiled over a reduced period of time. The savings in 2016-17 are predicated on the implementation of any necessary changes to the staffing structure being implemented by the end of February 2017				

5. Consultation

5.1 Prior to consultation the Service:

- assessed the Service’s contribution to corporate outcomes and priorities;

- took into account key national, regional and local strategies;
 - benchmarked services against other local authorities taking account of innovation, good practice and lessons learned;
 - examined usage, performance and demand for the service
 - reviewed available resources, including staff, buildings and stock.
- 5.2 Following approval by Cabinet on 14th March, 2016, extensive consultation on the Library Strategy, Customer Services, the proposed closure of the Mobile Library Service and changes to Book Link commenced on the 17th March, 2016 and closed on the 13th June, 2016. Consultation on the proposed merger of Maltby Library and Customer Services closed on 27th June, 2016.
- 5.3 A wide variety of methods were used to gauge user and non-user opinions, including:
- An online survey and dedicated email address which was available on the RMBC website;
 - Paper copies of the survey were made available in all 6 Joint Service Centres and 9 Community Libraries;
 - Informal consultation drop in sessions were held at each Customer Service Centre/Community Library to speak with customers about the proposal;
 - Staff and other Service Directorates across the Council were actively encouraged to take part in the consultation;
 - Attendance at Members' seminars and meetings with individual Members in order to provide detail of the proposals and capture feedback;
 - Letters issued to Town and Parish Councils, Unions, communities of interest and hard to reach groups informing them of the proposals. Meetings have taken place with many of these stakeholders to discuss the proposals in more detail and capture views;
 - Engaged with children and young people, the Youth Cabinet, Children's Centres and the Looked After Children's Council in order to ask for their views;
 - Captured the views of non-users of the service by undertaking surveys in high footfall areas across the Borough;
 - Issued letters to all schools in the Borough informing them of the consultation and encouraging students and teachers to take part. Workshops have taken place at a number of schools;
 - Questions on Library usage were included in the recent consultation undertaken by the Early Help and Family Engagement Service on the future youth offer.
 - Rotherham UNISON also conducted their own surveys relating to the Library Strategy and customer services, one which was distributed electronically to households in the Rotherham area and the second a survey at the outside market place in Rotherham Town Centre.
- 5.4 A summary of each questionnaire along with recommended actions is provided below.

5.5 1475 responses to the consultation have been received, made up of 1194 from paper based and online questionnaires and 281 non –user questionnaires. The Unison consultation received a total of 275 responses.

5.6 Library Strategy and core service offer

5.6.1 The survey asked for views on the strategy and core service offer:

- The Library Strategy sets out the future plans for the development of the Library Service over the next 3 years taking account of reductions in local government funding. The consultation questionnaires focused on the following themes; the vision for the service, the core offer and more efficient service delivery.

5.6.2 Responses:

- 606 people completed the questionnaire providing their views on the proposed strategy; 97% (587) were current library users. These customers cited a number of reasons for using the service, but borrowing books came out as the main reason for visiting the library at 45%.
- 85% (517) of respondents were in agreement with the principles outlined in the vision. 94% (571) of respondents also agreed with the proposal to keep all 15 static sites open, many commenting that libraries are essential community hubs. Those who disagreed with the proposal suggested that there should be fewer, but better resourced, libraries.
- 87% (525) of people agreed with the core service offer, with 89% (538) agreeing with the proposal to work with volunteers, partners and community groups to help deliver additional services and activities in libraries. 21% (130) of those who agreed with the proposal would be willing to volunteer in some way. 59% (68) of those who disagreed with the proposal said that volunteers should not replace paid staff.
- 64% (390) of respondents disagreed with the proposal to operate libraries with fewer staff during certain times of the day.
- 82% (496) of respondents agreed with proposals to generate income within libraries.
- Respondents were asked when they would prefer to visit the library. Mornings were identified as the most convenient time, particularly on a Monday and Saturday.
- Rotherham UNISON received 275 responses to the two surveys which they carried out. The results showed that:
When going into a library 92% (252) of people preferred a face to face service.
82% (224) of people did not agree with opening libraries with fewer staff.
88% (241) of people do not believe the Council should be using voluntary services to cover experienced librarians.

5.6.3 Outcome:

- The consultation feedback on the strategy demonstrated that Libraries are a well loved, much appreciated service and seen as the hub of the community.

- The majority of respondents agreed with the principles within the strategy and the core offer. However, a significant number of respondents both within the service and Unison questionnaire disagreed with the proposal to operate libraries with fewer staff. There was a strong feeling that this would impact on customer care/service quality.
- In order to address these concerns, whilst the Council will need to reduce the number of staff (where it is safe to do so) in order to reflect the demand for service, attempts to minimise where possible the number of locations and times that single staffing will apply. In addition, the Council will continue to have customer satisfaction measures in place which relate to the quality of service received, these will feed into our monthly Performance Management reports.

5.7 Customer Services

5.7.1 The survey asked for views on a range of proposals connected to the delivery of customer services:

- Consultation was carried out with both service users and non-users. Internal stakeholders who regularly use Riverside House cashiering service were also invited to respond.
- Areas for consultation included the withdrawal of the face to face cashiering service, the introduction of appointments and the level of support customers would need following the introduction of an online benefits service.

5.7.2 Responses:

- 313 people gave their views on the proposed changes with the overall result showing the following:
- 43% (134) of people completing the questionnaire currently use the face to face cashiering service. Of these, 40% (57) of people said withdrawing this service would have a major effect on them and 30% (43) said a minor effect.
- When asked what alternative payment methods would you use if the face to face cashiering service was withdrawn, 27% (48) said Paypoint/Post Office, 23% (41) said Payment Kiosk and 24% (42) said Direct Debit.
- 30% (94) of customers said they would require help to use alternative payment methods, the majority of these required help using either payment kiosks or using computers/internet, others required a list of Paypoint/Post Office locations.
- 69% (212) of users would be happy to make an appointment to speak to an advisor. Those who would not be happy expressed their desire to retain a drop in service.
- 54% (79) of people said they would require help to apply for Housing Benefit or Council Tax reduction online. Of these, when asked what help would you need, the majority of comments related to access to and help with computers and support/advice when completing online forms.

- 72% (104) of people use a Library and Customer Services Centre to access council services, whilst 77% (129) of all respondents said they are able to use the internet.
- Rotherham UNISON received 275 responses to the two surveys which they carried out. The results showed that:
When making a payment, 75% (206) of people said they would prefer to be served by a member of staff, 21% (58) of people said by using a payment kiosk and 4% (11) of people declined to answer.
When asked if the face to face cashiering service were to be withdrawn and replaced with alternative ways to pay, what effect it would have, 29% (80) of people said a major effect, 29% (80) also said a minor effect, 39% (106) said none and 3% (8) declined to answer.
42% (115) of people said they would need help to access council services online.
- The majority of feedback from internal departments was in relation to the cashiering function and how processes such as the reconciliation of payments, cashing and paying in of monies/cheques, petty cash and storage of Departmental monies will be dealt with in future.

5.7.3 Outcome:

- A significant number of those currently using the face to face cashiering service felt that removing it would have a major effect. When investigating why this was the case the majority of comments referred to a preference for face to face contact. It is therefore proposed that the service implement a focused campaign targeting customers who currently use the cashiering service at Riverside to inform them about other methods of payment which involve transactions being carried out face to face i.e. paypoint/post office.
- In order to address the comments raised in relation to support in using alternative payment methods it is proposed that:
the number of floorwalkers available during the transition period are increased to assist customers who wish to pay via the payment kiosk; support is provided to use the Council's website payment facility or telephone the Contact Centre, as well as Post Office and Paypoint outlets.
- Some concerns were raised by customers that the implementation of the appointment system would mean that it would be less convenient for them to 'drop in'. In order to address this it is proposed that whilst locality Customer Services centres would offer services on an appointment basis only, Riverside House would have a mixture of appointments and "drop ins" available.
- The service will continue to engage with Departments in order to agree alternative methods of delivering the internal cashiering processes within the Council.

5.8 Withdrawal of the Mobile Library

5.8.1 The survey asked users and non users for their views on withdrawal of the service:

- The total number of registered users of the service is 337, this figure includes those who use static sites as well as the mobile library. There are approximately 170-180 people who access the mobile service on a

regular basis across 14 locations including Woodsetts Primary School. The service operates on a weekly schedule.

5.8.2 Responses:

- 71 responses for the mobile service questionnaire were received with 56 from users of the service. The latter figure represents 16% of the total number of active mobile library borrowers. Of the active borrowers who responded 75% (42) use only the mobile to access library services and 25% (14) visit static sites as well as the mobile.
- The most commonly expressed advantage to the service was convenience. 95% (53) of the active borrowers who responded do not want the service to be withdrawn with 31% (16) of this figure citing social isolation as the main factor to explain this.
- 77% (43) of respondents said that withdrawing the service would have a major impact. Loss of a convenient access point to library services, an adverse impact on health and wellbeing and an inability to access other library services were the major factors influencing this response.
- The mobile library service is used predominantly by females and majority of the respondents are aged 65 or over. 11% (8) of respondents consider themselves to be disabled.
- Within the Library Strategy questionnaire 49% (297) of the 606 responses agreed with the proposal to withdraw the mobile service.

5.8.3 Outcome:

- Static library sites provide coverage for the majority of the borough within a 2 mile radius. It is therefore proposed that the mobile service is removed at all locations within the 2 mile radius, but a smaller mobile vehicle continues to serve the localities which fall outside this distance, including Woodsetts Primary School.
- It is proposed that elderly users are offered the Book Link service, enabling them to still gain access to library material.
- Where there is sufficient interest/demand the service will develop deposit collections in locations where it is proposed that the Mobile Library is removed. Wentworth Village Community Association has shown a keen interest in having a deposit collection: it is proposed that this site is be used as a pilot.

5.9 Changes to the Book Link Service

5.9.1 The survey asked users and non users for their views on changes to the service, including the withdrawal of the “walk on” service and change to frequency of visits:

- The service offers a three weekly schedule of visits to care homes, sheltered accommodation units and residents in their own homes. There are over 500 users of the service as well as an additional number in residential care homes. These homes receive a deposit collection of books once every five months.

5.9.2 Responses:

- A total of 122 responses about the Book Link service were received with the majority (86%, or 105) being from users of the service. This

latter figure represents about 21% of the total number of users. The proposal incorporated two possible changes to service delivery, the end of the walk on component and alterations to the frequency of the service.

- 62% (65) of respondents select their books directly from the vehicle (walk on) and although 51% (33) of this group said they would be happy to receive books delivered to their home a similar number, 49% (36), said that they did not want home delivery. Twenty nine comments were received from this latter contingent. Three separate themes emerged from the comments with 59% (17) preferring to browse / choose their own books, 31% (9) saying that walk on alleviated social isolation and 10% (3) advising that delivering books to their own homes would be inconvenient.
- The social function of Book Link should not be underestimated as 21% of 112 comments received about the benefits of the service mentioned social / community factors.
- A majority of respondents, 57% (60), said they would accept delivery of books less frequently than at present with 49% (52) preferring a four weekly frequency.
- There was little enthusiasm for additional services which could mitigate the proposed changes with 86 out of 115 respondents declining to answer this question. Of the remainder 21% (6) said they would use community transport to visit a community library and 14% (4) asking for help to use the library service's online service. A further 14% (4) said they would like help with e readers.
- The questionnaire results showed that Book Link is used predominantly by females, 56% (69), with 60% (73) over 65 years of age. 51% (62) consider themselves to be disabled of which 28% (45) have a physical or mobility impairment.

5.9.3 Outcome:

- It is proposed that the current Book Link and Mobile vehicles are replaced by one vehicle, allowing for the walk on service for Book Link to be retained. Continuing the walk on service addresses the many social isolation concerns raised both in the paper based/online questionnaire and consultation meetings. It will contribute to the corporate priority to ensure that every adult is secure, responsible and empowered along with supporting our local Authority's requirement to comply with the Care Act 2014.
- It is proposed to extend the eligibility criteria for the Book link service to all people who would have significant difficulty accessing static libraries. In addition, the Service will look to make available e-book readers/tablets to customers who access the Book Link service.

5.10 Relocation of Maltby Library into Maltby Joint Service Centre

5.10.1 The survey asked users and non users for their views on the relocation of the library service, including the re-design of the layout of the Joint Service Centre.

- Due to the proposed change primarily impacting Maltby and the surrounding area, the Town Council, Rotherham Council ward

members and the Local History Society, which regularly uses the library, were also invited to respond.

5.10.2 Responses:

- 74 completed questionnaires were received, of these 60% (43) of people were in favour of the proposed merger.
- Many saw the merger as a sensible approach to making necessary budgetary savings whilst improving access to services by bringing them together in a modern building along with other community facilities. It was also felt by several people that the co-location will attract more library members.
- Those who objected to the move did so primarily on two main grounds. Firstly, there was an affection for the existing building because of previous and often long-standing use of the building and because there was a concern for the future development of the High Street. Secondly, there was a perception that the library was being squeezed into an already busy building, which they felt would lead to a decline in the service offer. Other concerns included noise levels and the lack of privacy in the proposed merger.
- One respondent raised concerns regarding both internal and external disabled access to the Maltby Joint service centre.
- The Local History Society raised a series of concerns in relation to the proposed merger. These related to; the reduction in staffing levels, accessing the Joint service centre particularly for the disabled and infirm, appropriate meeting room availability, noise levels and privacy.

5.10.3 Outcome:

- The state of the fabric of the existing building plus the level of usage, together with the perceived advantages of bringing the library and customer service together in the same building, were persuasive in the majority of people's minds that the move should proceed. There will be clear benefits to the library service from moving into modern new accommodation where there is already a high level of community use.
- Subject to approval of the proposal, at the design stage of the new centre, options will be considered to make the best use of the space ensuring that it is accessible for all, including those with disabilities. Consideration will also be given to reducing noise levels and ensuring that the maximum natural light is available. A private interview room will be included in the design for any customers wishing to make use of it.
- There will be a reduction in the amount of shelf-space within the new library. However, a careful stock management policy will ensure that there is a satisfactory selection of books that people want and the free request service for books will continue. There will continue to be a circulation of stock which helps ensure that customers continue to see a changing and new selection available.
- The Service will liaise with Places for People and Asset Management to look to improve the disabled access in and around the Joint Service Centre.
- The proposal is dependent upon their being an overall property business case related to the wider area. This will be brought forward separately by Asset Management.

- 5.11 A number of areas for further work have been identified during the consultation period which in turn may impact on future service delivery options and/or lead to additional opportunities for efficiencies. These are detailed within the Library Strategy and its action plan.

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 Subject to approval by Cabinet, adoption of the Library Strategy and associated savings proposals will be considered by Council on the 19th October 2016.
- 6.2 The Library Strategy runs between 2016 and 2019. Accountability for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy, core offer and action plan lies with the Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Manager
- 6.3 The savings in 2016-17 are predicated on the implementation of any necessary changes to the staffing structure being implemented by the end of February 2017

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 The 2016-17 revenue budget related to the area of Libraries and Customer Services considered by this review is £5,034,590 prior to the approved savings value set out in paragraph 7.4. This includes property budgets of £1,220,333. The cost of the libraries service alone was £3.2m in each of the last two financial years.
- 7.2 Proposed reductions in expenditure across the review area are detailed in Section 4, table 2. These total £474,000 across 2016/17 and 2017/18.
- 7.3 The savings approved by Council on the 2nd March 2016 were based on an implementation spanning across the current and next two financial years, realising a savings profile as per the table in 7.4 below. Under the proposals within this report, the majority of the budget reductions will now be implemented in 2017-18, rather than 2016-17 and the savings assumed for 2018-19 will be brought forward a year. The profile of savings for these proposals is therefore different.
- 7.4 The savings in 2016-17 take account of the transfer of a number of staff from the Regeneration and Environment Directorate into Finance and Customer services during 2016-17 and are predicated on the implementation of a revised staffing structure by the end of February 2017. The table below summarises the revised savings profile, compared to the original profile.

		2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	Total £000
Original Profile	Savings	250	178	46	474
Revised Profile	Savings	37	437	0	474
	Difference	-213	+259	-46	0

The savings pressure of £213,000 for 2016-17 identified above is reflected in the July Revenue Budget Monitoring 2016-17, which is also on this agenda.

- 7.5 Whilst the savings are not being achieved as planned in the current year, the directorate overall is mitigating this financial position. It is therefore proposed that the Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan is amended to retain the requirement for the £213k savings value overall this year (by other mitigating actions) and the revised savings profile for 2017-18 and 2018-19 be reflected in future revisions of the MTFS which will assist the financial position of the Council next year.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 The adoption of the “Annual Library Plan” is currently a decision for Council. The Library Strategy fulfils this purpose.
- 8.2 The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 makes it the duty of every library authority to provide a “comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof”. In fulfilling its duty, the Council must have regard to the desirability of:
- Securing the facilities are available for the borrowing of and reference to books and other printed material, recorded music and pictures and film to meet the general and special requirements of adults and children
 - Encouraging adults and children to make full use of the library service and of providing advice as to its use and information as may be required by users of the service
- 8.3 The Council also has to ensure it complies with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Under section 1 of that Act, the Council must, when making decisions of a strategic nature about how to exercise its functions, have due regard to the desirability of exercising them in a way that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage. In addition, under section 149 of the Act, the Council must comply with the public sector equality duty which requires it to have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, and

- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.3.1 In dealing with this duty, the Council must have due regard in particular, to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
- Take steps to meet the needs of people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different to the needs of persons who do not share it; and
- Encourage persons who share a relevant characteristic to participate in public life or any other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
- Protected characteristics include disability, age, race, sex, religion or belief, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity and sexual orientation.

9. Human Resources Implications

9.1 The implementation of the savings proposals will lead to changes in roles, responsibilities and ways of working across the Service and at all levels. This will also include reductions in staff numbers. Specific proposals will be subject to consultation with staff and unions.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

10.1 The adoption of the Library Strategy and core service offer will impact on services to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

10.2 The withdrawal of the Mobile Library and changes to the Book Link Service will affect vulnerable adults. Mitigation to those changes is included in the revised proposals.

10.3 Within the core offer, the Service has included a “Children’s offer”. (Appendix 1, Library Strategy, page 21)

10.4 A number of items within the action plan relate specifically to improving services to children and young people and vulnerable adults. (Appendix 1, Library Strategy, p23-26)

11 Equalities and Human Rights Implications

11.1 An Equality Analysis has been carried out on the overall Library Strategy and core service offer, as well as the proposals relating to the Mobile Library Service; the Book Link Service; the closure of the face to face cashiering service at Riverside House; the introduction of an appointments booking system for the delivery of customer services; the implementation of electronic claims and a risk based verification approach for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction; and the

merger of Maltby Library and Customer Service Centre. These have been reviewed by the Corporate Equalities and Diversity Officer

- 11.2 In each case specific actions or targets have been identified and detailed in relation to protected characteristics. The summaries of the analyses will be published as appropriate.

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

- 12.1 Partners and other Directorates have been consulted on the proposals. There are specific implications for services whose customers use the Riverside House face to face cashiering service.
- 12.2 A wide range of current partners and Council services expressed an interest in working with the Library Service in the future. In addition, a number of individuals and organisations suggested additional opportunities for future partnership working, including co-location and joint delivery of services.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 In order to ensure rigorous and robust decision making, proposals for future service delivery have taken account of the statutory nature of the service, the resources available, existing and projected need for the service, including consideration of vulnerable groups.
- 13.2 The implementation of savings proposals has taken account of the timescales for decision making and any associated staff and union consultation.
- 13.3 Levels of risk associated with implementation of the individual savings proposals were considered by Council as part of the revenue budget setting process on 2nd March 2016.
- 13.4 As the Authority continues to face challenging financial circumstances, there will be a need to identify opportunities to further improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the service. These proposals therefore need to be implemented as soon as possible to ensure that the Service is ready to respond positively to further change.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Approvals Obtained from:-

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services:- Jon Baggaley

Director of Legal Services:- Neil Concannon

Head of Procurement (if appropriate):- Not applicable

Elenore Fisher: Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Manager

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