

DECISION-MAKER:	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE		
SUBJECT:	THE FUTURE OF THE SOUTHAMPTON'S LIBRARIES SERVICE		
DATE OF DECISION:	4 FEBRUARY 2016		
REPORT OF:	CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES, CULTURE AND LEISURE		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

None

BRIEF SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress with implementing the recommendations of the 18 August 2015 Cabinet report regarding the Future of the Library Service. The project is still currently on schedule to create community libraries for each of communities where the five affected library buildings are by April 2016.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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| (i) | To note the report relating to the progress made with implementing the changes to the future of the library service. |
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REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1. | On the 13 August 2015 Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee considered a report about the Future of the Library service. It was agreed as a result of this meeting that Officers would provide an update in 2016, when community and not for profit organisations have had a reasonable period of time to engage and progress through the process of developing community independent libraries and reference will be made to other examples of best practice. |
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ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

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| 2. | Alternative options were considered at the 18 August 2015 Cabinet Meeting. |
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DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

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| 3. | On 18th November 2014 Cabinet considered a report which set out a proposed Future Focus for the Library Service and a preferred option for the provision of libraries in the city. These two issues formed the focus of a consultation which spanned 14 weeks from 28th November 2014 to 6 March 2015. The results of the consultation and recommendations for the way forward were then considered at the 18 August, 2015 Cabinet meeting. |
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4.	<p>There had been 7,706 responses to the consultation in total across the online and paper questionnaire, children and young people's survey and written submissions. The consultation results included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of support for the proposed Future Focus with levels of agreement ranging from 97% to 52% on the five key areas of focus identified. • 57% of respondents agreed that Southampton's Library Services need to change to meet future needs. • 53% agreed with the Council's preferred option to retain six City Council managed and operated libraries in the City. • 70% of respondents agreed that the Council should provide opportunities for community led initiatives to be established if libraries are no longer managed by the Council.
5.	<p>The consultation also sought to identify the impact on users of the preferred option so that the draft Equality and Safety Impact Assessments (ESIAs) could be updated in the light of the consultation feedback to more accurately reflect the impact of the proposed changes and identify potential opportunities to mitigate this impact.</p>
6.	<p>The consultation also invited views on any alternative ideas/ suggestions/ proposals or expressions of interest. These were considered by officers and feedback was provided. The ESIAs were updated and a new community package was developed as a direct result of the feedback from the consultation relating to the proposals for community independent libraries.</p>
7.	<p>The 18 August 2015 Cabinet meeting approved the proposal to implement the Council's preferred option to retain six City Council operated libraries in the City and seek to encourage and support community led/not for profit initiatives in those buildings that the City Council owns or uses but are not being retained as part of the preferred option. The Mobile Library would not be retained as part of the preferred option, however measures have been investigated (including the principle of community collections, extending the Housebound service and increasing access to the online services) and will continue to be to seek to minimise the impact for the users of this service.</p>
8.	<p>The report provided delegated authority to the Director of Place to devise and implement the necessary processes and documentation required to establish, where appropriate, community led initiatives in the library buildings that the City Council ceases to provide a service from. Cabinet also provided delegated authority to the Director of Place, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture and Leisure and the Head of Property, to lease Burgess Road Library, Cobbett Road Library and the new unit at Weston at less than Best Consideration (where appropriate) following the application process, referred to above, subject to meeting the required legal tests and duties. Cabinet also approved the implementation of formal staff consultation on the changes that resulted from the decisions in the report and gave permission to devise and implement a staffing structure accordingly.</p>
9.	<p>On 21st September 2015 the expressions of interest process began, this was promoted extensively within the City. A dedicated email address was set up for all enquiries. Information packs were prepared for the five library buildings which included a wide range of information such as the property details, the legal agreements, historical finance and use data and all the forms and procedure relating to the expressions of interest process. There was an information evening on 7th October 2015 to provide answers to any</p>

	queries from organisations about the process and to provide opportunities for networking and developing potential partnerships. The closing date for expressions of interest was on 19 th October 2015.
10.	Expressions of interest were received by 19 th October 2015. These expressions of interest were evaluated by a panel of officers from the City Council. Following further queries and clarifications organisations passed through to the second stage of the process which involves the development of a business plan. The deadline for the Stage 2 submissions was 18 th January 2018. These submissions are in the process of being evaluated with an aim to have a decision made by 8 th February 2016 under the delegated powers referred to earlier in the report.
11.	Once this has been confirmed, the legal agreements will need to be put into place and implementation plans agreed with a view to handing over the buildings on 1 st April, 2016. The aim is to provide an opportunity for the organisations to shadow the existing library staff for a period and also training will be provided.
12.	The library staffing restructure is in the process of being implemented to deliver the agreed saving in 2016/17.
13.	Progress has been made in implementing the IT infrastructure needed in order to hand over the buildings to community groups, this includes the provision of a community package of the library management system which safeguards community organisations from seeing the personal data of members of the library service.
14.	The Council has been contacted by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to advise that they have received a complaint from a Southampton resident about the plans to transfer five council-run libraries to community organisations to operate community libraries. Officers have provided all requested information to the DCMS. Having taken further legal advice on the issue, the City Council is continuing as planned with the timescales as identified in the 18 August 2015 Cabinet report.
15.	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee requested that examples of other community run libraries be provided, please find examples in Appendix 1.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
16.	The implementation of the preferred option approved at Cabinet on 18 th August 2015 will result in savings of £286,200 in a full financial year.
17.	British Gas has agreed funding to assist the libraries in Thornhill, Weston and Millbrook in their early years to become established.
<u>Property/Other</u>	
18.	The option being implemented results in the City Council continuing to own and operate a library service from the six libraries listed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Library • Shirley Library • Bitterne Library • Woolston Library (the new library will open in 2016) • Portswood Library • Lordshill Library
19.	The target timescale is April 1 st 2016 for transfer, however, if there are community groups which are nearing readiness but need a little more time before the transfer is implemented, consideration will be given to extending this deadline for a limited period by agreement as recommended by OSMC on 13 th August 2015.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
20.	See 18 th August 2015 Cabinet report for full details.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
21.	See 18 th August 2015 Cabinet report for full details.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
22.	See 18 th August 2015 Cabinet report for full details.

KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1. Community Library Examples

Documents In Members' Rooms

1. None

Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	No
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Privacy Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	Cabinet report dated 18 August 2015 http://www.southampton.gov.uk/modernGov/documents/s26677/Cabinet%20Report%20-%20The%20Future%20of%20The%20Southampton%20Library%20Service.pdf
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