

**CABINET – 7 OCTOBER 2015****FUTURE STRATEGY FOR THE DELIVERY OF LIBRARY SERVICES****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES****PART A****Purpose of Report**

- 1 The purpose of this report is to:
 - i. Outline to the Cabinet the progress made with communities who have been assessed as meeting the County Council's conditions to enable them to manage their community library.
 - ii. Provide an update on the second and final round of registrations of interest (ROI) that targeted communities where previously no ROI had been received, or had been received and subsequently withdrawn.
 - iii. Request that a three month consultation exercise be approved with regard to those libraries where a viable outline business plan has not been put forward.

Recommendations

- 2 It is recommended that the Cabinet:
 - a) Notes the current position of 32 libraries that are progressing towards community management following the successful submission of outline business plans;
 - b) Notes the additional engagement work that has been completed with communities as part of the second period of ROI;
 - c) Notes that the ROIs and outline business plans of East Goscote, Enderby, Kibworth, Measham, Quorn and Thurmaston now meet with the County Council's conditions and are capable of moving to formal agreements, following approval from the Director of the Adults and Communities and following consultation with the County Solicitor;
 - d) Notes that the outline business plans for Burbage, Cosby, Great Glen, Ibstock, and Sapcote have been provisionally approved subject to minor conditions being met;
 - e) Notes that issues associated with the lease of Kirby Muxloe library need to be resolved before any transfer of the library to community management can be achieved;

- f) Notes that Braunstone Town, Mountsorrel and Narborough have either submitted an outline business case that is not compliant with the published offer of the County Council, or have not submitted an outline business case, and authorises the Director of Adults and Communities, in consultation with the County Solicitor, to commence a three month consultation on the possible closure and replacement with a mobile library service;
- g) Notes that following the best endeavours of the Council some libraries may not be capable of completing the transfer to Community Management for legal or other reasons, and agrees to delegate authority to the Director of Adults and Communities, in consultation with the County Solicitor, to commence consultations on the possible closure and replacement with a mobile library service if communities are unable to progress with their agreed outline business plans;
- h) Agrees that a further report on the outcome of the consultation on alternative library provision and recommendations for libraries listed in f) above be submitted to the Cabinet in March 2016.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 3 The County Council has a statutory obligation to ensure the provision of a comprehensive and efficient library service. An analysis of the current library service indicates that, whilst it is comprehensive, there are a large number of service points, potentially leading to an inefficient use of resources. Alterations to the service proposed would continue to meet the statutory obligations of the Council whilst contributing towards Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) savings.
- 4 Libraries in Braunstone Town, Mountsorrel and Narborough have not been able to produce an outline business plan that meets with the Council's conditions of support and therefore closure of the sites and alternative library provision for those areas through the mobile library service will need to be considered, as outlined in paragraphs 36-38.
- 5 A range of options other than a mobile service are detailed in Appendix A. These include the provision of a community based location for books, a trust model of books in the community and a book vending machine in the local community. Given the financial envelope in which the service is to be delivered, access to the service via the mobile library service represents the most viable and flexible option for providing access to services.
- 6 A consultation exercise will help inform recommendations for alternative library provision through the mobile library service for those libraries listed in paragraph 2 f) above.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

- 7 The Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider this report on 6 October 2015, and its comments will be reported to the Cabinet.
- 8 It is intended that a report on the outcome of the consultation and recommendations for alternative service delivery for the libraries referred to in paragraph 2 f) will be

submitted to the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet in March 2016.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

- 9 The MTFS approved by the County Council on 19 February 2014 identified a reduction in funding for library services, including its supporting infrastructure. This saving consisted of a reduction in opening hours at market town and shopping centre libraries, a reduction in the book fund, and the implementation of community managed libraries.
- 10 On 5 March 2014, the Cabinet approved a three month consultation on a proposed remodelling of the library service based on the following elements:
 - 16 major market town and shopping centre libraries funded by the Council with a 20% reduction in opening hours;
 - A support service that will enable local communities to run their local library;
 - An online library service available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to those with access to the internet;
 - A mobile library service that will provide a regular library service to most villages without a static library.
- 11 On 19 November, 2014, the Cabinet agreed the infrastructure support package to be offered to local communities wishing to operate community managed libraries.
- 12 On 16 March 2015, the Cabinet authorised the Director of Adults and Communities to assess the outline business plans put forward by community groups that had registered an interest in running their community library, and the County Solicitor to prepare the necessary legal agreements where communities were deemed to have in place a satisfactory outline business plan which was compliant with the County Council's requirements for providing support to community managed libraries.
- 13 It also agreed a further round of engagement with community groups would take place where either no ROI was received by the deadline date of 16 January 2015, or where the ROI had been subsequently withdrawn, or where the initial ROI submitted required further work to be compliant with the County Council's requirements.
- 14 On 11 May 2015, the Cabinet noted the assessments of 27 submissions of outline business plans and authorised the Director of the Adults and Communities, following consultation with the County Solicitor, to enter into agreements for 19 community managed libraries to be run by community groups/organisations, subject to appropriate legal agreements in relation to lease and grant funding being in place. It noted that three of the 19 community groups needed to make only minor adjustments to their outline business plans to meet the conditions for approval.
- 15 On 16 June 2015, the Cabinet noted that a further five outline business plans met the County Council's conditions and were capable of being progressed through formal agreements to enable those communities to manage their library. It also agreed further engagement work and a second and final period to invite ROIs and outline business plans for those communities where either no ROI had been received, or an ROI had been received and subsequently withdrawn, and also for Mountsorrel and Braunstone Town, as the outline business plans submitted by those communities were not considered acceptable.

- 16 The Cabinet also requested officers to commence the development of proposals for alternative library service provision should no viable ROI or outline business case come forward.

Resources Implications

- 17 Members will be aware of the worsening financial situation which is reflected in the MTFs approved by the County Council on 18 February 2015. Savings of £2.6m will need to be made by the Communities and Wellbeing Service (part of the Adults and Communities Department) by 2018/19. However the delivery of this year's savings target has been delayed by various issues including:
- Judicial Review of the decision to close Snibston Discovery Museum;
 - Extended negotiations with trade unions regarding the reduction in opening hours at market town and shopping centre libraries;
 - Changes to the timetable for the transfer of community libraries.
- 18 Delays in implementing this year's savings target means that savings have been made elsewhere within the department's budget.
- 19 The annual savings from the community libraries programme remain in line with the initial estimates. For the 32 libraries that are well positioned to become community managed libraries, annual savings are expected to be £0.4m from staff savings and £0.3m from running costs, (net of income) following the end of the seven year tapering period when the groups assume full responsibility for the costs in question. This will also help to enable further savings from the departmental infrastructure that supports all libraries.
- 20 The County Council has set aside £0.3m to support community groups in the initial set up stage. Latest claim estimates against this amount are slightly above this figure. These implementation costs will be met from earmarked transformation funds, as will redundancy and pension costs relating to the staff changes.
- 21 The Director of Corporate Resources and the County Solicitor have been consulted on the contents of this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

- 22 As the proposals in this report affect a number of electoral divisions, this report is being circulated to all Members of the Council via the Members' News in Brief.

Officers to Contact

Jon Wilson, Director of Adults and Communities
 Adults and Communities Department
 Tel: 0116 305 7454
 Email: jon.wilson@leics.gov.uk

Nigel Thomas, Head of Service, Communities and Wellbeing
 Adults and Communities Department
 Tel: 0116 305 7379
 Email: nigel.thomas@leics.gov.uk

PART B**Background**

- 23 The Council aims to enable and facilitate the ongoing provision of library services, wherever possible, by closer working with communities and other providers, whilst at the same time sustaining the countywide infrastructure to enable it to meet its statutory obligations and budget challenges.
- 24 The Council has sought to ensure that local communities are given the opportunity to manage their local library within the framework of a support package provided by the Council over a tapered period of seven years. A very positive response has been received from all 36 communities who have submitted ROIs.
- 25 The proposals for community managed libraries are in line with the County Council's Community Strategy which was agreed by the Cabinet on 13 October 2014. Priority 2 of that Strategy aims to support community groups to operate community managed libraries and to work alongside the Authority to design and deliver services.
- 26 Following reports to the Cabinet on the 11 May and 16 June 2015 and further engagement with local groups and organisations, a total of 21 libraries have been transferred or are in the process of transferring to become community managed libraries. These are listed below:

Library	Current status	Indicative implementation date
Anstey	Transition plan agreed	October 2015
Barrow upon Soar	Transfer completed 27 July 2015	Completed
Barwell	Transition plan to be developed	February 2016
Bottesford	Transition plan agreed	October 2015
Castle Donington	Transition plan to be developed	February 2016
Countesthorpe	Transition plan agreed	August 2015
Desford	Transition plan to be developed	November 2015
Fleckney	Transition plan to be developed	February 2016
Glenhills	Transition plan agreed	September 2015
Groby	Transition plan to be developed	November 2015
Hathern	Transition plan to be developed	January 2016
Kegworth	Transition plan to be developed	January 2016
Leicester Forest East	Transition plan to be developed	December 2015
Market Bosworth	Transition plan to be developed	March 2016
Markfield	Transfer completed 7 September 2015	Completed
Newbold Verdon	Transition plan to be developed	December 2015
Ratby	Transition plan to be developed	January 2016
Rothley	Transition plan agreed	October 2015

Sileby	Transition plan to be developed	December 2015
South Wigston	Transition plan to be developed	March 2016
Stoney Stanton	Transition plan to be developed	November 2015

- 27 The remainder of this report deals with communities that submitted an ROI which required further work, or submitted an ROI which did not comply with the Council's offer of support.

Progress update

- 28 Barrow on Soar became the first community to assume management of their library on 27 July 2015. This was followed by Markfield Library which transferred on 7 September 2015.

Kirby Muxloe, Quorn and Thurmaston

- 29 These libraries were identified as requiring further work being undertaken to their submissions, in order for them to progress to a stage where agreement can be reached. This is detailed below:

Library	Outline Business Plan Status	Recommendation
Kirby Muxloe	Outline business plan approved	Issues associated with the lease of Kirby Muxloe library need to be resolved before any transfer of the library to community management can be achieved
Quorn	Outline business plan approved	Approve for transfer
Thurmaston	Outline business plan approved	Approve for transfer

Burbage, Cosby, East Goscote, Enderby, Great Glen, Ibstock, Kibworth, Measham, Narborough and Sapcote

- 30 The 10 communities in this grouping did not submit an original ROI, or did submit, but subsequently withdrew the ROI. Additional engagement in these communities with existing groups and potential interested parties was completed in June 2015 with the aim of supporting any emerging groups so that they were able to take part in the second round of ROIs.
- 31 ROIs were received and accepted for all libraries and the groups involved were invited to submit outline business plans by 4 September 2015. The progress made with these groups is detailed in the table below:

Library	Outline Business Plan Status	Recommendation
Burbage	Outline business plan approved	Progress to transition to community management subject to minor conditions being met
Cosby	Outline business plan provisionally approved	Progress to transition to community management subject to minor conditions being met
East Goscote	Outline business plan approved	Progress to transition to community management
Enderby	Outline business plan approved	Progress to transition to community

		management
Great Glen	Outline business plan provisionally approved	Progress to transition to community management subject to minor conditions being met
Ibstock	Outline business plan provisionally approved	Progress to transition to community management subject to minor conditions being met
Kibworth	Outline business plan approved	Progress to transition to community management
Measham	Outline business plan approved	Progress to transition to community management
Narborough	Outline business plan not submitted	Consult on possible closure and replacement with Mobile Library service provision
Sapcote	Outline business plan provisionally approved	Progress to transition to community management subject to minor conditions being met

Braunstone Town and Mountsorrel

- 32 The outline business plan submissions for Braunstone Town and Mountsorrel were evaluated in the first round of assessments, the results of which were reported to the Cabinet in June 2015. In both cases the financial assumptions underpinning the outline business plan did not comply with the Council's published offer of grant funding, and assumed an ongoing element of County Council financial support. Both libraries were therefore included in the second period of ROIs.
- 33 Braunstone Town Council re-submitted two outline business plans as part of the second round of submissions. Neither of the plans were found to be compliant with the County Council's published offer of grant support for the same reasons as outlined in paragraph 32.
- 34 The Mountsorrel War Memorial Trust did not re-submit an outline business plan and therefore have not altered their original proposals. Consequently their plan does not comply with the published offer of grant funding.
- 35 It is recommended that the County Council considers possible closure of the sites and replacing library provision through the mobile library service as part of the consultation period recommended in 2 f) above.

Libraries not in a position to progress to community managed library status

- 36 Following the processes outlined in paragraph 15, the following libraries are not in a position to progress as a community managed library supported by the County Council :
- Braunstone Town;
 - Mountsorrel;
 - Narborough.
- 37 Information that was provided as part of the consultation process in 2014 indicated that the most likely option for providing access to library services where there was no outline business plan was a remodelled mobile library service. In order to provide a

check on whether this was the most appropriate method of delivery, a range of other options were investigated. These options are summarised in Appendix A.

- 38 This analysis confirmed that the provision of a mobile library service remains the most viable and flexible method of continuing to provide access to library services in the affected communities.

Consultation

- 39 It is recommended that a three month public consultation is undertaken in the communities served by the Narborough, Braunstone and Mountsorrel libraries.
- 40 The aims of the public consultation will be to receive feedback on proposed replacement services to assess impact on users and inform any mitigating measures to be taken.
- 41 It is proposed that the consultation will comprise of the following elements:
- a) A bespoke consultation document that outlines the background and proposals for the specific library available online and in hard copy;
 - b) A survey questionnaire available online and as hard copy integrated into the bespoke document noted above;
 - c) An information event at each library location aimed at informing residents about the proposals and enable them to make an informed response to the consultation (via the survey);
 - d) Information displays at each library.

Conclusions

- 42 Since the initial proposals for the remodelling of Leicestershire's library services were considered in March 2014, a great deal of work has been carried out with local communities to enable them to manage their local library, supported by the County Council. A total of 32 libraries have now either transferred or are expected to do so over the next six months. Many local communities have been assisted by Voluntary Action Leicestershire, which has helped to develop outline business cases and supported training.
- 43 Only three communities have not produced a viable outline business plan. Possible closure of the existing service delivery for these sites is now proposed with a three month consultation over the replacement of the existing facilities with the mobile library service. The proposed three month consultation exercise which, if approved will begin in October 2015, will help to inform recommendations for the future delivery of services for each of these communities.

Background Papers

Report of the Cabinet to the County Council meeting, 19 February 2014 - Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014/15 to 2017/18

<http://ow.ly/JmQUZ>

Report to the Cabinet, 5 March 2014 - Consultation on Proposals for Changes in the Delivery of Community Library Services

<http://ow.ly/JmQOC>

Report to the Cabinet, 19 September 2014 - Outcome of Consultation on Proposals for Changes in the Delivery of Library Services

<http://ow.ly/JmQGv>

Report to the Cabinet, 13 October 2014 – Communities Strategy

[http://politics.leics.gov.uk/Published/C00000135/M00004268/AI00039244/\\$8CommunitiesStrategy.docxA.ps.pdf](http://politics.leics.gov.uk/Published/C00000135/M00004268/AI00039244/$8CommunitiesStrategy.docxA.ps.pdf)

Report to the Cabinet, 19 November 2014 – Future Strategy for the Delivery of Library Services

<http://ow.ly/JmQwT>

Report to the Cabinet 16 March 2015 – Future Strategy for the Delivery of Library Services

<http://ow.ly/QKDBW>

Report to the Cabinet 16 June 2015-Future Strategy for the Delivery of library Services.

<http://ow.ly/QKDxv>

Appendices

Appendix A – Updated Options Appraisal: Alternative Library Service Provision

Appendix B – Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments in respect of Braunstone Town Library, Mountsorrel Library and Narborough Library

Appendix C - Community profile information in respect of Braunstone Town Library, Mountsorrel Library and Narborough Library

Equalities and Human Rights Implications

- 44 An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) for each of the 36 community libraries was appended to the Cabinet report of 19 November 2014. These have been updated for Braunstone Town, Mountsorrel and Narborough and are attached to this report as Appendix B.
- 45 The EHRIA process is iterative in nature and Equality and Human Rights Improvement Plans, attached to each EHRIA, outlines mitigating actions to be monitored as the consultation outlined in paragraphs 39-41 progresses and for a final assessment be produced for the Cabinet in March 2016.
- 46 An online interactive community profile for each area has been established which outlines key features associated with each community from a number of criteria. This can be viewed through the following link: <http://ow.ly/JmQgE>. This has been supplemented by additional profiling contained in Appendix C for Braunstone Town, Mountsorrel and Narborough where consultation on an alternative service provision is proposed.
- 47 It should be noted that although the majority of the information contained in the profiling work is not required in order to address the authorities Public Sector Equalities Duty, it has been regarded as good practice in order to ensure that an informed decision is made in deciding where services should be targeted if a decision is ultimately taken to close any of the libraries detailed in paragraph 36.

This page is intentionally left blank