APPENDIX F

NOTES OF STAKEHOLDER EVENTS RE DRAFT COMMUNITIES AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2016-20

As part of the consultation, the following stakeholder events were held meetings were held.

This report provides a summary overview of the key issues raised and discussed at this meeting as well as a record of the questions and comments put forward by delegates at this meeting.

Wigston

Place of Meeting:	Record Office of Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland Long Street, Wigston, Leicester, LE18 2AH
Date & Time of Meeting:	Thursday 31 March 2016 @ 10.00 a.m.
Number of Participants:	5

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS FROM THE DISCUSSION

It should be noted that all attendees at the meeting came from organisations associated with museum and heritage services and therefore comments and questions made related mainly to this area.

Views expressed about the draft Communities & Wellbeing Strategy	Comments made that the strategy has a slightly negative tone (e.g. strategy sub-title refers to "providing less"). Instead the aim should be to create a vibrant heritage service for the future with more limited resources and identify ways this could be achieved despite the financial pressures.
	View expressed that the biggest impact would be a loss of tourism to the county. Identified that the recent success of Leicester City Football Club has increased visitors to the county visitors and visitors to museums, libraries and other services have increased as a result.
Views expressed about "Enabling and supporting communities"	Acknowledged the importance of having structures in place to sustain and support volunteering. Recognised that it can be difficult to acquire volunteers with knowledge and experience in relevant fields. Identified that the current age profile of volunteers (i.e. majority are aged over 60 years) is an issue.
	Suggestion was made to try and bring on businesses in

as consultants to give advice and support.

Views expressed on "Access to services"

Risk identified that if opening hours are reduced too far it may devalue the service and lead to perception that libraries and other services are always shut.

Online digitalisation of collections and artefacts was viewed as a beneficial enhancement to customers and students but does not replace the experience of visiting and viewing these in person and being able to liaise with the curators at the museum to gain further knowledge.

Comments made to be wary of introducing high levels of technology within museums as it is unable to provoke an experience or give advice.

The option people would least like to happen is closure of venues and museums. There would still be a need for curators and conservation issues would need to be addressed.

View expressed that 90% of volunteers are retired and many are not IT literate, so trying to offer digital services to children that know more than they do is difficult. It does not come easily to a lot of people as not everyone has a computer. This could be a barrier preventing access for people.

In relation to the Record Office, it was felt that it would be difficult if there was a reduction of opening hours and a number of conservation staff has already reduced. One area under pressure which has always been important is conservation. The Records Office is always on the lookout for collections and this cannot be done without skilled professional staff. There is a useful partnership between staff and volunteers at the Records Office and a lot of work is being done by volunteers to digitise information, so people may not come if the information is online.

Views expressed on "Supporting key strategies in preventing and reducing need"

The Museum and Heritage sites have always believed in curriculum based activities. It is important that children know about the history of the community and build on that. Prioritisation should be on children and families being able to visit and access these activities.

Other suggestions about delivering the Strategy

There was a strong opinion that LCC museums should look at making a small charge to visitors

Comment made that museums and heritage sites cannot price themselves out of the market with parents who have large families as these are 'bread and butter' visitors. People who can afford it could give a "suggested donation". If the suggested donations were £1 for adults and 50p for children throughout the year this could generate a large amount of money.

However, if introducing charges a more detailed discussion/consultation would need to take place.

Question raised that with many schools becoming Academies, is there is a revenue opportunity to charge Academies for our services?

LCC museums need to become more business-like. Independent museums have been a good proposition due to the expertise of people working in them. The best bits of everything independent museums offer and share this with LCC.

Why couldn't a county wide charity or independent trust for libraries and museums be set up?

Explore corporate giving, not just financial contributions but services in kind as well.

As a last resort, if it could be demonstrated, with figures to evidence this, that museums are not attended between certain hours (e.g. between 9.00am – 10.00am) then opening hours could be tailored to reflect this. Exceptions would need to be made during school holidays due to more people attending during holiday time.

Suggestion was made to look at bringing groups of libraries within a certain area together within one central hub library which maintains its opening hours and full service to customers.

Customers would love cafes in museums which would make a more enjoyable experience for them. If not a full café then what about self- serve vending machines.

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS RAISED:

1. Is there any perceived reduction in requests from schools for services LCC provide by subscription and will the Academy status potentially reduce that interest?

2. This is a two way relationship especially where cuts put pressure on other services. We know of an example where it is becoming difficult for a museum to attract school visits. We have to understand the implications of curriculum for the future. The feeling is that schools are not visiting places like the Records Office due to the cost of the visit, obtaining all necessary permissions and health & safety issues. Effectively it is easier for staff to go out to schools rather than invite them to visit.

3. As schools are becoming independent academies and not part of the LCC services, where is the opportunity to co-ordinate the activities with schools to learn about the local community and history?

4. It is felt that children are losing opportunities to visit the historic buildings of the county and what they can learn from these visits.

5. There is an opinion the service seems to have become very fragmented.

6. Can you project what the savings are likely to be?

7. Have you found there is a different response from different areas of the county? Are some districts more keen and responsive than others and will this lead to a difference of attitude and performance within the county?

8. Staff at museums have crucial information and knowledge to assist visitors. Removing these staff members to achieve savings would be very detrimental for museums.

9. If 16 libraries are to be retained, need to look at where libraries are distributed, how they link with other local services provided by the County Council and District Council and how the individual buildings can be responsive.

10. Some people may object to bringing in other services into museums (e.g. coffee shops) believing it is too much commercialisation.

11. Donington le Heath Manor House has a purpose in itself, but other museums could be moved elsewhere but need to be accessible for all ages and provide an enjoyable learning experience.

12. At the Record Office there is potential in all of the collections and it is difficult to prioritise what in a collection is more valuable than something else and then having the resources to do anything about it. Is there a structured relationship between the Heritage Lottery Fund and LCC? It seems to me that very often a local group applies for a grant from the lottery and either gets it or they do not and that is the end of the story.

13. Are there any other priorities that are not included in this consultation?

14. What can't be included in a document is an objective review of all the venues we have got across the county and how it will shape up in the future. On a recent visit to Beaumanor Hall I wondered what this costs and wonder what can be done with this as it is a prominent building and not cheap to maintain, perhaps they could be changed and administered in a different way.

15. It is felt a 'hands on' service should still be available to pre-school children upwards into adult years as culture starts as an infant and without culture a society cannot thrive.

16. To emphasise the value of the relationship between the Records Office and schools, it is felt that a better title than the Record Office is needed to reflect this.

17. Cultural heritage and the enrichment of people's lives are immeasurable. Organisations like education should be approached to increase the value to our organisation.

18. The Record Office is jointly funded and we are always conscious that the city is a contributor as well. There is not scope for business sponsorship to promote heritage services. Trying to get businesses to support history has been very difficult and there has been virtually no response in respect of funding even though they will get involved with academies and schools. History and the arts are difficult to define and difficult for businesses to find a reason to support.

19. Has there been a study made in recent months of the visitor reaction of the Bosworth battlefield site?

20. Is there collaborative work between the County and the City? We have a lot of English history but it is not really displayed anywhere, this would be an area that could be developed as a collaborative project.

21. With 30% less resources the council needs to work smarter and try to find more avenues to add value and improve the service. The council needs to market itself so others can see the value of services, buy into the services and see the benefits of what is being done. We need to look further and deeper.

22. All staff have their own knowledge and expertise within their area of the organisation such as libraries or museums. One of the biggest challenges is to collectively pool this knowledge and experience to develop the service. If the council do not share their information, knowledge and experience this is going to leave groups without the necessary expertise. Perhaps there could be a central point to share this.

Place of Meeting:	Melton Carnegie Museum, Thorpe End, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, LE13 1 RB
Date & Time of Meeting:	Tuesday 12th April 2.00-4.00pm
Number of Participants:	3

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS FROM THE DISCUSSION

It should be noted that all attendees at the meeting were stakeholders associated with museums, therefore many responses focussed on that area.

Views expressed about the draft Communities & Wellbeing Strategy	There was a broad understanding of the purpose of the strategy and the rationale behind it.
	Suggestion that opportunities be sought to joining up Melton Museum with the library in a single site. Melton Museum is not in the right location.
	Suggestions to continue looking at identifying income streams for the service.
Views expressed about "Access to Services"	Queries raised around paying for access. Possibly

associated with museum entry.

Discussion around possible pricing structure and whether charging for museum entry might create a barrier for people. Some concern that pricing might be a deterrent

Pricing might be mitigated by having different pricing for different groups; e.g. visitors/tourists to the area, local residents, annual passes, higher one off charge for visitors/tourists. Suggestion to incorporate a free day on a regular basis.

More work required to target visiting coach parties with information.

Acceptance that IT should be used more to improve access, but that appropriate support should be available to help people make best use of technology. Further exploration of use of technology was needed by the service.

Service should provide more information about its services, e.g. location of museum, how to get there, and meeting people at coach stops.

Impact of closures /reductions in hours would be loss of visitors/future generations not having access to museums in future/difficult to outline impact.

Risk of vulnerable people falling through the gap.

Views about "Supporting key strategies in preventing and reducing need"

Books and reading are very important.

Comment about supporting vulnerable people – this is the role of social services.

The outcomes/targeted work outlined in the draft strategy was about right.

Supporting children's learning identified as very important and promoting reading.

Responses to developing and supporting digital services were mixed with no strong view either way.

Supporting health less well supported as a priority area by the group.

Unsure about supporting economy.

Does supporting the history of Leicestershire have to be done through museums? Should this be the job of the library in partnership with Parish Councils?

Other suggestions about delivering the Strategy	Impact of income through Friends groups' talks at Melton Museum. Could this be packaged up across the County to contribute to a re-designed income strategy?
	Openness expressed by the group of alternative types of governance which included voluntary/independent sector as a key partner.
	Friends' organisations could support the strategy by giving talks, supporting learning. They could join up talk programmes across the County.
	If the museum shut then the friends groups would not exist.
	Concern that long term sustainability of volunteering would work.
	Volunteers should be used around specific and time limited projects.

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS RAISED:

1. Query around Bosworth being managed separately due to its size and national/international profile.
2. Can coach firms be targeted so that staff/volunteers meet people off coach trips with information about Museums? Use "meeters and greeters".
3. Can the mobile library service be reduced/de-commissioned? Perception of low usage.
4. Can museums be managed by commercial operators to increase profile and income?
5. Aren't social services there to target vulnerable people?
6. Be more focussed on what the offer is.

Place of Meeting: Council Chamber, County Hall, Glenfield, Leicester, LE3 8RN

Date & Time of Meeting: Thursday 14th April 2016 – 2pm to 4pm

Number of Participants: 17

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS FROM THE DISCUSSION

It should be noted that all attendees at the meeting came from organisations associated with Community Managed Libraries (CMLs) and therefore comments and questions made related mainly to this area.

General views expressed about the draft Communities & Wellbeing Strategy

Comments made that the threat of losing a service will encourage communities to get involved; as has happened with CMLs.

There was a dislike of the reduction of staffing because volunteers enjoy working alongside them.

Recognised that the public reaction to changes in library services is different to other areas such as social care etc. However, sometimes the public only realises what is missing after they have lost it.

Views expressed about "Enabling and Supporting Communities"

Emphasised the need to build trust between LCC & CMLs. This relationship is currently at a delicate stage of the relationship and this must to be considered once the future plans and actions to implement the strategy plan are developed.

LCC has expertise in finance, legal etc. and providing named contacts in these areas would be a good way to help build trust.

Several attendees noted that they hoped to still have the support of LCC to carry on the service they provide whilst the strategy is implemented.

Suggestion that LCC provide assistance to CMLs to enable them to bid for the provision of other services.

The development of CML Forums which meeting on a regular basis (possibly bi-annually) to discuss issues and priorities was viewed as beneficial. Each CML could nominate a representative and hold discussions within their local CML to identify local concerns for representation. This would enable the sharing of best practice, ideas about infrastructure and overall sustainability. As all CMLS delivering the same type of services they are likely to have the same issues. There is also the potential for CMLs to join together to negotiate cheaper rates and deals for supplies e.g. energy, training, books.

Publishing a prospectus of services. Inviting people/groups to offer to run them. Commissioning the services that C&W provides.

Investigate how CMLS could co-ordinate their ideas/expertise. CMLs could host LCC services and events. This could include the sharing of library and museum staff for talks and linking up with other relevant service such as museums and LCC libraries.

Recognised that CMLs are independent so they may in

the future decide to go in alternative directions from that contained in the strategy. LCC would have to respect that.

Recognised that the sustainability of the CMLs will be affected by any future financial issues. LCC & CMLs need to work together to enable CMLS to continue to evolve.

Views expressed about "Access to Services"

Risk that demand on CMLs will increase if LCC funded libraries and the services they provide are reduced.

Concerns were raised regarding reduced staffing and increased self service in libraries that the human element would be lost, which is one of the key things that library users like.

View that digital services should always be extended as it is the future.

Recognised that although an eBook service doesn't need physical premises but the library "principles" still apply.

Identified potential benefits of digitising more original materials as keeping less hard copies may reduce costs and year on year stock deprivation.

Also need to look at the sustainability of IT infrastructure which is already often outdated.

Views about "Supporting key strategies in preventing and reducing need"

Identified the need for a small group of PCs for children and teenagers' to do their homework.

Consider what CMLs can do for children and teenagers that education for children does not already offer. Are CMLS and education doubling up the same service?

The key strategic priorities for the library services should be to provide access to reading including children and the wider family unit; encouraging children to come to libraries and get them into reading, job workshops, basic skills for adults and supporting the elderly people retain access to outside world.

Other suggestions about delivering the Strategy

Suggestion to offer concessionary rates and/or extra benefits for local population/regular users.

Feedback has been received from library users that if the quality of service was better people do not mind paying. To avoid any legal issues relating to charging it was suggested that a "friends of" library group could charge subscription fees to raise further funds.

Similarly suggestions were made to investigate benefactor/sponsorship with private enterprises and to encourage more philanthropy generally.

Potential to rent out space in libraries and maximise other revenue streams.

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS RAISED:

1. Will the financial support package for CMLs be affected by the outcomes of the current consultation?

2. What statutory responsibilities and legal requirements do CMLs actually have? E.g. health & safety requirements.

3. Will LCC funded libraries be prioritised over CMLS when allocating funding and other resources?

4. Why can smaller libraries be transferred to community management but larger ones not?

5. Are LCC allowed to enter into partnership with private organisations?

6. Are any other services (i.e. other than libraries) statutory as part of the C&W Service?

7. Will the levels of representation from the different areas of the county affect the allocation of funding and resources?

8. Are any elements of the C&W budget ring-fenced?

9. Will there be any further changes to the budget figures currently stated?

10. How are free form comments in the questionnaire/consultation document analysed?

11. Comment made that CMLs cannot yet comment on the value, experience, etc. of the Summer Reading Challenge as they have not yet experienced running the programme.

12. Do libraries have their own server infrastructure? It would be good to allow more flexibility for CMLs to invest/generate funding in IT.

13. Hinckley Hub has been very helpful.

14. What resources are required to run the home library service?

15. Broadband/IT services should be good quality as all types of services will eventually be run digitally services. It will be increasingly difficult to provide a good service if this is not in place.

16. CMLs could take on more volunteers who currently work with LCC. Although DBS checks can cause problems.

17. It was highlighted that there was some uncertainty about how the relationship between school libraries and CMLs operates.

18. Safeguarding issues/concerns were a bigger issue than many CMLs thought they would be.

19. CMLs find outlay capital is easier to generate, but month to month/year on year funding costs are the biggest long-term issue.

Place of Meeting:	Council Chambers, County Hall, Glenfield, Leicester, LE3 8RN
Date & Time of Meeting:	Monday 18th April 2016 – 10am to 12pm
Number of Participants:	11

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS FROM THE DISCUSSION

It should be noted that all attendees at the meeting were volunteers in the Community & Wellbeing Service and therefore comments and questions made related mainly to this area.

Views expressed about the draft Communities & Wellbeing Strategy	Attendees asked what more can be done so to make people aware of the consultation and the C&W services provided?
	Comment made that regular meetings were needed on a locality or county level to discuss changes.
Views expressed about "Access to Services"	Questions were raised about what will happen to libraries if they are closed?
	Suggestion that instead of reducing number of venues/staff, venues could be made smaller or look at sharing venues. Also investigate opportunities for renting space out in venues.
	Comment made that it would be worthwhile trying new ideas such as self-service libraries.
	What other services apart from libraries are planned to be digitized? Recognised the need to support those without IT skills and that other organisations can be asked to help. Without this people feel isolated at home with no contact.
	Identified that voluntary organisations can help with training/developing people in using newer technologies
	Need to consider the impact of closing venues on social dialogue and the wider community.
	There is a potential impact on vulnerable people if they don't have access to the services. For example libraries provide an important function for socially excluded people.
	How will this affect people who rely on libraries to access a PC?

If venues closed, groups that are vital for social inclusion could be lost. Other sectors (e.g. mental health reablement, anti-social behaviour) could find an increased workload and issues arising indirectly from this.

Views about "Supporting key strategies in preventing and reducing need"

With regards to priority area suggestions some felt that 'supporting children's learning' and 'encouraging value of reading' overlaps. Also in the same way 'supporting vulnerable people' links to others such as 'better health and wellbeing'.

The major priorities for C&W suggested were supporting health & wellbeing, learning in the community, promoting the value of reading, access to information and signposting to information. There was a feeling amongst some that the education system and parents should already be providing some of the services that libraries provide.

The main groups that libraries should target should be people with disabilities, older people in care homes or who live alone and vulnerable children.

Other suggestions about delivering the Strategy

Several attendees suggested the introduction of some form of charging. One example of feedback from Glenfield Library suggested library users would be willing to pay.

Introduction of café facilities was a popular suggestion.

There is a need to build more relationships with potential visitors to museums to generate more income.

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS RAISED:

1. The scanning backlog at Snibston will take 2 years to complete. How can this issue be resolved and progressed?

2. Why was digitisation not started earlier?

3. Can the overall library budget be devolved the libraries themselves?

4. How will any digital improvements be funded in the future?

5. After Snibston closed, it was promised that a mining museum would be opened. What has happened with this?

6. Will there be a car park for Century Theatre reinstalled at old Snibston location?

7. Coalville Library's opening time was changed from 9am to 10am but most in library users would prefer opening times of 9am – 5pm. Could this be reverted?

8. What will be done with Snibston's old archives?

9. The LCC website is not the most helpful when looking for activities.

10. What things are being done at County Hall to reduce costs?

11. Are all volunteers asked about their different skills when they start, so we could think about involving them in new/different volunteering opportunities ?

12. There needs to be more advertising of C&W services.

13. Will there be charges for any future online services?

14. Sharing plans and testing new ideas is good. Maybe designated groups could be established to do this?

15. There is a need to encourage more relationships with other businesses, anything that can be learnt/gained is a bonus.

16. Does the C&W service have links with Age UK and other similar charities?

17. A marketplace for volunteers would be very useful. As would the option to share volunteers between services where suitable.

18. Is there a cut off when it comes the stopping of a service? (i.e. how many reductions can be made to a service before it is stopped completely?)

Place of Meeting:	Council Chamber, County Hall, Glenfield, Leicester, LE3 8RN
Date & Time of Meeting:	Monday 18th April 2016 – 7pm to 9pm
Number of Participants:	11

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS FROM THE DISCUSSION

Views expressed about the draft Communities & Wellbeing Strategy	The need to retain professional expertise within the service was identified.
	Concern that if there is too much is focus on libraries museums will be forgotten. Museums are important and need to investigate whether these can be expanded although it might require investment?
Views expressed about "Enabling and supporting communities"	Recognised the benefits of the support from UAL in setting up as CMLs. It enabled the groups to learn about best & worst practices.
	Concerns were raised that in moving services from professionals to willing volunteers "something" will disappear. The professionals need to focus on research

and understanding the community and its needs. Professionals are the key to developing the service with volunteers.

It is vital for volunteers to have access to appropriate advice and expertise. It was felt that there are some misconceptions about CML volunteers, e.g. they are professional librarians. Expert librarians need to be there at the very least for any handover to maintain the expertise.

Recognised that there are risks associated with volunteers. E.g. the continuing need to maintain levels of volunteers and as many current volunteers are retired this can present issues during the summer months.

Questions were raised about maintaining the fabric of C&W buildings? Commented that the responsibility for looking after a building is more significant than just offering a few hours a week and CMLs have to sign a full repairing lease.

Questions asked about what would happen if someone got hurt in the library and who would be liable?

Reference made to the Safe Place Programme, which libraries are part of. There is a need to ensure volunteers are protected also.

Questions were raised about what will happen in the future when if funding runs out and/or volunteers drop off due to other priorities?

Comments made that CMLs can do front end tasks such as meet & greet but sometimes they cannot do behind the scenes tasks.

Frustration was expressed around backroom costs being passed onto volunteers & individuals

Risk identified that with so many calls on people to volunteer, communities are going to run out of volunteers.

Views expressed about "Access to Services"

Concern was expressed about vital services being taken away. Several attendees felt that no more libraries could close, as the service had reduced enough already.

Questions were raised as to why the service is considering closing libraries, when there are opportunities for communities and other organisations

to get more engaged with those venues?

With an increased move towards people using online services, those that cannot engage are excluded as a result. If the library is closed, how would people get access to these computer resources? Also need to bear in mind travel distance for people using public transport and in particular those with a disability.

Comments made that libraries are about a community space and need people in there. It is all about personal contact.

Acknowledged that self-service happens in the city already.

Concerns were raised about accessing a library when you do not know who was in there.

A query was raised about whether self-service libraries would have CCTV?

Concerns about how a self-service library would work and issues such as untidy books

Comments made that self-issuing machines seem to work based on some attendees' experiences.

Comments made that online information needs to be maintained and kept relevant

Questions were raised about IT support. Recognised that some if the IT equipment/infrastructure is quite old so how will this be funded/supported in the future?

Recognised that technology could be an opportunity for increasing access and retaining the service by enabling self-service access to the building.

There is a risk that going digital & online will replace all other access means and this will exclude some people.

Views about "Supporting key strategies in preventing and reducing need"

Comments made that if personal budgets for people with disabilities with Personal Budgets are reduced, free activities and services in libraries will be key.

Recognised that an outreach service is needed for people who cannot get to venues such as libraries. It is very important to protect vulnerable people.

Recognised that volunteer roles can impact on people's ability to get jobs; especially those with learning and/or physical disabilities, as jobs opportunities can be

limited.

Comment made that it is difficult to evidence how successful preventative measures are.

Comment made that enabling access to information is vitally important.

Priorities identified as supporting reading practice of children and support for older people enable social contact.

Other suggestions about delivering the Strategy	Suggestion to introduce charges for more events & activities. – E.g. Donington – annual pass/season passes rather than pay per visit.
	Why not increase council tax?

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS RAISED:

1. How will LCC store the feedback from the events?

2. Why did Snibston close? It is a real lost opportunity as you cannot promote Coalville for tourism without a museum.

3. Why do we need a County, District, Parish & City council system? (Why can't we just be a unitary authority)?

4. How are we going to share the knowledge about how some CMLs have accessed additional funding, so that other libraries can benefit and access those opportunities?

5. How have you let people know about the consultation?

6. VAL has done an excellent job.

7. Does the £1.8m include the CML saving?

8. Measham library is one example of successfully being a community hub which is helping community cohesion.

9. Could Health & Wellbeing be covered by Public Health?

10. Will CMLs have access to the JAG offer from social care?

11. Need to ensure C&W service provision is not contrary to how ASC is working.

12. What checks are in place for people working in the library to protect users, especially children.

13. CMLs are seeing a big interest in home library service

14. Libraries could be an important hub in the community with links to schools, health etc. It is good to have this locally available.

Place of Meeting:	Heritage Rooms, Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Site & Country Park, Sutton Cheney, Nueaton, Warwickshire, CV13 0AD
Date & Time of Meeting:	Thursday 28th April 2016 – 2pm to 3.30pm
Number of Participants:	1

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS FROM THE DISCUSSION

Views expressed about the draft Communities & Wellbeing Strategy

Libraries serve a diverse range of people and communities and are particularly important in areas of high unemployment and to help those with low skills and / or language barriers.

The strategy will look to 'provide less, support more' with volunteer groups managing, sustaining and controlling smaller community venues.

Volunteers may be seen as 'amateur' which could create low expectations of the service. It is important therefore to have a mixed model with community groups receiving support from LCC in the long term with dedicated librarians, possibly covering multiple sites, on hand to offer help and advice.

It can be difficult to get people out of the mind-set of LA funded services and hard to embrace change.

Public confidence is a key issue. Local anger at cuts to smaller libraries as staff have built good relationships with the public over time.

LCC have a 7 year funding agreement and after this time, volunteer groups would be expected to go it alone. The Council would however, need to ensure that all statutory and legal requirements are met.

The strategy for Adult Learning Services is in the early stages and will undergo a separate review.

Views expressed about the potential reduction in staff within libraries and museums

It would be challenging for community groups to run the libraries without professional staff on hand to offer help, at least in the short term.

Several volunteer groups had considered taking over some of the smaller sites but had found it not to be viable so had not pursued this further. Volunteers would need to have business experience to make the new model work efficiently.

Volunteer groups would be able to decide their own agenda on how they deliver meaningful community services and would also have control over opening hours etc.

Views expressed on community managed library solution

The public will not be too concerned if libraries are staffed by volunteers as long as they continue to provide a professional service and there is a seamless transition from LA led provision.

Introduction of more 'self-serve' facilities to ensure longer opening hours and more flexibility for staff and customers. Access could be via library card.

Reasonable charges could be introduced for the loan of books and other materials.

Library building could be used for a wide range of community activities or alternatively, libraries could re-locate to other building within the local area. Important to work with other organisations to share / pool resources.

Library sites to be made more 'user friendly' to minority groups, welcoming diverse client groups and offering books / talks on relevant subjects.

Accessibility of other/alternative services (online and other libraries)

Digital services should be extended as it's the future and will appeal more to the younger generation. Again, charging a small amount for these services would not be unreasonable.

Community groups would still need IT back up from LCC in case of breakdown / repair problems

The elderly can find it difficult to get online and would still require support and expertise from trained professionals to enable them to access and continue to use this service

Job Centres currently send job seekers to libraries to access job sites etc. so the loss of technology in more remote areas is a cause of some concern.

Views of what the impact would be of this strategy.

Reduction in availability for all. Support needed for vulnerable and minority groups within local communities with buildings offering user friendly facilities so all are catered for.

Overall greater concern with widely used facilities being reduced. Museums are important but most would prefer to see services retained which relate to the present day

rather than historical events.

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS RAISED:

1. Will the cuts continue to affect other services such as children's and the elderly? How far will they go?

2. It would be better overall to have one or two well used facilities within a locality rather than many that are not supported.

3. Will LCC be providing support after the 7 year funding runs out?

4. Will volunteer led services cater for minority groups and provide adequate facilities to ensure they feel welcome.

5. Will members of the public have their say on how the service is run in future?

6. If libraries are run on a self-serve basis, how would volunteers manage the element of risk. They could be liable for accidents and incidents which occur with no staff present.

7. Also, how would security be managed? CCTV?

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