

CULTURE AND LEISURE REVIEW COMMITTEE

AGENDA

Meeting to be held in the Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, City Library and Arts Centre, Sunderland, on Tuesday, 18th July, 2006 at 5.30 p.m.

Please Note the change to usual venue

ITEM		PAGE
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 20th June, 2006 (Copy herewith).	1
3.	Declarations of Interest (including Whipping Declarations)	
4.	Library Management System Migration Project Report of the Director of Community and Cultural Services (copy herewith).	5
5.	Remit and Scope of Study into the Usage of Public Libraries – Scope of Policy Review 2006/07 Report of the City Solicitor and Director of Community and Cultural Services (copy herewith).	8

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R.C. RAYNER,
City Solicitor.

Civic Centre,
SUNDERLAND.

6th July, 2006.

At a meeting of the Culture and Leisure Review Committee held in the Civic Centre on Tuesday, 20th June, 2006 at 2.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor J.B. Scott in the Chair

Councillors Ambrose, P. Gibson and L. Walton

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Bohill, Foster, Grey, Mann and Wares.

Minutes of the last Meeting

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 26th April, 2006 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest (Including Whipping Declarations)

There were no declarations of interest.

Priorities and Key Issues for the Year Ahead

The City Solicitor and Director of Community and Cultural Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide Members with an outline of the key issues and priorities for the year ahead for services contained within the remit of the Committee.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Alison O'Neill, Assistant Head of Community Services (Sport and Leisure); Chris Alexander, Head of Culture and Tourism; and Peter High, Head of Environmental Services, gave a presentation to Members each covering their respective service areas.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

In response to a question from Councillor P. Gibson, Ms. O'Neill, Assistant Head of Community Services (Sport and Leisure) advised that funding had become available to target higher risk groups, such as those with chronic heart disease and Type Two Diabetes in partnership with the TPCT. Ms. O'Neill emphasised the importance of reducing health inequalities and the necessity to train Health Trainers in order to build capacity.

In response to a question from Councillor Ambrose regarding Hard to Reach Groups, Ms. O'Neill advised that joint working with the TPCT would enable the City Council to identify individuals who came under this category, who did not otherwise present themselves.

Councillor Ambrose enquired as to whether a programme of refurbishing existing leisure facilities existed in addition to new developments. Ms. O'Neill advised that Cabinet had agreed that when Stadium Park opened, Newcastle Road Swimming Baths would close. In respect of Seaburn and Crowtree Leisure Centres, feasibility studies were being undertaken by the City Council and the Sunderland ARC was considering the Crowtree site as part of a wider review. However, existing facilities would not close unless alternative facilities were going to be offered in their place.

Councillor P. Gibson commented that he was enthusiastic about World Heritage Site Status and as St. Peter's Church had been excavated in the past enquired as to whether some kind of visitor site could be developed, as at present the main sources of interest were inside the church itself. Mr. Alexander, Head of Culture and Tourism, agreed that a significant gap currently existed at the site and whilst the county archaeologist had advised that future excavation was not permissible, it was hoped that ground level developments could take place at the site.

In response to a question from Councillor Ambrose, Mr. Alexander advised that the Cultural Partnership included, amongst others, representatives from the City Council, the Sunderland Partnership and the cultural sector.

In respect of the landmark art feature, Councillor Ambrose enquired whether the nature of the artwork had been determined. Mr. Alexander advised that a competitive process was currently underway. Three artists had been short-listed and they were in the process of visiting Sunderland. The decision on which piece to commission would be taken by a working group which included Councillor Speding, the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Leisure, the Strategic Arts Manager and representatives from the Arts Council and the University of Sunderland.

In response to a question from Councillor Ambrose, Mr. Alexander advised that partnership work was undertaken with North and South Tyneside around coastline issues.

Councillor Ambrose enquired as to plans for the Christmas Ice Rink as the rink last year in Mowbray Park had proved controversial. Mr. Alexander advised that he appreciated that the ice rink in Mowbray Park had attracted some negative comment and that alternatives would be considered, however visitor numbers at Mowbray Park had been high.

The Chairman commented that he felt St. Peter's Church had not been pushed to its full potential. He drew attention to the question of accommodation for tourists visiting the City. Mr. Alexander advised that it was necessary to ensure that sufficient visitor attractions existed to encourage developers to build hotels. Three sites identified by the ARC could lead to potential development.

In response to a question from Councillor Ambrose regarding park rangers and attendants, Mr. High, Head of Environmental Services, advised that wardens were based in a number of parks at the moment and that the context of Single Status and efforts to assist staff to move out of pay protection could lead to staff undertaking a wider range of duties.

2. RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

Policy Development and Review 2006/07 : Topics for Consideration

The Director of Community and Cultural Services and the City Solicitor submitted a report (copy circulated) setting out a number of possible topics for policy development and review as part of the Committee's work programme.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor P. Gibson commented that it would be useful to receive a presentation on Planning for 2012, particularly in relation to Sunderland's role in this. He highlighted the importance of public libraries, especially as many children still struggle with reading.

3. RESOLVED: -

- (i) that Improving Usage of Public Libraries be selected as the policy development review topic for the Municipal Year 2006/07; and
- (ii) the Review Committee receive a presentation on Planning for 2012.

Draft Annual Work Programme 2006/07

The City Solicitor and the Director of Community and Cultural Services submitted a report (copy circulated) for the Review Committee to consider and agree a work programme for the Municipal Year 2006/07.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

4. RESOLVED that the Work Programme for 2006/07 be approved and submitted to the Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee.

Overview and Scrutiny in Sunderland – Draft Handbook 2006/07

The City Solicitor submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek Members' endorsement for publication of a revised and updated version of the Council's Handbook for Overview and Scrutiny.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

5. RESOLVED that: the Review Committee-
- (i) support the 2006/07 Scrutiny Handbook; and
 - (ii) support the use of all six Review Committee's budgets – in equal portion – to publish the Handbook for circulation.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

(Signed) J.B. SCOTT,
Chairman.

CULTURE AND LEISURE REVIEW COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL SERVICES

18 JULY 2006

LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM MIGRATION PROJECT

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update members on the Library Management System Migration Project and associated developments.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The previous Library Management System was a bespoke mainframe system which had been developed over 25 years by the City Council's ICT Unit. It was an integrated system including circulation (the management of loans to borrowers), acquisitions (management of the purchase of stock items), cataloguing (enabling the search and retrieval of items) and reservations (enabling the supply of requested items to the public). It had been in operation at 9 of the 21 static service points with an offline circulation solution available on 2 mobile libraries.
- 2.2 Over a period of years it had become increasingly clear that the existing system had become inadequate to meet the needs of the e-government agenda and to deliver library services applicable to the twenty-first century.
- 2.3 The main concerns were the need to extend the system to all service points to meet ODPM e-government guidelines, to support the delivery of DCMS Public Library Standards and to fully address the requirements of local, regional and national ambitions for the public library service and the modernisation agenda.
- 2.4 The project was highlighted as a priority by the Community and Cultural Services Directorate and £400,000 was earmarked from Community and Cultural Services delegated surpluses. The capital expenditure covered the purchase of hardware and software, installation costs and updating power, data and desking in libraries.
- 2.5 Following a European Tender Process the contract for the replacement Library Management System was awarded to SIRSIDYNIX in August 2005.
- 2.6 Following an intense period of specification, configuration, testing and training the system was launched to the public in 11 service points on 14 February 2006. These libraries were City Library & Arts Centre, Doxford Park, Fulwell, Hetton Centre, Houghton, Kayll Road, Sandhill Centre, Washington Millennium Centre, Washington Town Centre and 2 mobile libraries.
- 2.7 The system was implemented at Bunny Hill Library on its opening on 12 June 2006.

3.0 FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1 The library service is now undertaking a series of steps in preparation for the remaining libraries being transferred from manual systems to the new system. These include the installation of kit, the issuing of new computer tickets to borrowers and staff training.
- 3.2 It is currently planned that all public service points be added to the new system by September 2006.

4.0 NEW PUBLIC SERVICES

- 4.1 Library members and non-members can view the new online library catalogue from any computer with access to the worldwide web (www.sunderland.gov.uk/libraries/opac). The catalogue enables users to search for items held in any public library in Sunderland, see the selection of music and films available, search for books by a selection of criteria and see what the book jacket looks like.
- 4.2 Sunderland public library members can also access further information using their current library card – all they need to do is visit their local library to receive their personal identification number. Sunderland's new online library catalogue enables current library users to re-issue their books from any personal computer; gain access to details of what they have on loan and place holds or requests on books.

5.0 LIBRARY SERVICE DELIVERY

- 5.1 The new system and online services have enhanced library service delivery and led directly to improvements in Public Library Standards (PLSS) and Culture Performance Indicators.
- 5.2 The Library Service now meets ODPM e-government outcomes in priority area 7: Libraries, Sports and Leisure through the provision of 'renewal and reservation of library books and catalogue search facilities'.
- 5.3 The Library Service now meets PLSS 4 (Culture PI C3b) – Total number of electronic workstations with access to the Internet and the libraries catalogue available to users per 10,000 population.
- 5.4 The developments have supported improvements in PLSS 5 (Culture PI C11a) – Requests met within 7,15 and 30 days with all indicators now being in the upper threshold.
- 5.5 The developments are supporting the delivery of library services through the enhanced circulation and promotion of stock.
- 5.6 The new system is enabling greater detailed mapping and monitoring of service delivery, providing management information which is being used to inform the future development of the service.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Members are recommended to note the contents of the report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 There were no background papers relied upon to compile this report.

ABBREVIATIONS

Culture PI	Culture Performance Indicator
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
PLSS	Public Library Service Standards

**REMIT AND SCOPE OF STUDY INTO THE USAGE OF PUBLIC
LIBRARIES**

LINK TO WORK PROGRAMME – POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT

**Report of the City Solicitor and Director of Community and Cultural
Services**

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To set out the remit and scope of the Review Committee's study into the usage of public libraries in Sunderland.
- 1.2 To establish a draft programme and outline the various techniques and methods for gathering evidence that could be adopted during the study.

2 Background

- 2.1 On 20th June 2006, the Review Committee considered a number of potential topic areas suitable for an in-depth study. Following a discussion of the issues involved, the Committee agreed to undertake a study into improving the usage of public libraries.
- 2.2 In choosing this theme, members stressed the importance of examining an issue of direct concern to the local community. The study would also contribute to a priority area highlighted in the Community Strategy 2004/2007 and the Council's CPA Road Map.

3 Reasons for Study

- 3.1 Public Libraries continue to play an integral part in the life of citizens, acting as community centres for learning and allowing people access to a wealth of material in both book form and on the internet.
- 3.2 Libraries have potential to play an even greater role in the future in a society in which knowledge, skills and information are becoming increasingly important. Libraries can help to promote greater equality of access to information and act as gateways to knowledge held in other institutions, such as universities and colleges, museums and archives. They can help tackle the issue of social exclusion, promote E Government, and contribute to community regeneration.
- 3.3 However, a major challenge for public libraries will be increasing usage and the quality of services and reaching lapsed and non-users, particularly among young people.
- 3.4 The Audit Commission report "Building Better Library Services" highlighted the following issues:-

- 3.5 During 2000/01 library services across England and Wales received 290 million visits and loaned 400 million books and other items. Almost 30% of the population use libraries for borrowing books or other items. Many more people visited libraries to study, use PC's and the internet, make enquiries or for community activities.
- 3.6 However, despite the growing demand nationally for books and information, traditional services are in decline:
- From 1992/93 visits have fallen from 17% and loans by almost one quarter;
 - 23% fewer people are using libraries for borrowing than just three years ago.
- 3.7 It is suggested that the Review Committee may wish to examine in more detail the current position in Sunderland and the potential options available to overcome barriers to usage of the library service.
- 3.8 The type of issues considered could include:-
- A clear vision of the future role of the public library service;
 - The quality and range of available books;
 - The accessibility of the service – opening hours and the convenience of locations;
 - The marketing of library services to existing users and non users;
 - The quality of library buildings;
 - Making libraries a pleasant and attractive environment;
 - Consultation and feedback from users;
 - Staff training and involvement.

4 Proposed Remit and Objectives of the Study

Remit of the Study

- 4.1 The following remit for the study is suggested:-

“To investigate the current levels of usage of public libraries in Sunderland and consider the barriers to future growth and potential options for improving usage in the future.”

Objectives of the Study

- 4.2 In meeting the remit, the Review Committee will need to fulfil a number of key objectives. These include the following:-
- To obtain an overview of the national and local policy in relation to the library service;

- To consider the current levels of usage and the Council's progress in meeting the Public Library Service Standards (PLSS);
- To consider the barriers to greater usage;
- To consider potential means of improving usage among existing users;
- To consider potential means of attracting current lapsed or non users of the service;
- To make appropriate recommendations to the Cabinet based on the evidence received.

5 Approach of the Study

5.1 In order to ensure that the study remains structured and focussed, the following four stage approach is suggested: -

- Agree the remit and scope of the study;
- Provide background information on the current position and the issues involved;
- Obtain evidence and gather information;
- Formulate views and recommendations and approve the final report.

Agree the Remit and Scope of the Study

5.2 A proposed remit and scope for the study is set out in Paragraph 4.1 of the report. The remit is designed to ensure that a structured approach is taken to the study and to be sufficiently flexible to ensure that the Committee can investigate and respond to any issues that arise as a result of evidence generated during the study.

Background Information

5.3 The initial stages of the study will involve receiving information on the national and local road strategies shaping the libraries service within Sunderland. Details will be provided on the latest usage figures and consideration of trends and recent patterns.

Evidence Gathering

5.4 Once the Committee has a full picture of the background situation and the major issues involved, it will be possible to identify and to take evidence from a range of sources both in-house and external. Potential sources of evidence could include council officers, partner organisations such as the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (North East), central government bodies and agencies, academic institutions and other local authorities. Evidence can be gathered by a variety of means including presentations at Committee, Member visits, forums and conferences, written evidence and surveys, consultation exercises and externally commissioned research.

Formulation of Views and Recommendations and Approval of the Final Report

- 5.8 Following the submission of evidence, the Committee will have an opportunity to consider and discuss any issues raised during the study and formulate views and recommendations. This will be followed by the presentation of the final report to Committee.

6 Draft Study Programme

- 6.1 The attached draft work programme sets out a summary of the remit and scope of the study, together with the proposed methods for undertaking the study and details of the likely participants.

7 Recommendation

- 7.1 The Review Committee is asked to consider the proposals in this report, finalise the remit and objectives of the study the usage of public libraries and make recommendations for methods of undertaking the study.

8 Background Papers

Sunderland Strategy 2004/2007
Framework for the Future – Libraries, Learning and Information in the
Next Decade (DCMS)
Sunderland City Council – Spreading the Word - Annual Library Plan
2005/07
Building Better Library Services (Audit Commission) 2002

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Title of study	Study into the Usage of Public Libraries
Committee	Culture and Leisure Review Committee
Members undertaking study	Councillors Jim Scott (Chair), Ambrose (Vice Chair), N Bohill, T Foster, P Gibson, J Grey, L Mann, B Sidaway, P Walker, L Walton, R Wares, B Williams.
Officer support/ Contacts	Jim Diamond – Review Committee Administrator
Remit and Objectives of the study	To investigate the current levels of usage of public libraries in Sunderland and consider the barriers to future growth and potential options for improving usage in the future.
Key questions/ Evidence to be obtained	<p>During the study the Committee will need to fulfil the following key objectives:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ To obtain an overview of the national and local policy in relation to the library service ❑ To consider the current levels of usage and the Council's progress in meeting the Public Library Service Standards (PLSS); ❑ To consider the barriers to greater usage; ❑ To consider potential means of improving usage among existing users; ❑ To consider potential means of attracting current lapsed or non users of the service; ❑ To make appropriate recommendations to the Cabinet based on the evidence received.
Method (Meetings, surveys, visits etc)	Options include inhouse and external bodies providing evidence to full committee, invitations for the submission of written evidence, member visits to examine examples of good practice within other local authorities, views of government bodies and agencies, open forums, surveys, direct consultation with community groups and members of the community.
Participants	<p>The Committee are likely to obtain evidence from representatives of:</p> <p>Service providers within the authority Partner organisations Museums, Libraries and Arts Council (MLA) Advice on good practice within other authorities Views of central government Academic Institutions Representatives of Service Users Views of Non service Users</p>
Timescale	<p>The Committee will formally approved the remit and scope of the study on 18 July 2006 Familiarisation with issues in July 2006 Evidence gathering is expected to take place from September/February 2006/07 This followed by consideration of recommendations in March 2007 and approval of the final report by April 2007</p>