

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PEOPLE SERVICES

CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE DELIVERY OF LIBRARY SERVICES

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide Scrutiny Committee with information about the outcomes from the first phase of consultation on the future delivery of library services
- 1.2 To enable Members of the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee to inform the recommendations on the future delivery of library services prior to submission of a report to Cabinet on 14 December 2016

2 Background and Context

- 2.1 This consultation seeks to capture intelligence on how library services are used following the introduction of the current delivery model in 2013. Scrutiny Committee received a presentation at the meeting of 13 September where the background to the consultation, including the financial context and user information was shared.
- 2.2 The Library Service is a statutory function and whilst there is no stipulation in terms of a minimum number of libraries or geographical distribution, there is a need to carry out a data-driven, community-informed mapping exercise prior to proposals to change delivery.
- 2.3 In response to declining demand and budget challenges many councils, nationally and regionally are reducing the number of libraries and/or changing the way libraries operate. This has manifested itself in a variety of outcomes including library closures as well as new models of delivery including the creation of new organisations to operate libraries

3. Current Provision

- 3.1 In October 2013, following a comprehensive review and consultation process, Sunderland's current library services delivery model was introduced.
- 3.2 Prior to the review the service had been run along traditional lines with delivery from 20 static service points, supplemented by some mobile provision.
- 3.3 Following the review a library hub was designated in each of the five areas of the city, supported by a part-time community library in each area (two in the Coalfields area to serve the more dispersed population), enhanced digital

provision and a programme of community outreach activities, delivered by a small team dedicated to identifying and meeting community needs.

- 3.4 In 2015/2016 over 60,000 contacts with library services were recorded outside of static libraries and the community engagement team has established 147 community book collections (CBCs). CBCs are loaned to organisations rather than individuals, providing local residents with access to library books on their doorstep. The content of each collection is agreed with local representatives of the community group to meet the needs of its users; the CBC is reviewed at least every three months and stock is checked and replenished regularly.

Table 1 below summarises the usage of library services in 2015/2016 as compared to 2011/2012:

Library	Issues 2011/12	Visits 2011/12	Issues 2015/16	Visits 2015/16
City	318,481	597,259	202,047	218,972
Washington Town Centre	130,055	129,051	101,433	88,348
Houghton	71,388	82,368	64,926	68,107
Sandhill	34,499	26,936	58,207	36,296
Bunnyhill	46,269	48,698	50,215	30,355
Fullwell	77,370	54,766	50,162	27,290
Shiney Row	46,222	40,601	26,342	13,598
Kayll Road	50,651	29,019	22,986	13,507
Hetton	36,468	38,492	17,826	11,956
Ryhope	30,321	31,035	17,121	9,433
Washington Millennium	39,843	37,781	14,672	8,841
Total	881,567	1,116,006	625,937	526,703
Community Engagement				>60,000

- 3.5 Book issues from library buildings overall fell about 30% from 2011/12 to 2015/16. Visits to library buildings fell over 50% in the same period.

4. Consultation Methodology and Findings

- 4.1 A public consultation to inform the future provision of library services was carried out from Friday 27 August to Friday 21 October 2016
- 4.2 The consultation sought to find out more about how people access and use library services, and how needs could be met in the future as well as capturing potential new ways that the offer could be supported.
- 4.3 Electronic versions of the Public Consultation questionnaire were made available on the Sunderland City Council website, supported by paper version where required. Other formats and languages were available on request. No requests for other formats were received

4.4 A range of stakeholders were targeted through a number of methods as detailed in the table below:

Stakeholder	Method
General public – non-users of library services	<p>Press releases, articles in Sunderland Echo, Evening Chronicle and local TV news</p> <p>Sunderland.gov website and all social media accounts</p> <p>Message inviting people to participate in consultation with instructions as to how to do so included in all CSN recorded hold messages throughout October 2016</p> <p>Distribution of questionnaires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fawcett Street/Blandford Street 20 October • The Galleries 12 October • Houghton Town centre • Sea Road Fulwell
Children and young people – non-users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation at Sport Festival Seafront 10 August • Sport Festival Mowbray Park 17 August • Sport Festival Hetton Lyons Country Park 24 August • Sunderland Youth Parliament 21 September • CTAN 4 October • Change Council 5 October • Facilitated session with Ryhope Juniors 21 October
Library services users (25,000 members)	<p>Library pages of Sunderland.gov website</p> <p>@slibraries twitter account</p> <p>Home page on public access pcs in all libraries</p> <p>Information provided to all customers visiting libraries and library service activities during the consultation period by library team</p> <p>Face to face drop-in sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Library 20 September • Sandhill Library 22 September • Bunnyhill Library 23 September • Houghton Library 26 September • Washington Town centre Library 29 September
Books at Home users (170)	Letter with support to complete questionnaire by RVS volunteers
Reading groups	Contact from link Community Engagement Librarian/Assistant
City wide organisations: Age UK Art Studio	Email sent to all organisations including a link to the consultation and the offer of a face to face meeting with a member of Library Services team

B2B Project Back on the Map Bangladeshi Centre Bede's Bakehouse Blue Watch Project Box Youth Project Canny Space Carers Centre Castletown CC Chance Children's Services Chillingham House CAB Columbia CC Cultural Spring Cultural Partnership Deptford & Millfield CA Donnison School Doxford CA East CA Easington Lane CAP Fulwell CA FOSUMs GMB Grangetwon CA Grindon CA Grindon U R Church HYPP Herrington Burn YMCA Hetton Town Trust Jobcentre Plus Jubilee Centre Living History NE Lumley Tower Residents Middle Herrington Methodist Church Miss Tina's Coffee Shop, Southwick Moorsley Hut Residents Association National Careers Service ODYPP Pallion Action Group Parker Trust Pennywell CA Pennywell Youth Project Penshaw CA Plains Farm CA Prince of Wales Dementia Day Centre Roker UR Church Ryhope CA RVS Shiney Row CA Silksworth CA Southwick CA Sunderland and North	Presentations at VCS Networks West Area Forum 19 October Coalfields Area Forum 20 October East Area Forum 6 October Visits from area based outreach staff
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<p> Durham Royal Society for the Blind St Bede's Church St Cuthbert's Church St Gabriel's Community Project St Michaels and All Angels Church St Peter's Church Sunderland 2021 Sunderland Autism Partnership Board Sunderland BID Sunderland College Sunderland University SNCBC Tesco Washington MIND Youth Almighty YMCA Fencehouses WEA Weight Watchers WT Age UK Tutors WT Arts Centre WT U3A </p>	
<p> Trades Unions GMB UNISON UNITE </p>	<p> Email information and link to questionnaire Invitation to all employee engagement sessions </p>
<p> Equalities Groups Disability group LGBT group Inter Faith group BME Network </p>	<p> Information circulated via Jessica May / Yvonne Ewington Booked to attend Inclusive Communities meeting on 13 October which was cancelled </p>
<p> Secondary Schools Primary School Academies Sunderland College Sunderland University </p>	<p> Written information with email link </p>
<p> National and regional organisations DCMS Arts Council England </p>	<p> Update by letter – first update August 2016 Meeting 19 September </p>
<p> Sunderland City Council Elected members Library service employees </p>	<p> Briefing note Briefing meetings 22 and 26 September Email, staff briefings/updates, face to face meetings </p>

Other employees including Children's Centres and Public Health	Sunderland.gov The Hub Email with link to all Managers
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4.5 The consultation was completed by 937 individuals of whom 749 were adults (aged 17 or over) and 188 were children (aged 7-16).

4.6 Key headline messages are:-

Reading habits

- Books (722 responses) - 98.89% of adult responders' households read books of which 69.39% read them daily, 17.59% weekly, 11.91% sometimes. 1.11% of respondents indicated that they never read books
- E-books (487 responses) - 70.64% of respondents' households read e-books of which 29.52% read them daily, 12.53% read them weekly and 30.60% read them sometimes. 29.36% of respondents indicated that they never read e-books.
- Magazines (594 responses) - 94.11% of respondents' households read magazines of which 22.05% read them daily, 35.35% weekly, 36.70% sometimes. 5.89% of respondents indicated that they never read magazines
- Newspapers (642 responses) - 94.08% of respondents' households read newspapers of which 53.75% read them daily, 18.54 % weekly and 21.81% sometimes. 5.92% of respondents indicated that they never read newspapers
- Children who responded to the questionnaire told us that 43.87% of them read books, 21.08% read magazines, 15.38% read comics and 10.83% read e-books

Source of reading materials

- 27.77% of adult respondents (732 responses) get their reading materials from the library with 54.34% of respondents buying reading materials, of these 21.26% are bought from a bookshop or supermarket, 17.66% are bought online or downloaded
- Amongst children 21.24% get their reading materials from the public library, 20.05% from book shops or supermarkets, 18.62% get them as presents and 16.95% indicated that they get them from school

Access to information, including digital information

- 28.61% of respondents (726 responses) indicated that they access information including digital information from a website using their own computer, with 20.91% accessing it in a library and 19.57% using a smartphone app on their own device

Frequency of visits to a public library

- 58.53% of respondents (733 responses) have visited a public library in Sunderland in the last week with a further 21.15% visiting within the past month. 11.46% of respondents indicated that they visited a public library more than a year ago, rarely or never.
- 43.84% of respondents' (730 responses) households use public library services once per week or more, 31.23% at least once a month, 18.36% occasionally. 6.58% of respondents indicated that they or members of their household never use public library services

Use of public library services

- The most popular reason for using the library service amongst adults is books (28.16%), followed by information (13.96%) computers/internet (11.01%), activities for children (8.77%) and learning/study/research (8.43%) (704 responses)
- The aspect that children most like about the library is the variety of books on offer (46.37%) followed by activities (20.97%) followed by a place to study (12.50%)

Future library services

- The areas of the library service most important to respondents (723 responses) for the future are: Having a wide range of books and information to choose from (20.12%), being able to use the library as a space to read or study in (11.79%) having access to computers and the internet (10.65%) on-line services (being able to renew your books/reserve items) (8.62%), children and family based activities (7.79%)

Support for future library services

- 63 respondents indicated that they would willing to assist with events and activities
- 38 respondents indicated that they would be willing to deliver books to housebound adults
- 36 respondents indicated that they would be willing to help people learn basic computer skills
- 32 respondents indicated that they would be willing to offer support with marketing and promoting the library service
- 45 respondents indicated that they would be willing to catalogue and digitise local history resources
- 35 respondents indicated that they would be willing to support reading groups
- 17 respondents indicated that they would be willing to host community book collections
- 60 respondents indicated that they would be interested in using the library building

- 4.7 The comments from consultation were wide ranging and both positive and negative comments were received. This included comments such as "The libraries in Sunderland are outdated" as well as "Not interested in anything additional -I just want the Library left as it is". The comments will be shared more fully at the meeting.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The response to the survey was disappointing despite the wide ranging opportunities to engage and capture view as described in 5.1 above. The response represents less than 1% of the population of Sunderland and only a small percentage of current library members (24,782).
- 5.2 In comparison to the previous survey undertaken in 2012 there has been an expected increase in digital access including e-books (whether provided by the library service or otherwise).
- 5.3 Only about a quarter of respondents get their reading materials from a library although this is suggested as the main reason for visiting a library. More than half of the respondents had visited a library in the last week.
- 5.4 A more detailed analysis of the results will be undertaken including consideration of the comments attached to individual responses to consultation.
- 5.5 Scrutiny Committee views will be considered and will shape any proposals which will be presented to Cabinet in December.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:
 - (i) Consider the feedback from the recent consultation exercise alongside the background information and financial context
 - (ii) Provide advice, challenge and suggestions to support the development of recommendations on the future delivery of library services prior to submission of a report to Cabinet on 14 December 2016.

7. Glossary

CBS Community Book Collections

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 Cabinet Scrutiny Committee papers