

## SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL



**Executive Director  
Report**

**Report of:** Jan Fitzgerald/Andrew Milroy

**Report to:** Richard Webb

**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> September 2013

**Subject:** The future of Sheffield's Library Services

**Author of Report:** (Jan Fitzgerald 2734486/Andrew Milroy 2734751)

**Summary:** This report to the Executive Director seeks approval for the next stage of the Libraries, Archives and Information Service review. Research, consultation and an option analysis have been undertaken. The next stage will consist of a 12 week consultation period seeking views on the proposals for the future of library services. This proposal describes the creation of 11 hub libraries and up to 5 co-delivered community libraries. The remainder may become independent libraries with the exception of Tinsley library which will remain open as a Council run facility for the next two years for reasons set out in the report. A change is proposed for the opening hours of Central Library which will retain its 6 day opening. It is proposed that the Mobile service be closed due to a decline in usage, and the Home Library service will be developed reflecting the needs of an ageing population. The results of the consultation will inform a report to Cabinet in the New Year.

**Reasons for Recommendations:**

1. To progress the review of the Libraries Archives and Information Service, enabling a new structure to be created and taking into account future requirements for libraries, both social and technological, and affordability of the service.

**Recommendations:**

1. To go out to consultation for a period of 12 weeks to seek views on the proposal including:
  - Views on 11 hub libraries
  - Views on up to 5 co-delivered community libraries
  - Views on retaining Tinsley Library as a Council run facility for the next two years
  - Views on library closure
  - Views on new opening times for Central Library
  - Views on the closure of the mobile library service
2. To open up a further period of Registrations of Interest for groups and organisations who are interested in helping us to co-deliver a library or deliver a library independently.

3. To report the insights and information arising out of this consultation to Cabinet in the New Year, with a final proposal.
4. To consider whether any further consultation is required as part of the report to cabinet in the New Year.

**Background Papers:**

- **Survey 2012 results**
- **Library Review Report (draft)**
- **Outline strategy**

**Category of Report:** OPEN

**Statutory and Council Policy Checklist**

<b>Financial Implications</b>
YES Cleared by: Liz Orme
<b>Legal Implications</b>
YES Cleared by: Steve Eccleston
<b>Equality of Opportunity Implications</b>
YES Cleared by: Phil Reid
<b>Tackling Health Inequalities Implications</b>
NO
<b>Human rights Implications</b>
NO:
<b>Environmental and Sustainability implications</b>
YES
<b>Economic impact</b>
YES
<b>Community safety implications</b>
NO
<b>Human resources implications</b>
NO
<b>Property implications</b>

NO
<b>Area(s) affected</b>
All
<b>Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leader</b>
Cllr Mazher Iqbal
<b>Relevant Scrutiny Committee if decision called in</b>
Economic and Environmental Wellbeing
<b>Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?</b>
NO
<b>Press release</b>
YES

## 1. Summary

The Libraries Archives and Information Service (LAI(s)) Review began with the establishment of an Elected Members Task and Finish Group in July 2011 and will conclude with a report to Cabinet in the New Year 2014. This report to the Executive Director includes a history of the service review, what has been learned, what has changed, and what is now proposed.

The Review was to ensure we have a comprehensive, efficient, modern, and sustainable service:

- A comprehensive service: because we need to provide a range of library services, materials and information for residents of Sheffield, visitors, businesses and community organisations. These services need to be accessed across the city and increasingly on line.
- An efficient service: because we know the number of people using the library service has been declining overall, with a 23% reduction in book issues between 2011/12 to 2012/13.
- A modern service: because we know that people want to access library services in new ways, such as reserving more books online, more community activity and use of technology such as e-books and Wi-Fi amongst younger age groups.
- A sustainable service: because services need to be fit for purpose when we have fewer resources. Since the period of national austerity began there have been a number of cuts to the LAI(s) budget. It is no longer possible to make further budget savings without re-organising and re-designing the service.

The proposal for the future of Sheffield's library service has been made in consideration of our statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service.

Sheffield's Libraries Archives and Information service has 28 libraries in total, 13 in district centres including Central Library and 15 in local community settings. This service is supplemented by

Mobile and Home Library Services. As well as public libraries, there are a range of other front line services such as Archives and Local Studies, Help Yourself Directory, Schools Library Service, and services to business including patent advice and the World Metal Index.

In 2012/13 the service had 133,337 registered adult users, this included 39,912 people over 65 years of age, and 2491 people who declared (voluntarily) a disability. In addition there were over 60,000 registered children and young people under the age of 18. There were 27,786 people who were registered (voluntarily) as having a minority ethnic background.

This report seeks approval for the next stage of the Libraries, Archives and Information Service review. Significant research, consultation and option analysis has already been undertaken. The next stage will consist of a 12 week consultation period seeking views on the proposal for the future of the library service. This proposal describes the creation of 11 hub libraries, up to 5 co-delivered libraries (plus Tinsley library as a Council run facility for the next two years), independent libraries, new opening hours for Central Library and the future of the mobile and home library services. The results of the consultation will be presented to Cabinet in the New Year, so that Elected Members can use information from the consultation to help them make their decision.

## **2. What does this mean for Sheffield people?**

The Sheffield City Council Corporate Plan 2011-2014 states that as an organisation we will focus on four priorities:

1. Standing up for Sheffield
2. Supporting and protecting communities
3. Focusing on jobs
4. Business friendly

Libraries are and can continue to be, key community anchors, connecting the City Centre with local communities. Critical to this role is the importance of a sustainable, flexible library provision which is outward facing and inclusive to all. This report seeks approval to launch a public consultation on proposals to change the way services are delivered, and their scale, whilst maintaining a comprehensive and efficient service.

Should the proposals be adopted by the City Council, it is estimated that for approximately 65 per cent of registered library users their local library will remain a Council run resource for at least 31 hours per week with an improved service offer. The introduction of Wi-Fi and e-books will enable people to access and use the library in new ways.

Around 12 per cent of registered library users would experience a new way of delivering the service through co-delivered libraries, which would still provide, as a minimum, the basic offer of providing free book loan, free internet access and a welcoming space for all people.

Up to 23 per cent of registered library users would need to travel further to access a library building. Care has been taken to ensure a fair geographical spread across the City, taking bus routes and frequency into consideration. Alternatively library users may wish to access the e-book service when this is established, or, if eligible, join the Home Library Service.

## **3. Outcome and sustainability**

We want to achieve an up to date Library, Archives and Information Service which is comprehensive and affordable. The scale of the reduction to the Council's budget means that basic efficiency savings alone will not be enough to cover the loss in funding. The consultation seeks views on proposals which are aimed at delivering a comprehensive and efficient service whilst recognising the reduction in resources that will be available. The proposals seek to balance

resources available to provide directly delivered services whilst also supporting a number of community organisations who are able and willing to develop a viable business plan to run their local library themselves, with some Council support, so harnessing community resources.

We have looked at library services afresh, and looked at how we can operate in new and different ways. This has involved researching new ways of working, visiting other local authority library services, city wide consultation in the summer 2012, and exploring the possibilities further by inviting registrations of interest.

We hope, by adopting a mixed delivery model, the impact of the cuts to the Council's budget will be minimised as much as reasonably practicable. Under this model we have the opportunity to develop creative and innovative ways of working together with Sheffield people and local groups and organisations. By supplying central services such as book and material stock and circulation, I.T. access and maintenance, we aim to ensure the quality and sustainability of libraries run by our community partners.

We will increase sustainability by supporting the groups who have registered an interest in developing their business plan to run any of the local libraries at risk of closure. Although priority will be given to libraries that rank highest on demographic needs (reflecting the findings of the Fairness Commission) all business plans must pass a quality threshold.

The needs analysis identified a number of libraries that, compared with other Sheffield libraries, have a comparatively low usage and have fewer people in the catchment area who need a library service. Some of these libraries are less essential because there is another library within walking distance or short bus ride, and it is more efficient to have a better geographical spread. Although it is unfortunate to have to close any library, in the interest of operating an efficient service, it is proposed that 10 libraries should close, with a further 5 at risk of closure if groups do not come forward to take them over. (An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken on this proposal and the results can be found in Appendix C). This recommendation is subject to further consultation with the communities affected.

We will give consideration to any proposal to run a vulnerable (to closure) library on an independent basis. Although we may provide the current book and material stock and furnishings, there would be no other financial or staff support from Sheffield Council. Terms for occupying the building would be negotiated with the Council's Property and Facilities Management service.

#### **4. Drivers for change**

There are compelling recent developments forcing and influencing change in the delivery of library services. The review has sought to understand these change drivers and how the service can adapt.

##### **4.1 Customer driven change**

Increasingly 'book issue' is not a good indicator of the value of the service. There is an increasing use of libraries by non-members primarily to access the People's Network. The way people choose to access information is changing as technology is developing. Access to information and services 24/7 is an increasing expectation. Finding information almost instantly via the internet is increasingly preferred to drawing information from reference books and materials. Having physical access to books is still highly desired, particularly for young children and older people. Our city wide consultation from summer 2012 enhanced our understanding of customer needs and the results can be found in Appendix A.

The Survey in 2012 showed that many people (who responded to final comments question), said that activities should concentrate on activities for children and young people, supporting homework

and encouraging reading and educational attainment. Slightly less people (10%) said they wanted more activities for adults including community events and self improvement classes.

There were 1,924,742 book and other media issues (-23% on the previous year), 366,609 Peoples Network sessions (+22% on previous year), and 2,179,879 visits to libraries (-10% on previous year).

Even though we have increased the ease with which people can borrow books (for instance self issue and reservation on line) the number of book issues continues to fall.

#### **4.2 Technology driven change**

We are now in a digital age where the options for accessing information are expanding. The quality and reliability of this information can vary greatly and the role of a Librarian can ensure people have access to the most valid and appropriate information.

There is a growing demand for new and improved technology such as e-books, wi-fi access and improved online catalogue facilities. Local authorities that have introduced e-books for loan have seen a surge in membership as a result. Despite the increase in home computers, the demand for access to the People's Network has increased 22% over the past year. This growth is impeded by low numbers of computer terminals in Sheffield compared with other core cities.

#### **4.3 Deficit-reduction driven change**

The savings in expenditure required in recent years have been met by reductions in front line staffing, opening hours and the deletion of back room development resources. The budget reduction target from 2014/15 at £1.669 million means that sufficient savings cannot simply be made by continuing to cut back services.

We want to have a comprehensive, efficient, modern service which is fit for purpose and delivers our statutory obligations. Given the resources available, this can only be achieved by restructuring the service.

### **5. Review of the Library, Archives and Information Service**

The Review of Libraries Archives and Information Service began with the establishment of an Elected Members Task and Finish Group in July 2011 and will conclude with a report to Cabinet in the New Year 2014. This section describes the history of this Review, what has been learned and what has changed.

#### **5.1 Elected Members Task and Finish Group**

The Elected Members Task and Finish group set off the Review in 2011/12 with a remit of analysing all services looking at best practice elsewhere and how we could make the service more efficient, modern and community based.

The principles set by the group were:

- All services will be the subject of a consultation.
- A city wide LAI(S) service where some communities may need more/different support to achieve city standards of service.
- We will not seek to close any libraries
- We will increase the use of volunteering to enhance our service provision, but not to replace paid staff.
- The service will be more self supporting, by increasing income.

Priorities for review:

- Review the library service organisation and culture.
- Seek to increase flexibility across the service, to support modern service delivery.
- Make the best use of changing technology and resources and seek investment.
- Consider the benefits and risks of working more closely in partnership with local communities.
- Consider how income could be further increased.
- Consider how services to business can be further developed.

## 5.2 A vision for the library service

In the early stages of the LAI(S) review a vision was drafted and agreed by Elected Members. This vision describes what we want from the city's library service, how this can be achieved, and some key objectives. The vision can be found in Appendix D. Although budget reductions were anticipated because of national austerity measures, the level of reduction was greater than anticipated. This means the vision will be harder to achieve, but remains the focus for the development of the service into the future. In assessing the potential models of operation, the ability of each model to deliver the vision has been taken into consideration.

The vision document describes a sustainable and deliverable service which includes the following features:

- *Promote reading and a wide range of resources*
- *Create welcoming library spaces*
- *Celebrate Sheffield's successful centres and rich local history*
- *Tackle poverty and social inequality*
- *Promote lifelong learning*
- *Deliver sustainable services with a focus on 'need'*
- *Utilising social capital*
- *Promoting better health and wellbeing*

## 5.3 Needs analysis

The aim of the needs analysis (attached at Appendix C) is to provide insight into and evidence of the need for library services in the city. In addition, from the consultation undertaken in 2012 we can ascertain that people need libraries for the following key reasons (not exclusive):

- Free access to books and other materials, particularly for people who are frequent and heavy readers, and people on low and restricted incomes.
- Social spaces – for book groups, coffee mornings, children's activities, general relaxing space to meet. Particularly important for isolated older people. Children's activities not only provide development and socialisation opportunities for children, but also provide support to parents and guardians by enabling them to make new friendships and share the challenges of parenting.
- Access to knowledge, particularly for young people, especially where there is access to school and college curriculum information, and quiet space to study.
- Access to free computers and internet. It is estimated that 45,980 households in Sheffield do not have a computer at home with internet access. Many services are now only available online, such as Universal Credit; therefore free access to the internet is essential for many people.
- Access to reliable information, research and reference material including local history for leisure and educational purposes

The needs analysis falls into two categories. The first is the assessment of demographic needs of older people, children and young people, people who have a disability and people from minority ethnic backgrounds.



The needs of these groups in particular have been identified because:

- Older people (over 65): Increasingly there are more people aged over 65 in the population. Social isolation is an issue for many older people, particularly those who have lost a partner (by 2025 it is estimated that there will be a 23% increase in people aged over 75 living alone). Low income is an issue for many pensioners, and 28% of people aged over 60, living in Sheffield households, claiming benefits relating to low income.
- Children and young people: reading for young children helps them view books as a fun activity, not a chore. Numerous studies have shown that students who are exposed to reading from a young age are more likely to do well in all facets of formal education. Sheffield still has a higher number than the national average of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- People who have a disability: 2% of adult registered users have declared (voluntarily) a disability. Libraries provide a safe and welcoming space. The location of library services is more acute for this group of people, who may be less able to travel to other libraries.
- People from minority ethnic backgrounds: Unlike the general population (from a white British background), many people from black and minority ethnic communities live in households concentrated in specific areas of the city. This means the location of a library service could have a bigger impact on this group.
- All people facing deprivation. There are 29 neighbourhoods in the city that are within the most 20% deprived within England, in total accounting for 28% of the city's population. The location of library services is acute for this group of people, as the cost of travelling to another library could be a barrier to accessing the service. The availability of free books and internet access is of greater importance when income levels are low.
- All people with literacy needs. Access to books, knowledge and learning in a safe and welcoming environment, can help people with low literacy needs improve their skills.

The second category of analysis is library usage. This looks at the number of registered users, the number of books and materials issued, the number of People's Network sessions and the number of library visits. This demonstrates how well used each library is.

#### **5.4 Researching good practice.**

A Libraries Review team consisting of Elected Members, theme group members, and library staff, visited 6 different local authorities to see how they had implemented new ways of working. The local authorities visited were: Manchester, Newcastle, Peterborough, Leeds, Wakefield and Doncaster. We also looked at the strategy and practice of others via the internet, e.g. Liverpool, Edinburgh and Barnsley.

Research highlighted the different ways we can run and develop library services. Options identified including the development of e-lending, expansion of online and digital services, working together in partnership and co-location, working with volunteers in new ways, developing the library offer with links to commercial services and partners (such as cafes and booksellers), increasing income earning opportunities such as charging for the People's Network.



## 5.5 Theme groups

The LAI(S) Review was divided into 5 theme groups in order to explore and identify the issues and opportunities, and build on the research. Council officers from different council departments were invited to attend relevant theme groups alongside the Libraries Review team and library service management.

The theme groups were:

- Communication planning - Remit (in brief):-
  - Develop a communications strategy and consultation plan.
  - Deliver statutory consultation. Explore creative ways to engage users and non users.
  - Analysis of questionnaires/consultation data
- Resources – Remit (in brief):-
  - Identify options for an increase (or decrease) in fees and charges
  - Identify options for sponsorship, marketing and branding and complementary commercial use (i.e. renting/sub letting space).
  - Identify options for income from partnership activity, grants and fundraising
  - Identify options for income generation from library resources – archives, grounds, transport, I.T.,
- Future development and delivery – Remit (in brief):-
  - Consider principles against which to consider options – Library vision, corporate plan i.e., tackling poverty and social injustice and the promotion of social regeneration.
  - Analyse alternate/new models of delivery, including volunteering, partnership working, digital options, and complementary franchises.
- Buildings and assets – Remit (in brief):-
  - Link to Asset Review/Community Investment Plan/Face to Face
  - Identify how efficient and flexible the current library buildings are and make recommendations for improvement.
  - Develop proposals for buildings which are not fit for purpose

## 5.6 Consultation 2012

A key element of the review was a city wide consultation which took place between 14<sup>th</sup> August and 8<sup>th</sup> October 2012. A consultation survey was developed with support and feedback from the consultation theme group, communications team, senior Council officers, and Elected Members of the task and finish group. The consultation invited both library users and non-library users to take part in the survey in order to get a variety of views and opinions on the Review. The survey could be completed online via Sheffield City Council Website, or paper copies could be obtained from libraries or First Point centres. Paper copies could be returned to any library or returned in a freepost envelope. Arrangements were made for a language translation telephone service to be available if required. A total of 6,037 people completed the consultation survey with 4,126 of these being done online.

Throughout the survey, there were free text boxes which invited comments and ideas, and over 15,000 comments were made. The survey was structured in 3 sections, 'Using the library services', 'Making our library services more efficient', and 'Ideas for the future'.

See report on the survey results Appendix A.

## **5.7 Consultation 2012 groups**

It was anticipated that the needs of some specific groups would be diluted by the generic nature of the wider survey. Therefore a number of consultation sessions were arranged with specific groups to gain a wider understanding of their specific needs in relation to library services. There were 7 sessions held with groups of young people, older people, people with disabilities, and refugees and asylum seekers.

## **5.8 Registrations of interest**

After the surveys were analysed, we were aware that a number of groups and individuals had offered to support the running of library services. It was then decided to issue a prospectus inviting further ideas and suggestions and offers of support, ensuring all the possibilities had been explored. This activity was open for 8 weeks from 11<sup>th</sup> February until 8<sup>th</sup> April 2013. We received 27 registrations of interest that included 18 from not for profit groups or organisations, 6 from individual people, 1 from a Parish Council, and 2 from private sector organisations. This exercise was successful in helping us to gauge the level of interest, and help formulate different models of operation. The registrations of interest are not part of any formal tendering processes and we have not engaged in any negotiations with any group or organisation to take over library services.

See summary of registrations of interest Appendix B.

## **5.9 Adaptation to new circumstances**

Over the period of the Review it became increasingly clear that the scale of savings required to help the Council meet its overall budget deficit targets would be greater than originally envisaged. The Government identified a period of austerity which was to last for a number of years but this was subsequently extended beyond the current parliamentary period and into the next.

Elected Members were aware that budget savings in library services made over the past years had been more pragmatic than strategic. Although previous budget savings had enabled the service to maintain the number of libraries and opening hours, this approach was untenable in the long term, given the diminishing financial resources that would be available to Local Authorities.

In the face of a very different financial landscape for local authorities Elected Members have sought to use what we have learned through the Review to direct resources to priority areas and into more efficient ways of running services.

The need to deliver a comprehensive and efficient service was considered in the light of priorities set by the needs analysis, and seeking to develop a community focused, rather than a building focused service. Elected Members felt that the potential to use more flexible peripatetic staff to outreach into communities and link closely with volunteer run libraries was a positive way to better connect with communities to make the best use of library buildings as community hubs.

An original desire not to replace staff with volunteers has been overridden by the desire to maintain libraries that would otherwise close

## **6. Key learning points from the Review**

A report on the Library Review brought together the research and learning that has taken place. There were some recommendations in the report, but it sought to guide the development of proposals for the future of the library service.

The key learning points from the Review were:

- Opportunities for partnership working are strong, but need to take into consideration the challenges of joint working, such as sharing resources, and operational compatibility.
- Volunteers can make a significant contribution to the running of libraries, it is important to ensure the role is clear and people are supported. Consideration needs to be given to the impact on staff.
- There are opportunities and challenges to meet the future demand for technology based services such as e-books, PCs and improved online catalogue which requires investment. Consultation showed that people in age groups up to 40 are more positive about the use of technology than older age groups.
- Consultation showed a strong willingness to pay for some library services such as the People's Network (after an initial free period), events and activities, reserving books and pay more for things such as DVDs and photocopying.
- Learning from other cities shows the importance of service location, understanding the needs of our users and understanding how volunteers can be successfully involved and engaged in the services.

## **7. An outline strategy**

An outline strategy has been developed which is strongly influenced by the Vision for the library service and considers the learning gained from the Review. The detail of the strategy is to be completed when the proposal for the future of Sheffield's library service is agreed, taking into consideration the next stage consultation. The outline strategy can be found in Appendix F.

See section 10 to see how the proposal relates to the desired outcomes of the strategy.

## **8. Potential Operating Models**

Research, consultation and registrations of interest helped to formulate a range of operating models which could be used to deliver the library service. Each of these models has been considered. The analysis of each model can be found in Appendix E.

### **8.1 Summary of the models considered**

The future operating models which were considered are, in summary:

- Model 1. SCC run library services: under the existing operating model, ensuring a comprehensive service in line with affordability.
- Model 2/3. Mixed delivery model: SCC run some libraries and also partner with organisations that will run some libraries (with volunteers). Volunteer recruitment and training is a joint effort between SCC and its partners. Central support (book and material stock, circulation and online access) and full building running costs paid for each library, community run as well as SCC. Model 3 is a small variation to model 2 where SCC delivers a volunteer recruitment and training programme via a contract with an external organisation.
- Model 4. SCC runs library services as in model 1. Allow community groups, if they request, and subject to an acceptable business plan, to run community libraries which might otherwise close. No running costs, staff or ongoing support would be provided.
- Models 5 to 8. All outsourcing models where a procurement exercise would take place for external organisations to bid to run the whole service or part of the service. This would be open to not for profit groups and organisations as well as Charitable Trusts and private sector organisations. Under procurement rules Council contracts must be

put out to tender (if the total value of the contract is above £25,000). The Council cannot restrict tender applications to a specific type of organisation.

Hub models have been developed but were not considered to be stand alone models and could be incorporated into models described above. It is already Council policy to co-locate 'first point customer services where appropriate.

A technology based model had been devised but not considered as it was agreed that improved use of technology should be a goal of each model.

## 8.2 Assessing the models

A method of assessment was devised which would enable each of the models to be scored. This assessment looked at:

- Quality of service: Based on staffing levels and the level of training and support for volunteers. The assessment also looked at sustainability
- Sustainability: Based on income levels and resources, and capacity to adapt.
- Impact: The number of libraries the model may be able to sustain.
- Equality Impact: The impact positive or negative of different models on protected groups and other groups. E.g. the impact of closure, the impact of new technology, the impact of fewer paid staff etc.
- Risk level – Operational: Based on the capacity to deliver and timescale
- Risk level – Other: Based on legal implications and costs to the Council.

Each of the criteria above was scored from a scale of 0 to 3 (0 being low, and 3 high). Therefore the higher scores reflect greater quality and sustainability, a more positive impact and lower risk level.

A facilitated session held to discuss the pros and cons of each model and for those present (Elected Members and officers) to independently score each model. The results of this scoring are:

Model	Average score
1 – Existing Council run	7.6
2/3 Mixed delivery model	9.9
4 Council run, but with community groups taking on those at risk of closure	5.8
5 outsourced model	9.4
6 outsourced model	6.3
7 – outsourced model	8.8
8 – outsourced model	6.1

The top scoring model at 9.9 was the mixed delivery model, featuring SCC delivery for some libraries and other libraries run by volunteers with SCC support. The next highest score at 9.5 was an outsource model for the whole service to be transferred to a Charitable Trust or similar organisation. In third place was model 7 again an outsourced model run by a consortium of voluntary organisations that would run libraries in clusters to provide capacity of scale. For more information on these models see Appendix E.

The mixed delivery model was favoured because a level of quality could be guaranteed through running SCC operated libraries. The support package to volunteer run libraries would also help to maintain the quality. This model could also provide added value from its links with partners (both voluntary and statutory) to enhance links with the community and provide additional services. This

model was considered to retain more libraries than other models helping to fulfil the requirement for a comprehensive service.

### 8.3 Financial Assessment

An initial financial assessment was undertaken to identify if the models were financially viable. This assessment was concentrated on the top scoring models, plus the existing model. At this stage there were lots of financial assumptions such as the total budget available for community libraries and savings which can be made from other parts of the library service. Each model was financially assessed using the same set of predictive data to compare across models.

### 8.4 Refining the model

The top scoring model 'mixed delivery model', was presented to the Council's Executive Management Team (EMT) and an Advisory group of officers to ensure the model was as robust and deliverable as possible. Subsequent refinements are described in the proposal below.

## 9. Proposal for implementing a mixed delivery model.

We will create a comprehensive, modern, affordable and efficient library, archives and information service for Sheffield: Sheffield's libraries will be *in person and on-line*.

We want to keep as many libraries in the City open, whether directly through the City Council or in partnership with other organisations, that when austerity is over, we have the option to invest again. On this basis, we are asking the City:

- *Can we run the library service together with you?*
- *Can we run a bigger service than the Council alone can afford by making the Council's money go further through partnerships with other organisations?*

The table below sets out the proposed model:

Central Library and Archives	Central Library and city-wide services, including the Archives, services for business, Help Yourself and the World Metal Index
Hub Libraries	Up to 11 main libraries, located in communities across the city – funded and staffed directly by the Council and supplemented by volunteers (plus Tinsley due to lease running until 2016)  Home Library service
Community Library Services	Up to 5 volunteer-led libraries, part funded by the Council  Community library staff, working with volunteers and out in communities
Independent Libraries	Any remaining volunteer-led libraries that would be run without Council funding  Mobile Library Service – if a volunteer-run option is forthcoming

## 9.1 Eleven hub libraries

Consultation and research has highlighted the desire and benefit of libraries running as community hubs, where local people can access a range of council services, advice and community activity from one place. Hub libraries will be easily accessible by public transport and conveniently located amongst other services and shops. We will liaise with other council services and voluntary sector partners to ensure the 'hub' mix of services provided reflects the needs of local people as much as possible. Library space is regarded as a safe and welcoming environment and this will be maintained.

Eleven hub libraries have been identified by the needs analysis (see section 5.3) as the most important libraries to fulfill the Council's statutory duty (and beyond). This analysis has taken into consideration library usage and performance (best performing libraries) the needs of people in the library catchment area (the libraries with greatest need) and geographical (travelling) distances between libraries (providing geographical coverage across the city). Everyone will have a hub library within reasonable access to them via a frequent public transport service (approx 30 minutes journey time)

The library service in the 11 hubs will operate with an increased offer (i.e. the development of Wi-Fi and e-book service). The hubs will run for a minimum of 31 hours per week, and we will encourage volunteers to supplement existing services. As well as providing a service for everyone, we will provide specific programmes for different age groups and communities. See Appendix G for details of the new service offer.

The 11 proposed hub libraries are:

- Chapeltown
- Crystal Peaks
- Darnall
- Ecclesall
- Firth Park
- Highfield
- Hillsborough
- Manor
- Parson Cross
- Stocksbridge
- Woodseats

## 9.2 Up to 5 community (co-delivered) libraries

In addition to the 11 hub libraries, we will also fund running costs and support (but not staff) for up to 5 community libraries.

As an exception we will continue to fund and staff Tinsley library for 21 hours per week and provide a staff member until the rental agreement expires in 2016, rather than waste resources paying for an empty building.

We will seek a city wide approach to connect the hubs with community libraries under a joint strategy, and will seek to introduce groups seeking to run community libraries to private sector partners who may be able to support them in a variety of ways.

In February 2013 we invited individuals, groups and organisations to register an interest in supporting community libraries. This exercise enabled us to better understand how we can work



together with partners. Research has also highlighted the added value partners can bring to a service, such as fundraising and gaining access to funding, enhancing community engagement, providing volunteers and helping to tailor services and resources more closely to community need.

We are aware from the survey in 2012, 59% of respondents were in favour of exploring partnerships (rather than library closure).

Co-delivery is the best way for keeping more libraries open. Our research, which looked at the experience of other local authorities, suggests it is not sustainable for community groups and organisations to take over the running of redundant libraries without any ongoing support and commitment from the Council. We feel it is essential that for any library to be sustainable it needs to be supported. We can therefore offer the following package of support:

- Building running costs: heat, light, cleaning, waste disposal, (rent if applicable).
- Book and material stock, and circulation.
- Radio Frequency Identification Devices (self service machines)
- Computers and free access to the Peoples Network (internet access)
- Computer maintenance (to be confirmed)
- On-line catalogue
- Access to activities and initiatives run by the Young People's Library Service.
- Community librarians will focus on improving literacy in the community and will support volunteer-run community libraries

There has been considerable deliberation. The greatest cost for community libraries, far outweighing running costs, is the cost of staff. Although we can afford to provide the above support package, we need community groups and organisations to come forward to run the libraries with volunteers in order to keep the libraries open. We will however, provide a small peripatetic staff support team which will cover all co-delivered libraries. Each co-delivered library will be supported according to need. Pro-rata this support is likely to equal 1 member of paid professional support and guidance for 15 hours per week. The Council will also be committed to working with these libraries to provide a training and support programme for volunteers.

It should be noted that the support package for co-delivered libraries will not include management fees, but income from room hire for example, may be retained subject to conditions. It should also be noted that complementary commercial activity (provided directly or indirectly) may be acceptable and will be subject to approval. The asset transfer of library buildings is not envisaged, but this has not been ruled out. Council funding and resources will only be committed to applications which meet quality & other criteria. Further details of eligible activity and quality standards will be outlined in the application and guidance pack.

Supporting the recommendations of the Fairness Commission, the criteria for the location of the co-delivered libraries are the demographic needs of the community. This includes levels of deprivation (IMD rank), educational attainment, the population of older people, children and young people under 19, disabled people, and people from minority ethnic backgrounds (Appendix C). This is also in line with the Council's Corporate Plan 'Standing up for Sheffield', where the library service can help to tackle poverty, increase social justice and support better health and wellbeing. We are aware of digital exclusion and the need for people to access benefits online. Free internet access offered by co-delivered community libraries will continue to play an important part in tackling digital exclusion.

During the consultation phase we will re-open Registrations of Interest for any group or organisation (who has not previously registered) who are interested in working with us to deliver a local library service or run a library or mobile service independently. It should be noted that as the proposals have not yet been considered by the Council and consideration must be given to the consultation results, any preparatory work undertaken by groups or organisations in developing a



business plan (following information and guidance provided by SCC) must be done so at their own cost and their own risk.

We will fund community co-delivered libraries for a pilot period which will last for two years, during which we will seek to develop the range of skills and experience within groups to run library services. Support will be given by Council library staff to help groups set up and sustain their library. Progress will guide future proposals for the community library service.

Libraries eligible to be delivered as a community co-delivered library are:

Newfield Green  
Burngreave  
Southey  
Woodhouse  
Park  
Broomhill  
Uppertorpe  
Tinsley  
Greenhill  
Jordanthorpe  
Ecclesfield  
Stannington  
Frecheville  
Gleadless  
Totley  
Walkley

The list order represents the libraries ranking in relation to demographic needs (see Appendix C). Newfield Green being highest and Walkley lowest.

\*Supplementary note. This data was updated on 19th September 2013 following identification of an error. The BME population data used, although correct, had been ranked incorrectly.

### **9.3 Independent libraries**

The libraries above which do not become hubs or co-delivered community libraries are likely to be closed though the final recommendations will be informed by the proposed consultation. There is a further option for these libraries to become independent libraries without Council support or funding (regarded as a closure in relation to our comprehensive and efficient duty). Our research of independent libraries run by other local authorities suggests this is not a long term sustainable option. However, we believe in the creativity of Sheffield people, and we will not rule out any viable proposal for running libraries on an independent basis. Any requests to purchase library buildings will be subject to Council procedures and open and transparent processes.

All 15 local libraries which have not been selected as a hub library are vulnerable to closure and eligible to become an independent library.

### **9.4 Volunteering**

In the consultation undertaken in 2012, 73% were in favour of volunteering to enhance the service. Many respondents indicated their approval as long as we are not replacing paid staff.

We will develop a volunteer strategy in line with corporate processes. This will include:

- Links to City Wide Strategy and the Fairness commission
- Working with volunteers to enhance and extend the Council run library services.
- Working alongside community groups and organisations in supporting and encouraging volunteering in community run libraries.
- We will encourage our schools and universities to support community libraries through volunteering and vocational placement schemes

### **9.5 Future of the Mobile Library Service**

There are currently two mobile Library units (but generally only 1 is used at a time). The cost of the Mobile service per transaction is very high compared to other libraries – it costs 3 times as much to issue a book through the Mobile Service (£3.99 per issue versus £1.30 per issue from a static library. In addition, the Mobile service doesn't offer community space, internet access or other activities. The usage is low and declining. Therefore it is proposed to close the Mobile library service, subject to consultation.

We will seek interest from organisations who may want to run the Mobile Library Service on an independent basis.

### **9.6 Home library service developed**

The Home Library Service offers an important service for people who are unable to visit a library and do not have any help to do so. The Home Library Service will be available for people who need help to live independently.

This service will also be offered to current users of the mobile service who cannot access their local library

The ageing population of Sheffield is likely to increase demand for this service therefore it is an important service to retain and support. We aim to develop and expand this service through a volunteer scheme in addition to paid staff.

As this service is delivering to vulnerable people in their own home, we will ensure safeguarding procedures are in place as well as training, support and supervision. Where volunteers are used, this will be with the approval of the service user. Consultation in 2012 highlighted that Home Library service users were concerned about a series of 'strangers' delivering this service. Therefore, where-ever possible, we will aim to provide continuity of staff and/or volunteer.

### **9.7 Central Library**

Under the proposals, Central Library would continue to be open 6 days a week (albeit with a reduction of 1 evening and 1 afternoon) offering a range of lending opportunities for all ages, local studies, library theatre, art gallery and because of its position in the city centre residents can access a range of other services. The current building is not fit for purpose and proposals are being developed to offer more modern and flexible space, where culture/art and library uses can better share space and offer an accessible, attractive and welcoming space for residents and visitors to enjoy..

## 9.8 SINTO and World Metal Index

SINTO is a partnership of library and information services in the Yorkshire and North Derbyshire region. With the goal of improving services to users through cooperation, training and planning. A decision was taken in the last financial year to discontinue this service by the founding partners and largest financial contributors, namely SAI(S), The University of Sheffield, and Sheffield Hallam University.

The World Metal Index has been developing its presence as a world wide database and this project is reaching its development potential. .

## 9.9 Transfer of Archives and Local Studies

We will look for a partner with whom to develop Archives services. This will be essential in continuing to meet the statutory duty to provide and maintain Archives. At present we cannot develop the service to its full potential without further investment. The potential of this service can be reached by utilizing economies of scale and developing income earning capacity with partners who have relevant and successful experience. Consultation on this proposal is not recommended at the current time as the opportunities are still being explored. This is likely to be a medium to longer term goal.

### 9.10 Organisation structure

We will develop a new organisation structure to deliver this proposal and the LAI(S) strategy. Key characteristics will be flexible and well trained staff, with a customer focus and key skills in community engagement and developing literacy. The management tiers will be streamlined with appropriate levels of responsibility.

### 9.11 Investments

We will have targeted investments to ensure that the library service is developing in a way that will meet needs into the future, with particular emphasis on social and technological change.

Financial investments:

- We will invest in technology to extend on-line services and develop e-lending
- In the longer term, we want to move our library buildings into new or upgraded facilities. This work includes the upgrading of Central Library
  - £30,000 to introduce an e-book service and Wi-Fi.
    - E-books delivered on a pilot basis and will be evaluated. 37% of survey respondents (across all age ranges) indicated they would use libraries more if they could borrow downloadable e-books. The preference amongst younger age groups (16 to 40) is higher.
    - Wi-Fi to be installed in Central library and the 11 hubs.

Non-financial investments:

- Development of a volunteer programme using existing resources and working in partnership with voluntary and community organisations. This will involve job-redesign

as part of the organisational structure changes. A proportionate amount of the training budget will be re-deployed to supporting community run libraries. This will involve the training of both paid staff and volunteers.

- Development of a volunteering scheme for the Home Library Service.
- Further research leading to a strategy for I.T. development and investment in the future, including the development of the on-line catalogue.

## 10. Analysis of the Proposal.

The following table outlines how the proposal will meet the needs identified in this report, and how it will contribute to the delivery of the LAI(S) strategy.

Links to Strategy	Links to needs analysis	Features of the Proposal
Services are cost effective and efficiently managed and demonstrate value and quality to the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to travel considering geography and transport routes.</li> <li>• People who are not in employment – access to work experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to 11 hub libraries hubs fully staffed and resourced.</li> <li>• Running costs and professional support for volunteer run libraries, following a clear business plan and service level agreement.</li> <li>• Volunteer training programme to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and equalities duties.</li> </ul>
Library provision that recognises the changing demands and expectation of its users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs relating to Universal Benefit and digital access.</li> <li>• 45,980 households in Sheffield do not have a computer at home with internet access.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online training courses and other IT classes</li> <li>• Computers and access to internet via People's Network</li> <li>• E - books</li> <li>• Wi-fi</li> <li>• Self service (RFID's, online catalogue) to free up staff time for enquiries, activities and other support.</li> </ul>
Contribute and support towards opportunities to tackle poverty and social inequality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low income is an issue for many pensioners</li> <li>• 28% of the city's population living in deprived neighbourhoods.</li> <li>• Cost of travelling to another library could be a barrier to accessing the service.</li> <li>• Free books and internet access is of greater importance when income levels are low.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job search sessions</li> <li>• Smart meters for loan</li> <li>• Free access to computers and the internet for all via the People's Network.</li> <li>• Community outreach by Community Development Librarians</li> </ul>

Library provision which enables the improvement of literacy and skills for people of all ages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literacy needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reader development activities e.g. adult literacy schemes, the Six book challenge</li> <li>• Reading groups</li> <li>• Community outreach by Community Development Librarians</li> </ul>
Service points are closer to neighbourhoods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People who are less able to travel.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A geographical spread of services across the city.</li> <li>• Use of peripatetic staff to go out into communities and not tied to buildings.</li> <li>• Investment in I.T. (WI-FI, twitter, flickr, facebook, blogs, online catalogue reservations and renewals) to extend the reach of library services.</li> </ul>
Books and reading are celebrated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literacy needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book and material loan</li> <li>• Writing groups</li> <li>• Meet the Author sessions</li> <li>• Range of activities for adults and children</li> </ul>
Information is easy to source and convenient. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Digital inclusion is supported and there is easier access to online services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital inclusion needs</li> <li>• Access to information needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reference and information services in hubs</li> <li>• Newspapers</li> <li>• Free access to computers and the People's Network</li> <li>• Online catalogue</li> </ul>
Sheffield's diverse history, locality and culture is celebrated and showcased.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote cultural awareness and social co-hesion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family and local history</li> <li>• Library activities</li> </ul>
The diverse needs of individuals and groups across the city are recognised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs of people with disabilities</li> <li>• Needs of elderly people</li> <li>• Needs of BME communities</li> <li>• Needs of children and young people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking books</li> <li>• Safe spaces</li> <li>• Large print books</li> <li>• Targeted services for 'new arrivers' – e.g. access to the 'Life in Great Britain Citizenship course'.</li> <li>• Books in a broad range of community languages</li> <li>• Children's activities</li> </ul>
People of all ages are enabled to explore, discover and learn to realise their potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literacy needs</li> <li>• Health and wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book and material loan</li> <li>• art clubs and other creative activity</li> <li>• coffee mornings</li> <li>• reading groups</li> <li>• homework zones</li> <li>• classes and educational activities</li> </ul>

Children and young people are encouraged to gain the right skills for the future and attain their potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A higher number than the national average of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing commitment to activities in hub and community run libraries such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– babytime and storytime</li> <li>– children’s books and children’s library space</li> <li>– homework zones &amp; after school clubs</li> <li>– educational activities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Communities are developed, improving skills and employment prospects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A higher number than the national average of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET).</li> <li>• Needs of people who are job seeking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job search sessions</li> <li>• Free access to computers and the internet for all via the People’s Network.</li> <li>• Community outreach by Community Development Librarians</li> <li>• Fax and photocopying services</li> </ul>
Groups and individuals are encouraged to use the library space, and space responds to local need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community cohesion</li> <li>• Health and wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community rooms and exhibition space</li> </ul>
Different areas of the service are enhanced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs of elderly people and those who are housebound</li> <li>• Digital inclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustained and expanded Home Library Service for people who are unable to travel to a library</li> <li>• Wi-fi access</li> <li>• E-book service</li> </ul>
Access to health benefits for library users and visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social isolation is an issue for many older people</li> <li>• Safe places for people with learning disabilities</li> <li>• Health &amp; wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe and welcoming spaces</li> <li>• Access to books for self help</li> <li>• Information and exhibition space</li> <li>• Social activity</li> </ul>

## 11. Alternative options considered

The main alternative to the Mixed Delivery Model proposal was to deliver a Sheffield City Council only model (see Model 1 see 8.1). The benefit of model 1 is:

- We know what works (experienced library staff)
- Easiest and quickest model to deliver

The weakness in this model over the preferred model is:

- Overall, this will deliver fewer community libraries (which will limit our ability to grow again in the future).
- Cannot take advantage of investment available to non-profit organisations
- Limits the opportunity to work more with volunteers

The other key alternatives revolved around variations of the Mixed Delivery model, i.e. should we have 7 hubs, 9 hubs, 10 hubs. The proposal for 11 hubs was considered the best in terms of overall geographical coverage, whilst enabling sufficient finance to support co-delivered libraries.

## **12. Consultation**

### **12.1 Consultation timescale**

- Forward Plan, report to the Executive Director published on Council Website 17<sup>th</sup> September.
- Decision by Executive Director 25<sup>th</sup> September (subject to scrutiny)
- Consultation to run for 12 weeks from early October until the beginning of January 2014 (exact dates to be confirmed).
- Analysis by mid-January leading to Cabinet report on final proposals in February 2014.
- Any further and final consultation which is considered to be necessary will be completed before the Council sets its budget in early March 2014
- We have not yet closed any libraries and, ahead of April 2014, there will not be any closures or major changes to, libraries

### **12.2 Consultation activity**

- We will organise specific consultation meetings and drop-in surgeries rather than large scale public consultation meetings. The Cabinet Member will attend, if possible, all appropriate requests to attend meetings arranged by others.
- Targeted consultation will take place in line with Equality Impact Assessment requirements
- On-line Survey
- Paper-based Survey, available in all libraries and library vehicles.
- Focus Groups
- Drop-in sessions at First Points locations proposed
- Targeted conversations with Voluntary Sector encouraging further development of Registrations of Interest

## **13. Financial implications**

The cost of the consultation is estimated at around £6000, and this cost is provided for in the current library services budget 2013/14.

Following consultation, should the proposals be approved by the Council, it is estimated that savings achieved as a result of service changes would be in the region of £1.669m in total over the next 2 financial years (2014/15 and 2015/16). The service budget would be reduced from just over £6m per annum to just over £4.3m per annum, a reduction of 15% in each year.



#### **14. Human Resources implications**

There are no immediate human resource implications of going out to consult on the proposals, however should the proposals be accepted by the Council, significant job losses would be necessary. Staff affected will be informed of the content of the consultation, and their views considered. If the proposals are accepted, appropriate negotiation with staff and Trades Unions would commence

#### **15. Equality implications**

An Equality Impact Assessment on the consultation plan has been completed and considered as part of planning the consultation, and is attached at Appendix H

#### **16. Reasons for Recommendations**

The recommendations have been made to ensure the review of the Libraries Archives and Information Service progresses, enabling a new structure to be created taking into account the modern requirements of libraries, both social and technological, and affordability of the service.

#### **17. Recommendations**

We have undertaken a "Registration of Interest exercise" which has tested if there is interest in helping us to run library services, and there is. This has enabled us to identify options and generate a number of models which provide for the most flexibility.

On this basis we seek an Executive Directors decision to agree the following process for taking this forward:

1. To go out to consultation for a period of 12 weeks to seek views on the proposal including:
  - Views on 11 hub libraries
  - Views on up to 5 co-delivered community libraries
  - Views on retaining Tinsley library as a Council run facility for the next two years
  - Views on library closure
  - Views on new opening times for Central Library
  - Views on the closure of the mobile library service
2. To open up a further period of Registrations of Interest for groups and organisations who are interested in helping us to co-deliver a library or deliver a library independently
3. To report the insights and information arising out of this consultation to Cabinet in the New Year, with a final proposal
4. To consider whether any further consultation is required as part of the report to cabinet in the New Year

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