

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 20th June 2018

Staffordshire's Libraries Strategy

Recommendation

1. That the outcome of the public consultation on Staffordshire's Library Service is considered by this Committee.

Report of Gill Heath, Cabinet Member for Communities

Summary

What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?

2. Consider the consultation response to the self-service proposal and comment upon the introduction of a self-service pilot within Staffordshire paragraph 46-50 within the paper.
3. Consider if the evaluation and selection process to procure Community Managed Library organisations, which was agreed by Cabinet in February 2015, is still valid in Appendix A
4. Review and endorse the existing support package and Service Specification for Community Managed Libraries, which were agreed by Cabinet in February 2015 Appendix C and paragraph 69 within the paper
5. Endorse the application of the principles that have been consulted on to inform Mobile and Travelling Library Service review paragraph 77-81 within the paper.

Report

Brief Report Summary

6. This report summarises the outcome of the Public Consultation that took place between 8 January and 1 April 2018 which will inform the strategy for Staffordshire's Libraries offer 2018-21.
7. The report expands on the proposed strategy for Staffordshire's Libraries offer 2018-21 which was considered by the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee on 12 September and by Cabinet on 18 October 2017.

Section 1 – Context and Background

8. In line with the 2016 DCMS publication Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-2021¹, the public consultation endorsed the role of libraries as strong partners in delivering agendas across the public sector.
9. Within Staffordshire the Library Service contributes to delivering health and wellbeing, digital inclusion, literacy, life skills and social cohesion outcomes. The Library asset and offer is embedded into the Corporate People helping People agenda and the Families and Communities Place Based approach.
10. It is essential therefore that as we implement a Libraries Strategy for the future we continue to work with internal and external partners to ensure that the library service remains relevant and continues to be sustainable.
11. The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 gives the County Council a statutory duty to provide “a comprehensive and efficient library service”. The Council is also required to ensure that facilities are available for the borrowing of or reference to books, other printed materials, recorded music and films, or sufficient number, range and quality to meet the requirements of adults and children. The Council must also encourage adults and children to make full use of library services, and lend books and other printed materials free of charge to those who live, work or study in the area.
12. The Secretary of State has overall responsibility for the library service across the country in the role of ‘superintendent’ of the service. If a complaint is made to the Secretary of State that the County Council is failing to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service, and the Secretary of State concludes that this is the case, then he can order the County Council to remedy this situation, and if the Council were to fail to do so then the Secretary of State can remove the authority's functions in relation to the public library service.
13. Library authorities that have proposed extensive library closures have been subject to judicial review. There are current/ ongoing judicial reviews to consider

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/libraries-deliver-ambition-for-public-libraries-in-england-2016-to-2021>

the library proposals in 3 authorities and a further 7 complaints are being investigated.

Staffordshire Libraries

14. As part of Staffordshire County Council's statutory network there are currently 43 Libraries, 2 Mobile Libraries and a Travelling Library. The Prison Library Service and School's Library Service are externally funded. See Figure 1 below:

15. Figure 1



16. During 2017-18:

- Staffordshire Libraries had **278,869** library members, over **2.8m** physical library visits and **740,000** virtual visits and issued nearly **2.2m** items.
- 373,657** sessions were booked on library pcs, **12,253** children joined the Summer Reading Challenge and **32,905** bus passes were processed.
- 1,152** Expressions of Interest in volunteering have been received since April 2016 and **826** trained volunteers are currently participating in regular volunteering opportunities.
- During 2017/18 these volunteers have contributed **77,000** hours of volunteering into the service and are making a financial, in kind, contribution of **£1.1m²** towards the delivery of Staffordshire's Library offer for the same period.

² The cost of volunteering in accordance with best practice is based on the following calculations (all figures published May 2015 on ONS website regarding all UK industries and occupations.).Average

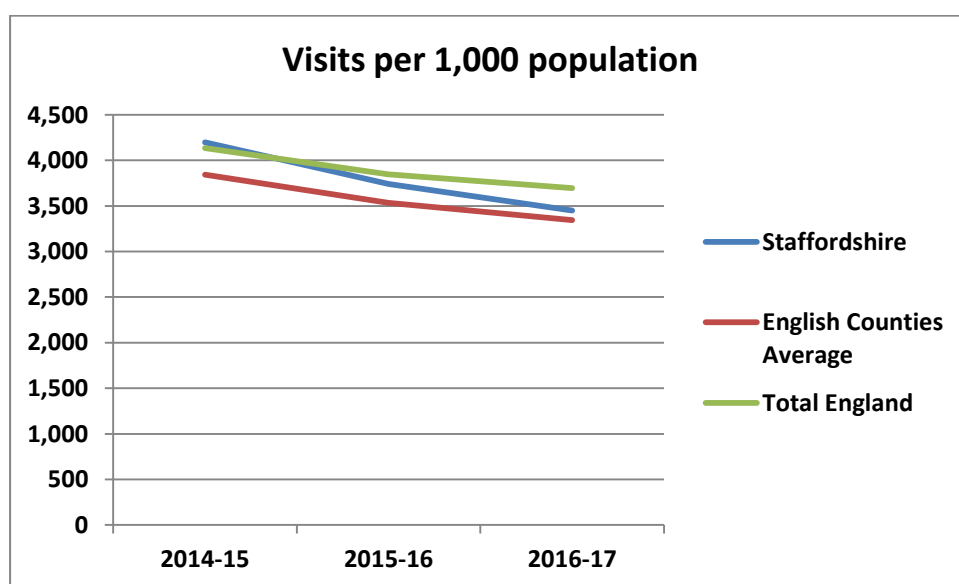
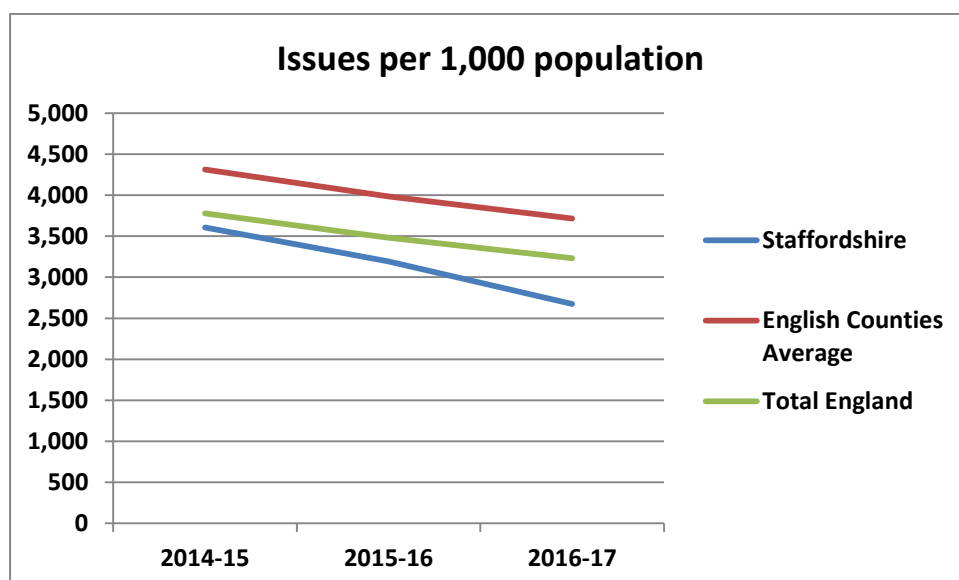
- e. On an annual basis over **1,000** people are volunteering in the service (including time-sensitive placements and Summer Reading Challenge Volunteers) and this number continues to grow,
 - f. See Libraries Infographic in Appendix b for more detail.
17. During 2017-18 we engaged:
- a. 22,192 people in reading and literacy activities
 - b. 7,234 people in activities to support their health and wellbeing
 - c. 59,210 people in learning
 - d. 10,125 people in cultural and creative activities
 - e. 8,700 people in activities to develop their digital literacy skills
 - f. 3,000 people in activity to support economic growth
 - g. 1,134 people in community activity – volunteering, co-creation and co-production of the library service offer
 - h. 166 volunteering opportunities - young people
 - i. 826 volunteering opportunities – over 25's
18. As described in previous reports the way that people access information and learning, the way they socialise and interact with each other and with organisations continues to evolve in the digital age.
19. The table below illustrates how library use in Staffordshire has changed between 2014-2018

Staffordshire Libraries	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Annual Visits	3,610,158	3,225,658	2,992,126	2,826,302
Total Issues of books, CDs & DVDs	3,101,106	2,752,677	2,319,115	2,180,439
Active Library Members who have borrowed an item in the last 12 months	94,203	86,307	77,988	75,097
Public PCs for the public to use	427	432	430	432
NetLoan Reservations (PC use per hour session)	528,156	474,343	439,364	373,657
Number of Libraries with free Wi-Fi	40	43	42	42
Virtual Visits	964,321	881,204	827,084	740,000
Children taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge	13,890	13,124	11,299	12,253
Volunteers + Work Experience Students - as per Cipfa definition	454	463	983	1,102

weekly earnings for full-time employees in the UK divided by hours in a full time week worked on average equals £13.71 per hour average. Rounded up for ease of calculation to £14 per hour volunteered.

20. The way in which people use libraries in Staffordshire is in line with national trends. Figure 2³ below compares Staffordshire against the other English Shire counties and Library authorities in England.

21. Figure 2:



Staffordshire Library Service Transformation – part 1

22. The savings currently identified for the Library Service within the MTFs are:

- a. 18/19 - £500k

³ CIPFA Public Library Statistics Actuals 2014-17

- b. 19/20 - £250k + £300k
 - c. 20/21 - £250k
23. The current 2018-19 budget for Staffordshire Libraries is **£4,786,760** and this will be reduced to **£3,986,760** by 2020/21 when further agreed MTFS savings of **£0.8m** are to be delivered. **£0.5m** MTFS savings have been delivered in year.
 24. Between 2008 and 2012 savings of £1.1m were delivered through digital/ technological solutions. By April 2016 a further £1.675m was delivered through the Libraries Transformation programme which introduced and implemented the Community Managed Library model.
 25. Through this programme, which was again informed by extensive public consultation during 2014, the County Council now manages and delivers a library service at the 20 largest and busiest libraries which account for over 80% of library business.
 26. 22 of the County Council's least busy libraries, which account for just under 20% of library business, have been transferred, or are in the process of being transferred, to community groups/ organisations. These groups, through a lease arrangement, manage and deliver the library offer and run the building, while the council remains responsible for agreed utility bills and maintenance costs, library stock, public pcs and WiFi. The approximate cost of the support package for the 22 Community Managed Libraries is £486,270 per annum.
 27. The Community Managed Library model has saved money and enabled these libraries to support the People Helping People agenda. 20 Libraries have transferred to date and work is ongoing with 2 partner organisations to enable the successful transfer of 2 of the remaining 3 libraries during 2018.
 28. The contracts for Cheslyn Hay Library and Great Wyrley Libraries were awarded to Catherine Care in April 2017. The management of Great Wyrley Library successfully transferred to Catherine Care in September 2017. However due to ongoing delays associated with the transfer of Cheslyn Hay Library within a shared building, Catherine Care withdrew their offer to manage this library in May 2018. The delay is not attributable to Staffordshire County Council; however the Library Service and Legal Services Team are working hard to resolve the issue which is contractual and not property related. As a result, this library will be offered again for community management through a procurement process.

Public Consultation Outcomes

29. On 18 October 2017 Cabinet agreed that we should consult on four options which could enable the further transformation of the library service and the delivery of MTFS savings:
 - a. Developing a further 4 Community Managed Libraries
 - b. Introducing self-service technology

- c. Encouraging more people to volunteer to support front line delivery
 - d. Reviewing the Mobile & Travelling Library Service
30. During December 2017 a first engagement phase was completed which highlighted to communities the need to make further savings and raised awareness of the Public Consultation that would be held during 2018. 132 people attended 7 events that were held at Burton, Tamworth, Stafford, Newcastle, Leek, Cannock and Perton Libraries.
31. The full 12 week Libraries public consultation took place between 8th January 2018 and 1st April 2018. In total 3,666 individuals, organisations and stakeholders shared their views as part of the consultation. Their responses delivered meaningful insight into preference and impact and provided robust representation of some of those individuals and communities most affected by the proposals.
32. Responses were received via surveys, letters, emails and at events:
- a. 2,948 survey responses (including 511 responses to the Young Peoples' survey and 1350 paper responses)
 - b. 704 people engaged with officers by attending one of 33 events
33. The public consultation process ensured that individuals, key stakeholders, including elected members, District, Town and Parish Councils, Schools and the voluntary and community sector, Library users, Library staff and potential users of the whole service had the opportunity to consider and comment on proposals and make their views known before final recommendations were developed.
34. The majority of respondents to the main survey (98%) had used libraries and were most likely to use their library on a weekly (30%) or monthly (37%) basis.
35. A full analysis and report of the consultation has been undertaken by the council's Customer Insight Team to ensure independence.

Self Service Proposals

36. The Library Service consulted on the introduction of a Self-Service System at County Council Managed Libraries which would provide secure access to the library when it is not staffed. This could provide an opportunity to expand the hours that the library is accessible and reduce expenditure.
37. An automated self-service system "powers up" the library and swipe-card access to library members over the age of 16 who have registered for self-service. During the hours when the library is accessible but not staffed, the library building is monitored by CCTV and remote support is provided from a telephone help desk.
38. As part of the self-service registration procedure, library members all complete an induction which covers Health & Safety and evacuation procedures and all self-service members agree to an acceptable use policy.

39. Half of all respondents (50%) said that they would use self service and half (50%) expressed no interest in using self service at all.
40. Self service would be most popular with respondents to the main survey on weekdays between 9am and 5pm and least popular on weekdays before 9am and from 7pm to 9pm.
41. For almost half of all respondents (46%), self service would make “little or no difference” but for 37% of respondents it would make it more difficult to use the service.
42. Concern was expressed by more:
 - a. People with a disability compared to those without
 - b. People under the age of 16 compared to all other age groups (yet 60% of under 16s supported the introduction of this technology)
 - c. Males compared to females
43. Respondents expressed general concerns about:
 - a. Staff advice/support (362 responses)
 - b. Technology (174 responses)
 - c. Safety (146 responses)
 - d. Interaction with staff (146 responses)
44. While the largest proportion of respondents (58%) disagreed with the proposals for self service. One fifth was in agreement with them (20%) and a similar proportion returned a neutral response (22%).
45. Disagreement with the proposal was common amongst all respondent types and was above average with the following groups:
 - a. People who had a disability compared to those without a disability
 - b. 35-59 year olds when compared to all other age groups
46. Public Consultation has enabled the Library Service to explore self-service options as an investment in technology to reduce core staffed opening hours and expand unstaffed opening hours. Having analysed the results of the consultation, it is proposed that self-service is piloted at Stafford Library and Penkridge Library, if this library does not transfer to community management (see paragraph 65).

47. It is not envisaged that Stafford or Penkridge library will be fully self-service and the proposed number of hours that each library could be staffed will be based on an analysis of use.

48. The estimated cost of implementing self service at one location is as follows:

Capital Costs	
Self-service Equipment	£15,400
Building costs/alterations to doors	£1,000
CCTV	£500
TOTAL CAPITAL	£16,900
Revenue Costs per annum	
Maintenance of equipment	£1500
CCTV Monitoring	£2400
ANNUAL REVENUE	£3900

49. It is anticipated that a tender and procurement process will be initiated during September 2018 with a view to implementing self-service from April 2019.

50. The pilot will be monitored over a 12 month period and then evaluated. The results of the evaluation will be brought back to PSSC and Cabinet to consider if self service could be extended to more libraries to improve the effectiveness of the Library Service and realise further savings.

Community Managed Library Proposals

51. Through the Libraries Transformation programme we wanted to ensure that our libraries do not just 'survive', but flourish, and make an even greater difference in local communities. Our vision was, and continues to be, that we will work with organisations to develop a thriving and exciting library offer through providing a strong package of support.

52. The 22 least busy libraries have been transferred, or are in the process of being transferred, to community groups/ organisations.

53. The 2014 public consultation highlighted that access to paid members of staff across the 23 libraries which were proposed as Community Managed and Community Delivered was essential and this was therefore built into the model which Cabinet agreed.

54. We have a Community Capacity Manager and a small team of Officers who work with our community managed organisations to provide professional guidance and expertise to ensure that the statutory library service continues to be delivered.

55. Examples of Community Managed Libraries in Staffordshire can be found on our website: <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/leisure/librariesnew/Help-shape-library-service/managed-libs/Examples-of-Community-Libraries-in-Staffordshire.aspx>

56. Through the consultation we explored transferring the day to day management of the four least busy County Council Managed and Delivered libraries to the community to become Community Managed and Delivered libraries.
57. Based on an analysis of visits, issues, active borrowers, library membership and computer use, these libraries are Cheadle, Clayton, Eccleshall and Penkridge. No weighting was given to per head of population, library opening hours or PC numbers which was challenged during the consultation by residents at Clayton and Penkridge who disagreed that these libraries were the least busy.
58. Through the consultation we wanted to explore the appetite for a Community Managed Library in these communities and identify if there are any interested local groups who may want to get involved.
59. Agreement with the Community Managed Library proposal was low amongst all respondents. Library users were most likely to be in agreement with the proposal at Cheadle (35%) and there was least agreement at Penkridge (6%). Service user disagreement ranged from 88% in Penkridge to 51% in Cheadle.
60. When the public were consulted during 2014 30% of respondents agreed with the 'Library Local' (Community Management) proposal with 46% disagreeing and 25% who neither agreed nor disagreed. Overall 51% of respondents disagreed with the allocation of libraries in the 'Library Local' (Community Managed) category.
61. Within the 2018 consultation, 870 respondents identified multiple concerns in relation to the Community Managed Library proposal. The most common concerns expressed include:
 - a. Losing Library Staff (316 responses)
 - b. Recruitment and retention of Volunteers (159 responses)
 - c. Future Management of Libraries (148 responses)
 - d. Access (113 responses)
62. 316 young people commented on Community Management in the young person survey. Some expressed support for this approach with respondents thinking that this proposal would keep their library open, provide opportunities for young people to volunteer and provide a purpose for the community to come together. While others expressed resistance echoing views of the main survey.
63. While there is a high level of disagreement for this proposal 445 people expressed an interest in volunteering at their local library. Most support was identified at Penkridge, Eccleshall and Clayton, three of the four libraries proposed for Community Management.
64. In addition 16 respondents representing an organisation/group expressed 'a great deal of interest' in supporting Community Managed Libraries. This includes 3

responses from Clayton, 2 responses from Eccleshall and 2 responses from Penkridge.

65. Analysis of the consultation evidences that agreement for this proposal is low however the community managed library model within Staffordshire does enable continued access to the library offer within communities. Therefore to enable these four libraries to remain part of Staffordshire's statutory network and deliver an MTFs saving it is proposed that Cheadle, Clayton, Eccleshall, Penkridge are offered for Community Management.
66. Full details of the proposed selection and evaluation process which was agreed by Cabinet in February 2015 can be found at Appendix a.
67. It is anticipated that the procurement process will commence during September 2018 with a view to contracting with community organisations from April 2019.
68. It is envisaged that the existing support package for Community Managed Libraries will be made available to these libraries and the existing Service Specification, Contract and Lease arrangements will be applied. These were agreed by Cabinet in February 2015 and the Service Specification can be found in Appendix c.
69. The support package which has been acknowledged as best practice includes the following:
 - a. Community Support Officers – who offer expertise and guidance, monitor contracts, assist with the recruitment and training of volunteers and deliver the People Helping People Agenda across the Rural County.
 - b. Library stock
 - c. Staff & public access PCs, WiFi – maintained by Staffordshire ICT
 - d. Property related costs – building maintenance, grounds maintenance, utility bills paid to an agreed amount.
70. Feedback from the existing community managed library organisations and their volunteers about the level of support provided by Staffordshire County Council has been excellent and we believe that our continued commitment to these libraries helps to ensure that they remain vibrant spaces at the heart of communities.

Mobile and Travelling Library Service

71. Staffordshire County Council currently provides a Mobile and Travelling Library Service which delivers a library service to 151 rural and isolated communities. During 2017-18 there were 34,114 in person visits to the Mobile and Travelling Library Service, a decrease of 12.6% on the previous year.

72. The Mobile & Travelling Library Service costs £309,674 per year to deliver which includes management time and mandatory training costs. It costs approximately £6.46⁴ to visit a mobile library compared to approximately £2.26⁵ to visit a static library.
73. The Mobile & Travelling Library Service was reviewed during 2015/16 and following public consultation new routes for delivery were introduced and implemented in April 2016. The service is delivered via two Mobile Libraries and one Travelling Library. Prior to the review during 2015/16 there were six mobiles and two travelling libraries.
74. This review realised savings of £350,000 and it was agreed as part of the 2016 MTFS process that the service would be re-reviewed during 2018/19 to realise a further saving of up to £300,000.
75. If the £300,000 that has been identified within the MTFS is removed in full from the Mobile & Travelling Library Service budget, the remaining vehicles would be withdrawn and the service would cease from April 2019. This would lead to gaps in provision.
76. To ensure that the Mobile & Travelling Library Service can continue to deliver a library service to rural or isolated communities, the public have been consulted on a set of principles which will inform the future planning of mobile routes. We believe that these principles will ensure that the service continues to reach into areas of greatest need.
77. There was overall agreement with the principles:
- a. 91% of respondents agreed with the principle that the service should be continued for 'those in greatest need'.
 - b. 87% agreed that there should be a mobile visit once every four weeks
 - c. 77% agreed that routes and stops should be reviewed on an annual basis
 - d. 66% agreed that stops should be outside a 2 mile radius from a static library
 - e. 64% agreed that stop time should be based on use with a minimum of 15 minutes per stop
 - f. 50% agreed that there should be a minimum of 5 visitors in each community
78. The consultation highlighted that the proposed changes to the mobile and travelling library service would make access to the library offer more difficult for

⁴ This is an internally produced cost figure used to show the difference between the Mobile & Travelling Library Service and static libraries. The cost per visit for Staffordshire Libraries (which includes static and mobile libraries) as published in CIPFA 2013 /14 was £2.66.

⁵ See above

40% of service users with the impact being greater on people aged 75+ and people with a disability.

79. 79% of service users would continue to use the mobile library service, 25% would use their nearest static library and 17% of users would stop using the library service all together.
80. In addition to consulting on the principles and the proposed routes, we also sought people's views regarding alternative proposals or delivery methods. 74 people commented on the service and 60 people commented on accessibility. Comments highlighted the need for better promotion of the mobile library service and a suggestion to expand the digital library offer but no alternative delivery methods were identified.
81. It is therefore proposed to apply the principles that have been consulted on to inform the review. This will mean that we will re-draw routes, withdraw the larger Travelling Library vehicle at the end of March 2019 and deliver the service via the two smaller mobile libraries which are more flexible and therefore able to access more isolated or rural communities from April 2019.
82. The 3% of respondents who are housebound and have requested a home delivery service will be contacted and arrangements put in place to deliver this service with volunteer support.

Next Steps

83. Prior to taking proposals to Cabinet in July 2018, we are asking the Select Committee to consider the outcome of the Public Consultation and:
 - a. Comment on the introduction of a self-service pilot within Staffordshire paragraphs 46-50 within the paper.
 - b. Consider if the evaluation and selection process to procure Community Managed Library organisations is still valid Appendix a.
 - c. Review the existing support package and Service Specification for Community Managed Libraries Appendix c and paragraph 69 within the paper.
 - d. Endorse the application of the principles that have been consulted on to inform Mobile and Travelling Library Service review paragraph 77-81 within the paper.

Background Documents

Staffordshire's Libraries Strategy, Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee Report 12th September 2017

<http://moderngov.staffordshire.gov.uk/documents/s97288/Staffordshires%20Libraries%20Strategy.pdf>

Staffordshire's Libraries Strategy, Cabinet Report 18th October 2017
<http://moderngov.staffordshire.gov.uk/documents/s97737/Staffordshires%20Libraries%20Strategy.pdf>

Appendix A – Evaluation process for Community Managed Libraries

Appendix B – Staffordshire Libraries infographic 2017-18

Appendix C – Service Specification

Report Commissioner: Janene Cox OBE

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