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|-------------------------|
| Local Members' Interest |
| N/A |

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee

**Monday 12th October, 2015 10:00 am
Libraries in a Connected Staffordshire (part 5)**

Recommendation/s

1. To consider and comment on the proposed realigned model for Staffordshire's Mobile and Travelling Library Service, set out in this report; which will shape and influence the future service to ensure that it continues to prioritise the people in greatest need.

Report of Ben Adams, Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills

Summary

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

2. To consider the results of the public consultation and how this has informed the proposals for the future of Staffordshire's Mobile and Travelling Library Service
3. To comment upon the realigned proposed routes for Staffordshire's Mobile and Travelling Library Service that have been revised following the public consultation.
4. The Library Service welcomes comments from the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee which will inform the proposals which will be considered by Cabinet on 21st October 2015.

Report

Report Summary

5. To summarise the results of the public and collective consultation and to outline a proposed future model for Staffordshire's Mobile and Travelling Library Service.

Background

6. The purpose of the report is to update the Select Committee on work that has taken place to adapt and reposition the mobile and travelling library service following the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee meeting on 1 June 2015 and Cabinet on 17 June 2015.
7. Initial proposals for the Mobile and Travelling Library Service were developed following an analysis of use, financial performance and six principles that aim to ensure people with the greatest need continue to have access to mobile or travelling services.
8. Permission to consult on these proposals was agreed by Cabinet in June 2015.
9. Public consultation upon these proposals took place between 1 July and 2 September 2015 to gain additional information and insight from Staffordshire residents and key stakeholders.
10. Staff and trade union representatives have also been engaged. This has informed the final proposals which are detailed in this report.
11. As outlined in Achieving Excellence – Libraries in a Connected Staffordshire: Part, Part 2, Part 3 and Part 4 (see previously published papers) the way that people access information and reading, and the way they socialise and interact with each other and with organisations continues to evolve in the digital age.
12. To meet these challenges, since 2008 Staffordshire Library Service has changed the way it operates, and has delivered £1.1 million of savings without building closures or reductions to opening hours through:
 - Reducing management and support services;
 - Introducing self-service; and
 - Reducing expenditure on CDs & DVDs.

A review of the static library service will deliver £1.325 million in savings by April 2017 as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

13. A further saving of £350,000 to the annual budget for the Mobile and Travelling Library Service will be realised if the proposals within this paper are agreed as part of the 2015-2018 MTFS review.
14. 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, of sufficient number, range and quality to meet the requirements of adults and children in the County Council’s area. 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.
15. Within Staffordshire the Mobile and Travelling Library Service is part of the county council’s statutory provision and is managed and delivered by Staffordshire Libraries and Arts service.
16. The recent analysis of use has demonstrated that a small percentage of the Staffordshire population are members of the Mobile and Travelling Library Service. During 2014/15:
- There were 11,305 members (1.32% of the population).
 - 4,805 members borrowed from the service (0.56% of the population).
 - Mobile and travelling libraries generated 7.3% of Staffordshire’s issues.
17. In 2014/15 there were 96,360 visits to Staffordshire Mobile and Travelling libraries. This is 2.7% of total visits to all Staffordshire Libraries (mobile, travelling and static libraries combined).
18. As with static libraries, use of Mobile and Travelling libraries has fallen consistently over a 10 year period and visits have declined by 15%, during the last 4 years.

| Mobile and Travelling Library Usage | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Visits | 113,315 | 113,431 | 101,794 | 103,056 | 96,260 |
| Issues | 360,873 | 355,517 | 280,690 | 218,969 | 227,466 |
| Total Members | 16,472 | 15,165 | 13,941 | 12,678 | 11,305 |
| Active Borrowers | 7,755 | 7,188 | 7,125 | 5,523 | 4,805 |
| Computer Bookings | 723 | 610 | 359 | 202 | 689 |
| Number of computers | 6 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 |

| | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Summer Reading Challenge - Children Starting | 355 | 435 | 422 | 393 | 439 |
| Summer Reading Challenge - Children Completing | 182 | 273 | 245 | 259 | 247 |

19. Mobile libraries reach into 350* communities, making over 800* individual stops. Details of current stops can be found in Appendix 1.

*figures from 2013/14

20. Currently, the mobile library fleet consists of two larger travelling libraries and six standard mobile libraries, with an additional 'relief' mobile library which is used if one of the vehicles is being serviced or breaks down.
21. The travelling libraries serve larger communities with a regular weekly timetable; they provide these communities with access to at least one day of service per week.
22. The standard mobile libraries predominantly provide shorter visits on a three-weekly timetable, mainly serving smaller, communities, although some larger communities do have a weekly service from standard mobile libraries.

Costs

23. The Mobile & Travelling Library Service costs £652,303 per year to run which includes £39,981 of management time and training costs. It costs almost £7¹ to visit a mobile library compared to approximately £2.26² to visit a static library. A full breakdown of costs are listed below:

| Mobile and Travelling Library Service | Budget 2015/16 |
|--|-----------------------|
| Staff costs: salaries and on costs of drivers, relief drivers, casual staff and library assistants | £352,420 |
| Vehicle costs: lease, fuel, repairs & maintenance, software licences etc. | £234,991 |
| Management & training | £39,981 |
| Book stock: annual additions to stock | £24,910 |
| Total: | £652,303 |

24. The County Council agreed as part of the MTFs 2015-18 to review the Mobile & Travelling Library Service and explore options to reduce the annual budget by £350,000. From the various options that have been

¹ 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.

² See above

explored it is considered that the £350,000 saving will be delivered if these proposals are agreed.

25. The Mobile & Travelling Library Service is managed operationally by the Library Service District Managers and delivered by the mobile drivers/assistants. Mobile Libraries are single staffed and Travelling Libraries have two staff with 1 FTE Driver/Assistant and 1 FTE Library Assistant to cover the extended hours that the vehicle operates. A full time Transport Manager manages the fleet of vehicles.
26. If these proposals are accepted there will be a reduction of 5 vehicles required to deliver the service.
27. There will be one off costs associated with reducing this service if these proposals are accepted. The cost of terminating the vehicle leases early are detailed below:

| Vehicle to remove | termination charge |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| FJ55 KVR | £31,871 |
| DX53 VAH | £12,118 |
| DX54 KCN | £14,504 |
| FJ05 EKB | £19,688 |
| FJ05 EKA | £20,883 |
| Total termination cost | £99,064 |

28. Mobile and Travelling Library staff will experience changes in structure and job roles if these proposals are agreed. We propose that there will be a reduction of 9.28 FTE posts to deliver the reorganised offer. This proposal will be subject to consultation with staff and their Trade Union Representatives before specific impact and costs can be fully established.

Principles

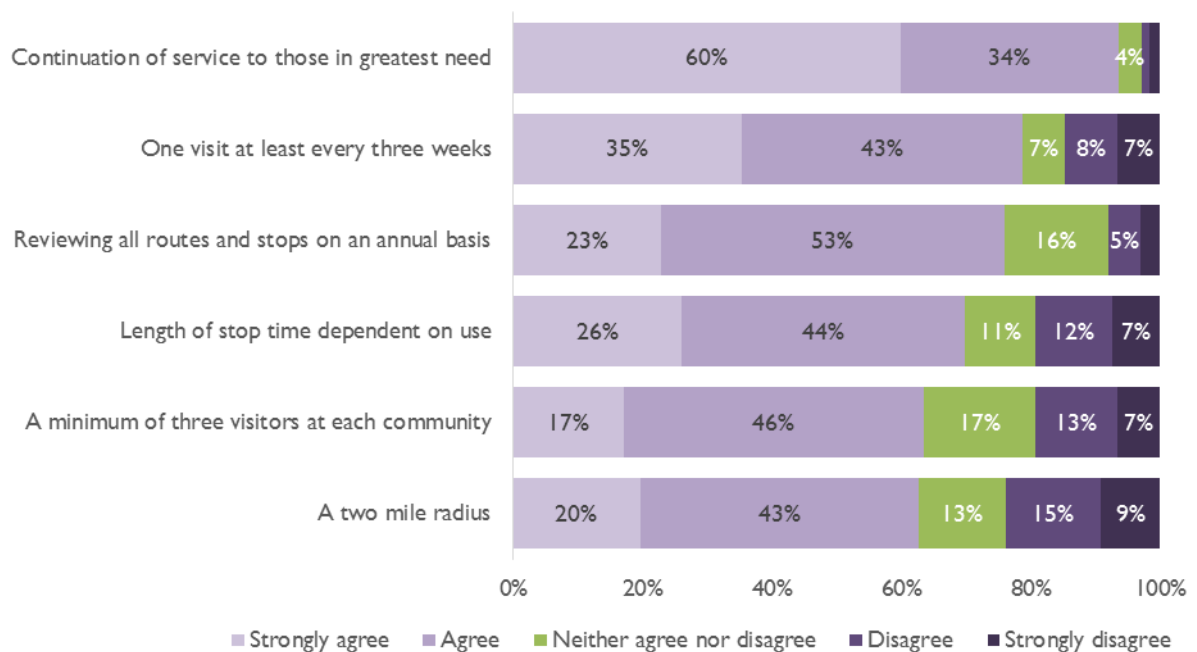
29. In addition to the analysis of usage and our engagement with staff, the following principles were developed and to ensure that the service continues to reach into areas of greatest need. These principles were debated and discussed by the Select Committee and will inform the future planning of mobile routes. We consulted upon these principles between 1 July and 2 September 2015:

| | |
|----|--|
| 1. | <p>Mobile and Travelling library stops will take account of the location of static libraries to ensure that duplication of service is not taking place.</p> <p>It is proposed that Mobile and Travelling Libraries will generally visit locations outside a 2 mile radius of a static library.</p> <p>However there could be exceptions identified through the public consultation that will need to be considered in the final proposals taking into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The needs of areas of deprivation b. The needs of hard-to-reach groups c. How connected communities are in terms of access to transport to reach static libraries and accessibility to online services and information through Internet access |
| 2. | <p>Based on performance of the last three years, where a mobile or travelling library has received at least three visitors within a community, a mobile or travelling library service will continue.</p> |
| 3. | <p>Each community identified as needing a mobile or travelling library service through this review will receive one mobile or travelling library visit at least once every 3 weeks. This will maximise access to the service across the county.</p> |
| 4. | <p>The duration of the mobile or travelling library stops will be for a minimum of 15 minutes. Length of stop time will depend on the level of use at each stop.</p> |
| 5. | <p>Continuation of service to those in greatest need is a priority.</p> <p>We will consider carefully how the needs of the vulnerable, the elderly and other protected groups can be met if there is a recommendation to change the service in their community.</p> <p>Alternative ways of ensuring service delivery will be explored during the consultation and recommended in the final proposals.</p> |
| 6. | <p>All routes and stops will be reviewed on an annual basis.</p> |

Consultation

30. During March 2015 a first engagement phase was held with the 18.06 FTE Mobile & Travelling Library Service staff who given the opportunity to comment on the principles and also to share their aspirations and expectations of the Mobile & Travelling Library Service as it is remodelled.
31. The findings from this exercise contributed to the development of initial proposals which were then subject to formal public consultation between 1st July 2015 and 2nd September 2015.
32. We acknowledge that this committee recommended a 12 week consultation period this was not agreed by Cabinet. The proposed length of a consultation depends on a number of factors, including the number and make-up of people that a particular consultation is aimed at, how long it will take to promote, and an estimate of how long it will take for consultees to consider the proposals and respond.
33. Last year's libraries consultation was aimed at the entire Staffordshire population as it involved a proposed restructure of the whole library service and fundamental questions of what type of library service was needed in the county.
34. This consultation is aimed at the users of particular parts of the library service, and therefore should not be compared in scope to last year's 12 week process.
35. In addition to consulting on the principles and the detailed proposal as described in the Cabinet report: Libraries in a Connected County part 4, we also sought people's views regarding to alternative proposals or delivery methods which have been considered before final proposals were developed.
36. The public consultation process ensured that the public/residents of Staffordshire, 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 the plans and offer alternative proposals or delivery methods before final proposals were developed.
37. The consultation approach undertaken was based on a multi-faceted consultation plan, targeting different groups of interest in different ways in order to secure maximum involvement. This approach has been successful, achieving a total of 1054 responses to the survey. This represents approximately 10% of all registered mobile and travelling users and over a quarter of active mobile and travelling library borrowers.

38. In addition over 400 people also engaged in organised public events and further feedback was received via letters, emails, social media and a petition.
39. A full summary and analysis of the public consultation can be found in Appendix 2.
40. By gender females were slightly over represented (78%) and males slightly underrepresented (22%) in the consultation responses. However the majority of active borrowers from mobile and travelling libraries are female (68%).
41. 84.5% of respondents were people over 60 and 32% of people who responded have a disability. This compares to 59.2% of active borrowers who are over 60 and 6% of active borrowers who have informed us they have a disability
42. The largest proportions of respondents were in agreement with each of the six principles. Agreement was the highest with the principle to continue to providing the service to those in greatest need (94%).
43. Figure 1 - Agreement/Disagreement with the principles:



44. Just over half of respondents (52%) indicated that it would make it more difficult for them to use the mobile and travelling library service if the proposed changes are agreed. Whilst 44% felt that the changes would make little or no difference to them and 4% said that the changes would make it easier to use the service.

45. 75% of respondents stated that they would continue to use the mobile and travelling library service and 12% of respondents said that they would use their nearest static library instead.
46. 58% of people with a disability felt that the proposals would compromise their ability to continue using the library service however a higher proportion of this group felt the proposals would make access easier for them compared to people who did not have a disability and respondents overall. The potential impact on people with disabilities and how we propose to mitigate this will be outlined in the Community Impact Assessment that will form part of the Cabinet paper.
47. In addition to the formal public consultation views were sought from the mobile and travelling library staff, recognising the thorough understanding our staff have of the communities they serve.
48. Staff were fully engaged in the process and have made valid suggestions which have influenced the final proposals. These include re instating a stop at Bradwell - including a separate stop at Handsacre and providing a service to Gnosall.
49. Findings from the consultation and staff engagement have fed into the Community Impact Assessment to ensure the council has a full understanding of the impact and how any negative impact can be mitigated to ensure we meet our public sector equalities duty.

Proposed changes to the Mobile & Travelling Library Service

50. The stops that we are proposing to retain as outlined in Appendix x were initially selected by applying the principles described in paragraph 29 and taking into account:
 - Existing level of use
 - Distance from a static library
 - Index of multiple deprivation
 - Car ownership
 - Access to public transport
 - Current level of internet access and provision within a locality
51. Through the consultation some people expressed a preference for retaining multiple stops rather than the proposal for one longer stop and in some locations people suggested an alternative stop or alternative time.
52. The principle of having only one stop in a community enables us to maximise access to the service across the county. Where possible we

have identified a central location where the mobile can park for longer which should increase the visibility of the service. Where a central location is too far for people to walk we will seek to provide a home delivery service.

53. In all instances alternative stop and time suggestions have been considered and the proposed changes to routes as a result of the consultation can be found in Appendix 3.
54. Minor changes to proposed routes include:
- Alton – changed stop location to the church which will enable greater use by children.
 - Adbaston - stopping at the Bungalows instead of Marsh meadow as this is a more central location.
 - Dunston - swapping the time of Dunston and Acton Trussell to relieve school parking congestion at Dunston.
 - Kings Bromley – amended stop times to enable after school use. In order to accommodate this change the entire Mobile 2 Route 13 will run later.
 - Longsdon – Lower Sutherland Road moved to Mobile 1 route 14 which will save travel time.
 - Rushton School - changing the stop time to avoid school lunch time to enable children to use the service.
 - Wetley Rocks – stop time amended to take account of the Longsdon route change.
 - Whittington - changing the time will enable us to park at the village hall. This means that the entire Mobile 2 Route 12 will run later.
 - Woodseaves - Primary School swapped to Police House. The School no longer use the mobile & access is difficult. The Police House is a central location & will suit more customers
55. During the public consultation, a petition containing 17 signatures was submitted from Morningside mobile library users which had the support of the Parish Council and local borough councillors. There were further comments received through the consultation which supported retaining a stop at Morningside : *“I am 80 years of age and cannot walk very well so it would make it more difficult to get to the travelling library in Madeley”* and *“I will not be able to carry books from the Madeley Centre to my home”*
56. Taking into account the average age and number of people who use this stop, we propose that the Travelling Library stops at Morningside en route to Madeley (see Appendix 4).
57. A number of comments were received in relation to discontinuing the stop at Bradwell. *“I have no transport and would not be able to use the mobile if it does not stop at Bradwell”* and *“A lot of disabled people use the Bradwell and Porthill mobile library and we will all miss out”*.

58. The mobile library staff have identified the stop at Bradwell Methodist Church as a key location as it is used in conjunction with other local amenities such as shops, the community centre, church events and regular nursery visits.
59. Taking the comments relating to Bradwell into account we propose to stop at Bradwell and Wolstanton on a Thursday (see Appendix 4).
60. Several comments were made in relation to the combined stop to cover Armitage and Handsacre including *"I think basing the mobile in Armitage limits elderly and young people's use of the service"* and *"I have mobility issues and if you take our stop away I would not be able to use the library and I love to read"*
61. A letter was also received from Hayes Meadow School, Handsacre with 123 signatures from children supporting the following statement: *"The children of Hayes Meadow would like you to save our mobile library at all stops in Handsacre"*.
62. As a result of the comments received in relation to Armitage and Handsacre we propose to divide the allocated Travelling Library time on a Friday between the two communities (see Appendix 4).
63. Abbots Bromley Parish Council expressed a desire to keep 3 stops, 2 hours of service and for the mobile to be available for children after school. Despite the choice of The Crown as a central stop in the village, comments were made about the suitability of The Crown for a stop: *"The steep grass bank is difficult to walk down and really dangerous when wet"*.
64. We are unable to retain 3 stops in Abbots Bromley as this does not meet the principle of **one** mobile or travelling library visit at least once every 3 weeks. However we propose to relocate the stop to the Bagot Arms where an average 19.3 people use the stop and propose a later stop time to enable more children to use the service after school.
65. Gnosall Library currently occupies space in St Lawrence's C of E Academy and is open 10 hours per week. Gnosall also receives a 3 weekly mobile service of 85 minutes which we propose is discontinued.
66. The school is being rebuilt and there will no longer be space to accommodate the library. The last day Gnosall Library will be open to the public is Saturday 19 December. This will enable staff to clear the space during the week of 21 December and vacate the school building by 31 December.
67. As an interim measure, from 7 January 2016 we are proposing to provide a weekly 9 hours Travelling Library Service to Gnosall and we are currently investigating two locations where the vehicle can park between 9.30-1.30 and 2-7.

68. The final proposed routes can be found in Appendix 4 and an overview of the changes that are proposed as a result of the consultation are in Appendix 4.

Section 6 – Alternative methods of delivery

69. As part of the consultation we explored:

- The potential to expand the current Home Reader Service, which gives individuals who are housebound the opportunity to have access to books and reading.
- Different ways of reshaping the service that will prioritise the people in greatest need.

70. Respondent's comments were largely focussed on how they would be affected by proposed changes as opposed to suggesting alternative methods of delivery.

71. During the libraries consultation 24 people told us that they would require a housebound service as a result of changes to proposals. We will follow up the contacts we have been given and will promote the availability of this service more widely.

72. Responses to the consultation included representatives 14 people representing residential homes and sheltered housing complexes. If the proposals are agreed we will contact residential homes/sheltered housing staff where there is a negative impact to investigate establishing deliveries via the Residential Homes Service.

Section 7 – Key Outcomes from the Consultation

73. A frequent suggestion which was made through the consultation was for less frequent visits with the ability to borrow more books. There is already no restriction on the number of items that can be borrowed from any mobile or static library and for mobile and travelling libraries there is no overdue charge for items that are returned after their due date. Items can also be returned to any static Staffordshire library. We recognise the need to re-enforced this message to current and new customers.

74. The current loan period for Travelling Library items is 3 weeks. To coincide with the fortnightly Travelling Library timetable we propose that the loan period for Travelling Library issues is extended from the standard 3 week loan to a 4 week loan.

75. Current mobile routes are available on the libraries website <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/leisure/librariesnew/branchlibraries/mobilelibraries/home.aspx> However it was evident through the consultation that improved marketing is required to promote the availability of the mobile

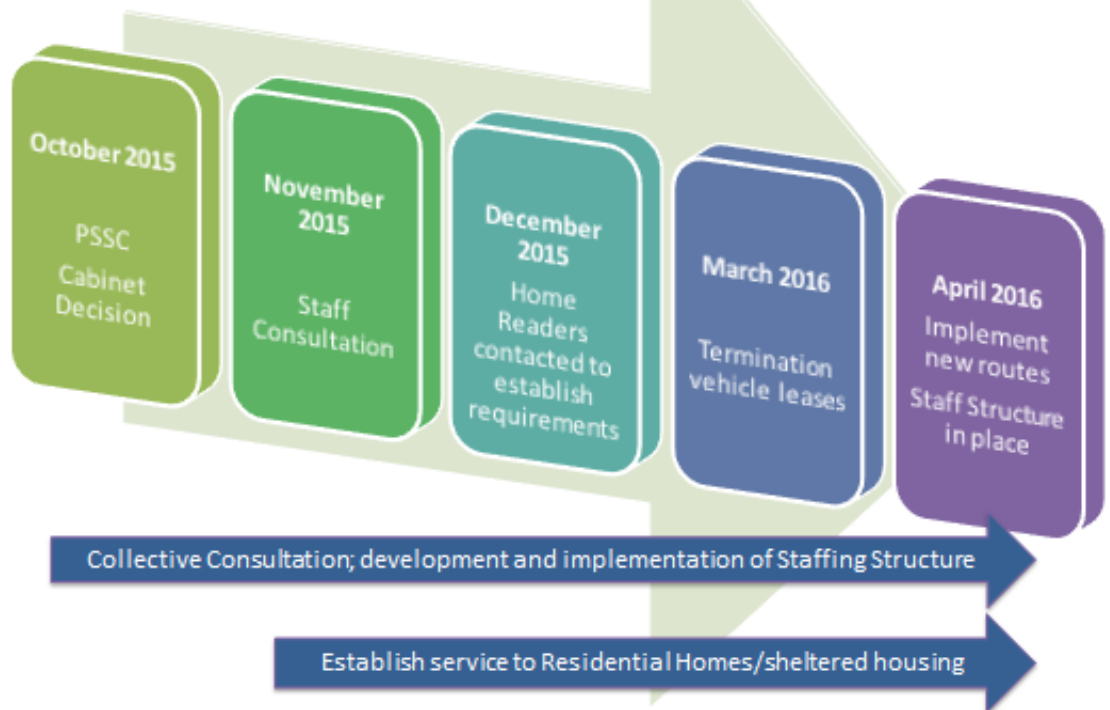
and travelling library service and as part of this we will investigate the introduction of e alerts to inform customers when the mobile is due.

Next steps

76. Feedback and comments from this committee will inform the final proposals which will be considered by Cabinet on 21st October 2015.
77. We propose implementing changes to the service from April 2016.
78. If the recommendations in this report are agreed then it is anticipated that the mobile and travelling library review will realise the saving of £350,000 identified in the MTFS by April 2017.
79. Milestones, should the proposals be agreed are overleaf (figure 2).
80. Figure 2

MILESTONES

Should the proposals be agreed;



Link to Strategic Plan – Libraries and Arts contribute to all of the County Council outcomes and sub-outcomes through improving and innovating the service to increase engagement and outcomes

Community Impact – A Community Impact Assessment has been completed to support the 21 October Cabinet report to ensure the council has a full understanding of the impact of final recommendations and how any negative impact can be mitigated to ensure we meet our public sector equalities duty.

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Appendices/Background papers

Appendix 1 – Current Routes

Appendix 2 - Mobile & Travelling Libraries Public Consultation 2015 – analysis of results

Appendix 3 – Proposed Realigned Routes

Appendix 4 – Changes to routes as a result of the Consultation