

Committee	Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee		
Report Title	Libraries Saving Programme – Update		
Contributors	Executive Director for Community Services		
Date	8 March 2017	Item	8

1. Introduction

1.1. The Library Savings Programme presented to the Select Committee on 16 September 2015 was approved by Mayor and Cabinet on 9 December 2015.

The Proposal was based on:

- The creation of three Hub Libraries – Deptford Lounge, Lewisham and Downham Health & Leisure Centre—which will carry an enhanced role for face to face contact between the Local Authority and the public to support the digital by default agenda.
- The extension of the Lewisham Community Library Model to Forest Hill, Torridon, and Manor House, in partnership with other council services and community organisations. And the integration of the library provision into the repurposed ground floor space within the Catford complex (Laurence House).
- The review of front line staff to include new functions through the re-training and enhancement of front line roles

2. Purpose

2.1. This report updates the Committee on:

- Hub Libraries implementation – Deptford, Downham and Lewisham
- Community Library model extension to Forest Hill, Torridon Road and Manor House
- Catford Library update (linked to the development of the joined up Ground Floor of Laurence House)

3. Recommendations

3.1. The Select Committee is asked to comment on the update.

4. Policy context

4.1. Shaping the Future, the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy includes the following priority outcomes which relate to the work of the Library and Information Service and reflect the Council's aspirations for the service:

- Ambitious and Achieving – where people are inspired and supported to fulfil their potential.
- Empowered and Responsible – where people can be actively involved in their local area and contribute to supportive communities.
- Healthy, Active and Enjoyable – where people can actively participate in maintaining and improving their health and wellbeing.
- Dynamic and Prosperous – where people are part of vibrant localities and town centres, well connected to London and beyond.

- 4.2. The Library and Information Service also contributes to the following Council Priorities:
- Community leadership and empowerment – developing opportunities for the active participation and engagement of people in the life of the community.
 - Strengthening the local economy – gaining resources to regenerate key localities, strengthen employment skills and promote public transport.
 - Active, healthy citizens – leisure, sporting, learning and creative activities for everyone.

5. Hub Libraries implementation

- 5.1. Both this Committee and Mayor and Cabinet recognised the role that public libraries play in delivering “unbiased access to information, learning, and the works of the creative imagination”. As society and the council move to extend this role from the physical to the digital world – and in line with the government and local authority’s “digital by default” agenda – libraries can play a role to support residents.
- 5.2. This activity takes place in the Hub Libraries, where library staff – beyond traditional duties – support residents and signpost online services.
- 5.3. To maximise the opportunities for accessibility, the Library & Information Service increased the opening hours at Lewisham and Downham to the level of Deptford Lounge. These three hub Libraries are now open 85 hours per week.

Monday – Friday	08:00-22:00
Saturday	9:00-17:00
Sunday	10:00-17:00

- 5.4. Within reduced staffing resources, this has been achieved by limiting the staff presence to the hours between 9am and 7pm during week days. At other times, the libraries are open to the public by security staff.
- 5.5. This approach has been in operation at Downham since 2006. It was adopted for Deptford Lounge four years ago, and has proved to be effective.

6. Community Library model extension – Forest Hill and Torridon Road

- 6.1. V22 and the newly constituted Archibald Corbett Community Library, Arts and Heritage Centre have successfully taken over the management of the Forest Hill and Torridon Road buildings.
- 6.2. The former maintained 66 opening hours per week, and the latter increased from 36 to 40 hours/week.
- 6.3. In both cases, visits and issues have remained to the same level or increased, when compared to the performance before the transfer to community library. In the case of Forest Hill, book issues have increased by 26%.
- 6.4. In January Torridon Road received 5,971 visitors and issued 1,898 items of stock, while Forest Hill received 11,715 visitors and issued 4,700 items of stock.

- 6.5. Both libraries are hosting a wide range of activities and events. At Torridon Road these include Making Workshops with Other World Arts, Stroke Association Digital Support, Knit 'n' Knatter, Gentle seated yoga, Corbett Writers, Inspired Word Poetry and a Reminiscence group. Forest Hill has set up a 'Kids Advisory Board' which met for the first time on 6 February, and is hosting events and activities including Feline Facts, Cat Care & Crafts, Lively Minds, Origami classes and Film and Book Clubs.

7. Community Library model extension – Manor House

- 7.1. After an unsuccessful first round aimed at identifying a partner able to take over the management of the building and after the Mayor's instruction on 13 July 2016, the search for a new partner re-commenced immediately.
- 7.2. Three partners submitted a full bid and – at the time of writing this update – it is expected that Mayor and Cabinet will identify the future partner on 1 March 2017. A verbal update on the outcome of that meeting will be offered to the Committee.
- 7.3. The timetable for implementation of the new arrangements with the incoming partner has been extended but it is expected that it will become operational as soon as possible after 1 April 2017.
- 7.4. Meanwhile, the library operates an interim service as described to this Committee on 15 September 2016.
- 7.5. Briefly, the opening hours reduced from 65 to 28, and staffing is provided through CIS with limited support of library staff. Some services, such as printing, photocopying, and payment of fines are not available.

8. Catford Library

- 8.1. The Customer Services and Community Services directorates are working at the development of an integrated approach to service delivery on the basis of the approach described to this Committee on 4 July 2016.
- 8.2. In brief, the approach includes:
- The integration of receptions and the relocation of the main reception area.
 - The opening up of the ground floor space as one public area, which retains the amount of floor space available for library purposes.
 - The introduction of a comfortable self-service lounge area where residents can use technology to access services independently.
 - The increased opening hours for the library using self-service terminals from 8am.
 - The allocation of two full time equivalent Library Assistants and the support of the Community Engagement Team to support the library provision in the space.
- 8.3. The work within the central space of the ground floor is due to commence in late spring, early summer.

8.4. Meanwhile, the Library and Information Service is developing a pilot aimed at maximising staff deployment across the opening hours with increased support of colleagues across reception and security functions. This pilot is being developed with front line staff and the unions.

9. Equalities implications

9.1. Partner organisations working with the council to enable community libraries are required to have comprehensive equalities policies and procedures to ensure that library services remain accessible to residents from all protected characteristics. It is expected that the new partner for Manor House be able to demonstrate that they meet this requirement.

9.2. The reduced interim opening hours at Manor House Library will make it more difficult for residents to access library services. However, this is intended to be a short-term measure and officers will consider the pattern of opening hours that ensures a range of users with different needs are accommodated.

10. Legal implications

10.1. There are no direct legal implications arising from this update.

11. Financial implications

11.1. This report relates to savings proposal L6 considered by Mayor and Cabinet on 16 September 2015. The proposal is for a reduction of £1m against the current net library budget of £4.18m, phased £400k in 2016/17 and £600k in 2017/18.

11.2. The interim arrangement at Manor House generates additional pressure that will need to be managed within existing resources. The suggested reduced hours will contain the pressure to ca. £20,000 between Oct 16 and Mar 17, equivalent to a weekly cost of £735/week.

12. Crime and disorder implications

12.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this update.

13. Environmental implications

13.1. There are no direct environmental implications arising from this update.

14. Conclusion

14.1. The Service is on track to complete all the Mayor and Cabinet instructions by 1 April 2017, apart from the Catford Library, which will require further work as described in paragraph 8 above.

Background Papers

30 November 2015 Safer Stronger Select Committee Proposed changes to the Lewisham Library and Information Service
http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s40112/4_LibrariesConsultation2015Update_30112015.pdf

9 December 2015 Mayor and Cabinet Revenue Budget Savings Report
<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s40314/Appendix%20i%20-%20SSSC%20libraries%20consultation%20outcome.pdf>

13 July 2016 Mayor and Cabinet Library Savings Programme Update – Decision and accompanying documents
<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?AllId=14647>

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