

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE		
Report Title	CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY TEAM UPDATE – ADDITION ON THE COMMUNITY LIBRARIES PROVISION	
Key decision	No	Item No 5
Ward	All	
Contributors	Community Assets Manager Library and Information Service Manager	
Class	Part 1	Date 10 June 2019

1. Purpose

- 1.1. On 4 March 2019, the Committee received a briefing specifically addressing the Health & Safety provision for Leisure and Community Libraries.
- 1.2. As a result, the Committee instructed the Library and Information Service Manager to provide:
 - the number of visits made by council workers in the exercise of monitoring health and safety in libraries;
 - a copy of the schedules which set out the responsibilities of each library.
- 1.3. The Committee also requested an update on the Pepys Community Centre, which hosts the Pepys Community Library.
- 1.4. This paper provides the information required.

2. Number of visits to community libraries

- 2.1. The provision of library services in community venues is an integral component of the council's statutory provision of library services to residents of Lewisham. As such, the Library and Information Service has a programme of visits to Community Libraries – all of which include a Health & Safety component – that re carried out by:
 - Senior Members of Staff, including the Service Manager and the Service Development Managers. These are aimed at fostering the partnership, monitoring the performance of the contractual relationship between the council and the partner organisation, and providing and receiving feedback.
 - Operations Officers. These are aimed at considering operational issues and support to the partner organisation.
 - Outreach Officers. These are the core of the relationship between the Service and the partner organisation and include regular meetings attended by all the partner organisations.
 - Community Engagement Team – Senior Library Assistants. These are the liaison staff assigned to each Community Library and those who have the closer relationship with staff and volunteers at the community library.

- 2.2. Specifically in relation to Health & Safety, the sample table below shows that – during April and May – the Outreach Officers conduct an average of 10 visits per month.

Health and safety visits by Outreach Officers

Library	April	May	Visits arranged
Blackheath	2	1	1
Crofton	2		
Forest Hill	1		
Grove Park		1	
Manor House	1	2	
New Cross	2	1	1
Pepys	2		1
Sydenham	1	2	
Torridon	2	1	1
Totals	13	8	

- 2.3. In addition to this, the table below shows the total number of visits by library staff in the last financial year.

Total visits to Community Libraries

Library	2018 – 2019
Blackheath	21
Crofton	28
Forest Hill	14
Grove Park	14
Manor House	16
New Cross	16
Pepys	21
Sydenham	21
Torridon	24
Totals	175

- 2.4. The figures above exclude any visits by the Service Manager – e.g. to announce the proposed library cuts and strategy – and by other staff – e.g. those carried out since December in relation to the recent migration to a new Library Management System.

3. Schedule of responsibilities

- 3.1. The Community Library Service runs in buildings that may be owned by the council or owned by others. In all cases the buildings themselves are managed by others.

- 3.2. The partner organisations manage these buildings:
 - a. as owners, in the case of Age Exchange in **Blackheath**, or
 - b. as lease holders, in the case of
 - Archibald Corbett Community Library Arts And Heritage Centre in **Torridon Road**
 - Eco Communities in **Crofton Park, Grove Park, Pepys** (owned by Hyde Housing), and **Sydenham**
 - New Cross Learning / Bold Vision in **New Cross**
 - V22 in **Forest Hill** and **Manor House**
- 3.3. The relationship between the council and the partner organisation is regulated through two documents, one that relates to the building and one that relates to the library service provision.
- 3.4. The first document addresses the need for a community benefit, in exchange of which the partner receives either a one-off payment or the ongoing right to occupy the building at peppercorn rent.
- 3.5. The second document regulates the provision of library services from the building clarifying the duties of the council and those of the partner organisation.
- 3.6. The provisions in the first document includes a schedule of responsibilities that varies from building to building. Appendix 1 presents the details of responsibilities that apply to Torridon Road, Forest Hill, Manor House, New Cross, Crofton Park, and Grove Park.

4. Pepys Community Centre

- 4.1. Officers visited the Centre and met Hyde Housing, who own the freehold to the building.
- 4.2. Hyde Housing confirm their continued support of community provision from the building. However, they clarify that they are seeking a community group able to be assigned a lease. The previous lease with Eco Communities is now expired.
- 4.3. Given that the current occupiers have no title to do so, Hyde Housing will be issuing a Tenancy at Will to one of the individuals active in the Centre, while they work with the council and other organised groups to create an organisation able to be assigned the lease.
- 4.4. Hyde Housing acknowledge some defects in the building, that they will action as follows:
 - Missing ceiling plasterboard and ceiling stain from leak: this will be repaired within two weeks from 23 May 2019.
 - Electrics: the electrics will be inspected, and the specific issue of electrics tripping will be addressed by the end of June 2019.

- 4.5. Hyde Housing confirmed that they carry out DDA compliance to all their buildings regularly and that a schedule of redecoration of the building is in place.
- 4.6. They further clarify that any commercial lease would imply a clear responsibility on the tenant to maintain the building on a full repair and insure basis. Hyde Housing acknowledge, however, that the current set up at Pepys would not allow a commercial agreement to be put in place. This is why they are happy to work on the basis of a Tenancy at Will with the current occupiers, on the understanding that they will make every reasonable effort to progress – with the support of the council and others – to the point of being able to take on a lease.

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