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5 April 2013

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD SUPPLEMENT PACK**

Wednesday 10 April 2013

4.30 pm

Warspite Room, Council House, Plymouth (next to the Civic Centre)

### **Members:**

Councillor Mrs Aspinall, Chair

Councillor Tuffin, Vice Chair

Councillors Bowie, Bowyer, Casey, Philippa Davey, James, Monahan, Murphy, Mrs Nelder,  
Nicholson and Wigans.

Please find attached additional information for consideration under agenda items 5, 6, 12 and 15.

**Tracey Lee**  
Chief Executive

# **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

## **AGENDA**

### **PART I – PUBLIC MEETING**

**5. TRACKING DECISIONS (Pages 1 - 4)**

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will monitor progress on previous decisions.

**6. WORK PROGRAMMES (Pages 5 - 6)**

To consider and approve work programmes for each of the panels, to include a progress update from each of the Chairs.

**12. RESTRUCTURE OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (Pages 7 - 22)**

The Board will receive a report on the restructure of Overview and Scrutiny.

**15. TASK AND FINISH UPDATES/REPORTS (Pages 23 - 42)**

The Board will receive from the Customers and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel a task and finish group report on Library Modernisation.

**Overview and Scrutiny Management Board  
Cabinet Response to Scrutiny Recommendations**

Grey = Completed

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Review</b>
R1	Ask strategic partners operating in the city to be explicit about their plans to support the city in its priority for economic growth and job creation.	Support the recommendation, although work is already underway. Growth and Health and Wellbeing Boards currently addressing city priorities with partners. Revised Corporate Plan will summarise progress in July 2013.		September 2013
R2	Bring forward proposals for greater member involvement in capital prioritisation.	Agreed - Cabinet Member for Finance has agreed to a review of capital programme arrangements by April 2013.		September 2013
R3	Consult with the Scrutiny Management Board prior to putting in place revised strategic partnership arrangements for the city.	Agreed – pre decision scrutiny by April 2013.		September 2013
R4	Discuss with the Scrutiny Management Board how scrutiny of future years’ financial and service planning can be better undertaken to reflect the major challenge facing local government.	Agreed – Leader, Cabinet and CMT will work with Scrutiny Management Board to review financial and service planning arrangements.		September 2013
R5	Publish targets for sickness and absence management by service for coming year.	Agreed – revised targets will form part of performance monitoring for the new municipal year from May 2013.		September 2013
R6	Ensure that plans to address staff engagement are prepared as part of the service planning process, include targets and timescales and are available for scrutiny.	This is a commitment already made to scrutiny and will form part of service planning arrangements from April 2013.		September 2013

R7	Ensure that appropriate performance measures are in place for each service that support city priorities and that Directors are held accountable for them.	Agreed – this process is already underway and will form part of performance management arrangements from May 2013.		September 2013
R8	Translate the commitment of the Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust to supporting the economic growth agenda in the city to specific partnership plans encompassing issues such as recruitment, supply chain management, apprenticeships and commercialisation of research and development.	Recommend Management Board ask the Growth Board to consider the best way to take this recommendation forward.	The Board <u>agreed</u> at its meeting held on 13 March 2013 that this matter is referred to the Growth and Prosperity OSP and not the Growth Board to take forward (minute 118(2) refers).	September 2013
R9	Commit to working with partners to ensure appropriate resources are in place to secure the future of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Plymouth, and of the city's domestic abuse services.	Cabinet endorse this recommendation to the Police and Crime Commissioner in respect of domestic abuse services but suggest given NHS commitments, that Sexual Assault Referral Centre Funding issue is raised with the appropriate health agency.		September 2013
R10	Ensure that appropriate partnership protocols are in place to monitor and manage mental health provision in the city through the coming year.	Recommend Management Board ask the Health and Wellbeing Board to consider the best way to take this recommendation forward.		September 2013
R11	Engagement with the city council over estate management in the city.	Cabinet believes that there are greater priorities for joint work with DSFRS than estate management.		September 2013
R12	Publish figures illustrating the impact of local procurement commitments on spend in the city.	Agreed – will be reported from April 2013.		September 2013

R13	Plans for improving capacity in the community and voluntary sector are published, explicitly addressing concerns about leadership and sustainability across the sector.	Already a commitment covered by the community and voluntary sector review.		September 2013
R14	The service plan for Public Health's first year as part of the council is brought to the Management Board by the Director for Public Health, demonstrating how the transition will enhance city responses to health objectives.	Agreed – this work already scheduled as part of Public Health Transition Plan from April 2013.		September 2013
R15	Firm plans are prepared showing how the city will address specific flood risks to the city where households have been flooded and strategic transport infrastructure into the city has been affected.	Flood plans already in place, further capital investment subject to corporate prioritisation through Capital Programme Board, along with other city priorities.		September 2013
R16	Publish Digital Plymouth plan with milestones and targets for digital inclusion and demonstrating partner buy in.	Work already scheduled for Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel.		September 2013

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**PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL**

**Subject:** Restructure of Overview and Scrutiny  
**Committee:** Overview and Scrutiny Management Board  
**Date:** 10 April 2013  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Peter Smith  
**CMT Member:** Chief Executive (Tracey Lee)  
**Author:** Giles Perritt, Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships  
**Contact details:** Gemma Pearce, Team Leader (Democratic Support)  
01752 398443 gemma.pearce@plymouth.gov.uk

**Ref:**

**Key Decision:** No

**Part:** I

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**Purpose of the report:**

This report proposes a restructure of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and its panels to improve effectiveness. The proposals modernise the Overview and Scrutiny Function and bring them in line with the Council's priorities. This report details the proposed recommendations for consideration at City Council on 22 April 2013 and includes new terms of reference for each panel.

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**Corporate Plan 2012 – 2015:**

Effective Overview and Scrutiny impacts upon all of our corporate priorities by providing a process for challenge to decision making and development of policy. It is also one of the ways the Council should monitor performance and demonstrate to the Community that it is spending their money effectively on the services and issues important to the city.

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**Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:  
Including finance, human, IT and land:**

The proposals decreases the number of Panels and the number of business meetings, consequently there will be a need to realign support to the Scrutiny Management Board and its panels. The Proposal will impact upon members allowance as a result of the proposal to reduce the number of non-chair members.

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**Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety and Risk Management:**

There is a risk that by not making changes to Overview and Scrutiny the Council will be ineffective in challenging decision-making and monitoring the performance of the Cabinet.

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**Equality and Diversity:**

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

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**Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:**

Recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board recommend to Council that -

1. A new scrutiny structure is approved (as detailed in this report)
2. The new terms of reference for the Co-operative Scrutiny Board and each of the panels are approved and incorporated into the constitution.
3. Statutory health scrutiny functions (other than referral of matters to the Secretary of State for Health) are delegated to the Caring Plymouth panel.

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**Alternative options considered and rejected:**

To continue under the current system, which was rejected as overview and scrutiny is not as effective as it could be and the Council needs to continue to modernise its processes and ensure that Overview and Scrutiny focusses on the issues most important to the Council's improvement.

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**Published work / information:**

Existing terms of reference for scrutiny  
[http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/council\\_constitution.pdf](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/council_constitution.pdf)

**Background papers:**

Title	Part I	Part II	Exemption Paragraph Number							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

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**Sign off:**

Fin		Leg		Mon Off		HR		Assets		IT		Strat Proc	
Originating SMT Member – Giles Perritt													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the content of the report? Yes / No													

### 1.0 Introduction and proposed structure

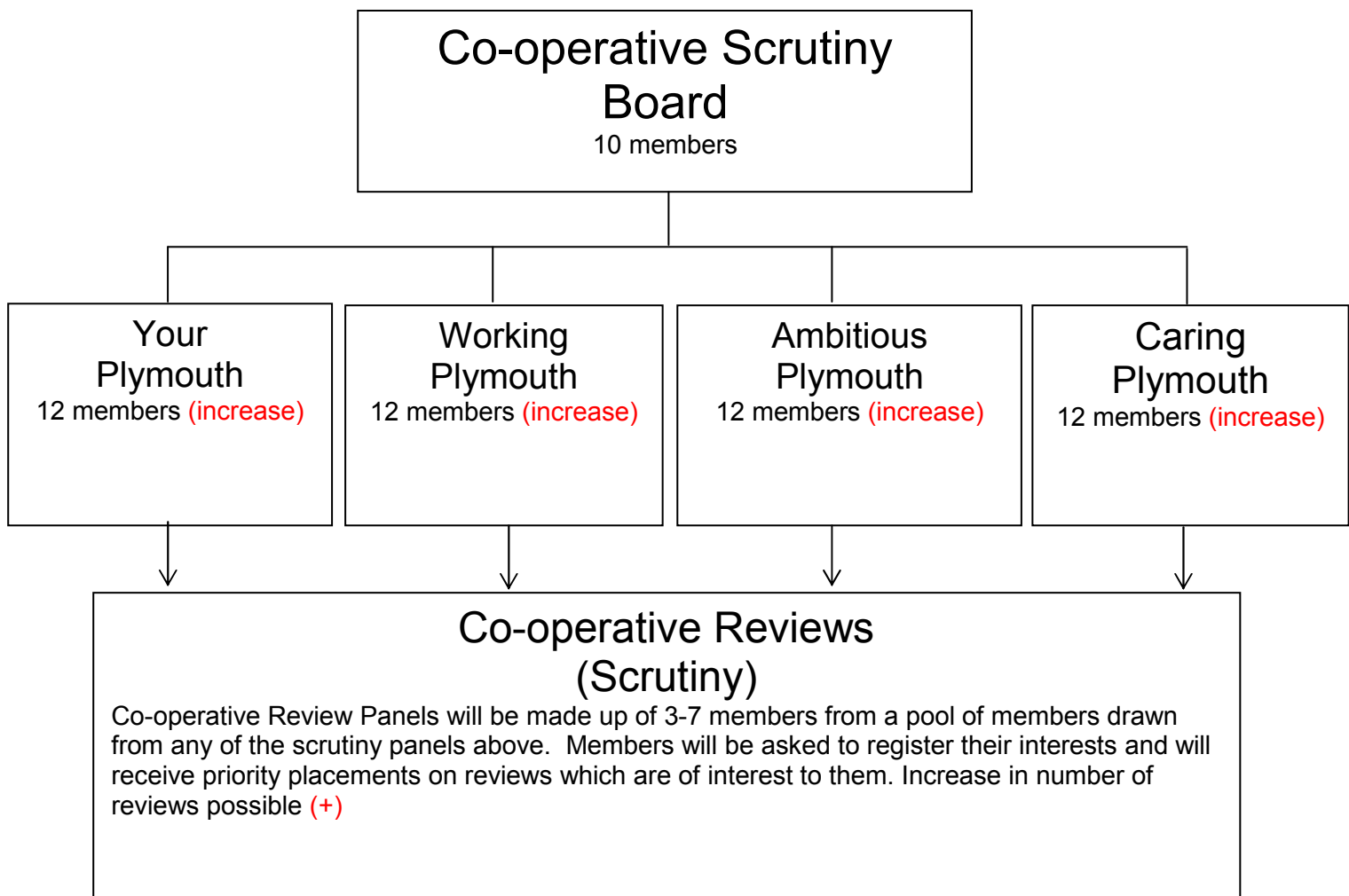
The proposed structure is for a Co-operative Scrutiny Board (the Board) and four Scrutiny Panels. The Board consists five Chairs and four Vice Chairs and one non chair member. Each of the four panels consist of 12 members including a chair and vice chair. The panels proposed are:

- Your Plymouth
- Caring Plymouth (with the Joint Health Panel, as required)
- Working Plymouth
- Ambitious Plymouth

The four panels will be chaired by a member from the majority political group with the vice chair from the opposition political group. One of the opposition vice chairs will take the role of Chair of the Co-operative Scrutiny Board.

The Co-operative Scrutiny Board may set up Co-operative Reviews Groups. The purpose of these groups will be to undertake scrutiny work as required by the Board and will be time and remit specific. These groups will be made up of members who have expressed an interest in the particular issue.

In keeping with implied good practice there will be no “whipping” of the members of the Co-operative Scrutiny Board or its panels.



## **1.1 Co-operative Scrutiny Board**

The break-down of the Board membership is all of the chairs and vice chairs of the four panels and two additional non-chair members. The Chair of the Board will be one of the vice chairs of the panels. Any Council Member who is not a Cabinet Member and who sits on a scrutiny panel may substitute at Board Meetings. The Board will meet at least one a month (except May, August and December) with provisional meetings on a 2-weekly basis to allow for call-ins.

The Co-operative Scrutiny Boards responsibilities are:

- To hear call-ins, councillor call for action and petitions and to allocate work accordingly
- To oversee workloads, including approval of work programmes, allocate work and the approval of co-operative scrutiny review requests
- To manage relationships between panels, cabinet members and partners to produce effective scrutiny
- To monitor performance against the relevant corporate priorities
- To receive finance and performance reports and to carry out the Annual Budget Scrutiny
- To agree recommendations to Cabinet, Council and partner organisations
- To produce an annual scrutiny report
- To agree appointments of co-opted representatives to panels
- Responsible for publicity and communications
- To monitor the forward plan
- To scrutinise corporate and cross cutting business

## **1.2 The Panels**

Each of the panels has its own terms of reference (attached as appendix 2). The Caring Plymouth panel will also have special responsibility for statutory functions in relation to health matters and joint health obligations.

Business meetings will take place four times per year except for Caring Plymouth who will have eight meetings per year to allow time to deal with statutory obligations. All meetings will be pre-planned into the annual calendar of council meetings. Panels will be on a set day and time determined by the individual panels (although panels must not be moved to clash with another scrutiny meeting). Any member who is not a Cabinet member and who is in the 'pool' of scrutiny members can substitute at panel business meetings.

## **1.3 Co-opted Representatives**

The statutory co-opted representatives will be allocated to the relevant panel.

## **1.4 Roles and Responsibilities of Chairs, Vice Chairs and Officers**

The role and responsibilities of Chairs, Vice Chairs and Officers will be set out in the Scrutiny handbook.

## **1.5 Co-operative Scrutiny Reviews**

Co-operative Reviews must be approved by the Co-operative Scrutiny Board. Reviews can be submitted (using the appropriate form) by any member direct to the Board. Panels may also submit requests for reviews.

All requests will be considered by the Board using an approval criteria and cannot commence until they have received approval. Once a co-operative scrutiny review has commenced work, no substitution is allowed.

Membership will be drawn from the entire pool of scrutiny members and will be made up of members who have expressed an interest in the subject matter. Where there are not sufficient members who have expressed an interest in the subject matter the Chair of the Board will consult the group whips for additional members.

Reviews must be chaired by a member of the Co-operative Scrutiny Board.

Every member of a scrutiny panel should aim to take part in at least one scrutiny review.

Review meetings should take place in a relevant venue where possible and practicable. Times, venue and frequency of meetings will be at the discretion of the review group members and should happen in a timely manner and with consideration given to ensuring that the relevant members and officers can input into the review.

Consideration should be given to co-opting of members of the public and organisations who may have experience / expertise in the relevant area and can add value to the process.

A report of the co-operative scrutiny review, including recommendation must be submitted to the Co-operative Scrutiny Board.

## **1.6 Communications**

A summary of scrutiny activity will be provided to the cabinet on a monthly basis.

A monthly circular will be sent to all scrutiny members providing useful information, details of activity at the Board and information on upcoming co-operative review groups.

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# CO-OPERATIVE SCRUTINY BOARD

## Terms of Reference



### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To manage scrutiny in a way that ensures that the work that is undertaken is undertaken with a view to improving services, reducing inequalities and improving outcomes for the people of Plymouth.

### ROLE OF THE CO-OPERATIVE SCRUTINY BOARD

- To hear call-ins, councillor call for action and petitions and to allocate work accordingly.
- To oversee workloads, including approval of work programmes, allocate work and the approval of co-operative scrutiny review requests
- To manage relationships between panels, cabinet members and partners to produce effective scrutiny
- To monitor performance against the relevant corporate priorities
- To receive finance and performance reports and to carry out the Annual Budget Scrutiny
- To agree recommendations to Cabinet, Council and partner organisations
- To produce an annual scrutiny report
- To agree appointments of co-opted representatives to panels
- Responsible for publicity and communications
- To monitor the forward plan
- To scrutinise corporate and cross cutting business

### LINKED TO THE CABINET MEMBER AND DEPARTMENT WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR

- The Corporate Plan
- Corporate Policy Development
- Human Resources
- Business Continuity and Civil Protection
- Revenue Budget
- Capital Programme
- Strategic Procurement
- Corporate Property and Facilities Management
- Performance Management
- Transformation and Change Management

### MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD

The Co-operative Scrutiny Board will consist of the Chair and Vice-Chair of each of the Scrutiny Panels plus other Councillors appointed by Council at the annual meeting. Any Councillor who is not a member of the Cabinet can substitute on the Scrutiny Board. All members of the panel will adhere to the general rules of Overview and Scrutiny. There are 10 members of the panel including the Chair and Vice Chair. The Chair is from the opposition political group and is a vice chair of one of the panels.

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# YOUR PLYMOUTH

## Terms of Reference



### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To scrutinise matters relating to our specified responsibilities with a view to improving services, reducing inequalities and improving outcomes for the people of Plymouth.

### OUR CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITIES

- Raise Aspirations
- Deliver Growth
- Reduce inequality
- Provide Value for Communities

### OUR CORPORATE COMMITMENT THEMES

- Safer Plymouth
- Greener Plymouth
- Vibrant Plymouth
- Living Plymouth

### LINKED TO THE CABINET MEMBER AND DEPARTMENT WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR

- Parks including playgrounds and greenspaces
- Waste management, recycling and street cleaning
- Climate change and sustainability
- Public protection service
- Miscellaneous licensing
- Social enterprise support
- Anti-social behaviour
- Community safety
- Community cohesion and equalities
- Localities working
- Community and neighbourhood development
- Homelessness
- Private sector housing, grants and improvements
- Housing enabling with respect to registered social landlords

**STATUTORY ROLE** with regard to scrutiny of the community safety partnership

### PARTNERSHIP LINKS

- Community Safety Partnership
- Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel

**MEMBERSHIP** - The Chair and Vice Chair of the panel shall serve on the Cooperative Management Board. All members of the panel will adhere to the general rules of Overview and Scrutiny. There are 12 members of the panel including the Chair and Vice Chair. The Vice Chair is from the opposite political group to the Chair.

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# WORKING PLYMOUTH

Terms of Reference



## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To scrutinise matters relating to our specified responsibilities with a view to improving services, reducing inequalities and improving outcomes for the people of Plymouth.

## OUR CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITIES

- Raising Aspirations
- Deliver Growth
- Reduce Inequality
- Provide Value for Communities

## OUR CORPORATE COMMITMENT THEMES

- Working Plymouth
- Greener Plymouth
- Moving Plymouth
- Vibrant Plymouth
- Proud Plymouth

## LINKED TO THE CABINET MEMBER AND DEPARTMENT WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR

- Regional and local economic strategy
- Development planning
- Strategic Housing Delivery
- Transport policies and strategies
- Sustainable transport including cycling
- Highways
- Car parks
- Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry
- Licensing – Hackney Carriage

## PARTNERSHIP LINKS

- Community Safety Partnership

**MEMBERSHIP** - The Chair and Vice Chair of the panel shall serve on the Cooperative Management Board. All members of the panel will adhere to the general rules of Overview and Scrutiny. There are 12 members of the panel including the Chair and Vice Chair. The Vice Chair is from the opposite political group to the Chair.

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# AMBITIOUS PLYMOUTH

## Terms of Reference



### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To scrutinise matters relating to our specified responsibilities with a view to improving services, reducing inequalities and improving outcomes for the people of Plymouth.

### OUR CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITIES

- Raise Aspirations
- Deliver Growth
- Reduce inequality
- Provide value for communities

### OUR CORPORATE COMMITMENT THEMES

- Young Plymouth
- Vibrant Plymouth
- Pride in Plymouth
- Open Plymouth

### LINKED TO THE CABINET MEMBER AND DEPARTMENT WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR

- Schools and Colleges (including Governing issues)
- Apprenticeships
- Early years Development
- Education Grants
- Youth Services
- Early Intervention and Prevention
- Corporate Parenting
- Leisure management (including leisure management contract)
- Events, Culture, Heritage and Museums (including Mount Edgcumbe)
- Sports Development
- Media, Public Relations and Communications
- Human Resources
- ICT
- Democracy and Governance
- Member Development

### PARTNERSHIP LINKS

- Culture Board
- Children's Partnerships(for education matters)

**MEMBERSHIP** - The Chair and Vice Chair of the panel shall serve on the Cooperative Management Board. All members of the panel will adhere to the general rules of Overview and Scrutiny. There are 12 members of the panel including the Chair and Vice Chair. The Vice Chair is from the opposite political group to the Chair.

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# CARING PLYMOUTH

## Terms of Reference



### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To scrutinise matters relating to our specified responsibilities with a view to improving services, reducing inequalities and improving outcomes for the people of Plymouth.

### OUR CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITIES

- Raise Aspirations
- Deliver Growth
- Reduce inequality
- Provide Value for Communities

### OUR CORPORATE COMMITMENT THEMES

- Caring Plymouth
- Young Plymouth

### LINKED TO THE CABINET MEMBER AND DEPARTMENT WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR

- Public Health
- Adult Health and Social Care
  - Older people's services
  - Mental Health Services
  - Physical Disability Services
  - Drug and Alcohol Services
  - Learning Disability Services
- Joint Health and Social Care Commissioning
- Health and Wellbeing
- Personalisation
- Other Healthcare Matters
- Children's social care
- Adoption and Fostering

**STATUTORY ROLE** with regard to undertaking all the statutory functions in accordance with Section 244, of the National Health Act 2006, (as amended by Health and Social Care Act 2012) regulations and guidance under that section.

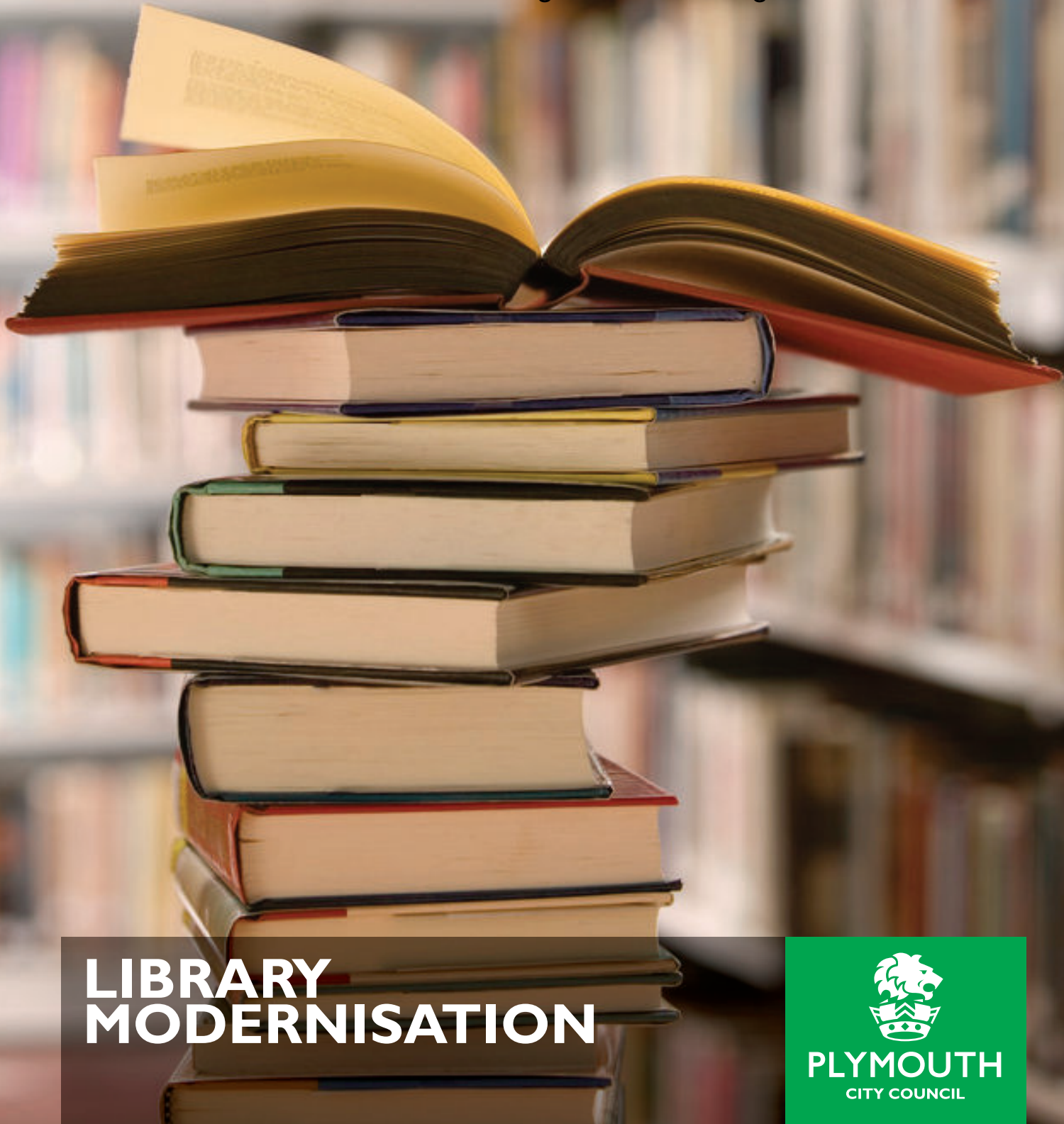
### PARTNERSHIP LINKS

- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Children's Partnership (for social care matters)

**MEMBERSHIP** - The Chair and Vice Chair of the panel shall serve on the Cooperative Management Board. All members of the panel will adhere to the general rules of Overview and Scrutiny. There are 12 members of the panel including the Chair and Vice Chair. The Vice Chair is from the opposite political group to the Chair.

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# LIBRARY MODERNISATION



A report of the Customers and Communities  
Overview and Scrutiny Panel – Task and Finish Group  
following a review of Library Modernisation

## CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
2. SCRUTINY APPROACH
3. FINDINGS
4. CONCLUSIONS
5. RECOMMENDATIONS

## APPENDICES

- A Project Initiation Document
- B Witness Evidence Summaries
- C Background Documentation

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The library service is delivered under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 which lays down local authorities' statutory obligations which, in summary, are –

- provide a “comprehensive and efficient” library service for all persons in that area that want to make use of it;
- promote the service;
- lend books and other printed material free of charge for those who live, work or study in the area.

1.2 Plymouth's public library service has a long and distinguished history with its first library opening in 1876. Membership is open to anyone with a permanent address in the city and members may borrow books free of charge.

1.3 The city currently has 17 libraries which vary significantly in terms of size, facilities and usage. Despite achieving good satisfaction rates in a recent customer survey and having a high number of service users at a number of libraries, the total number of active library users has declined - a common theme shared nationally. In 2011/12 Plymouth libraries made 1,034,515 loans compared to 2,113,461 in 1995/6.

1.4 In addition to the fall in library loans, many of the council's libraries are either in need of major refurbishment or are no longer fit for purpose. In a financial climate which is seeing tough cuts to local government funding, local authorities are faced with making difficult decisions over which services to prioritise and are therefore having to explore new, more innovative, ways of delivering those services; libraries being no exception.

1.5 At a meeting of the Customers and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 20 June 2012, the Deputy Leader reported that a review into library modernisation was currently being undertaken and he sought members' assistance in helping to shape proposals for a modern library service in order to safeguard its future.

1.6 This report summarises the findings of the task and finish group review and makes a number of recommendations to Cabinet on how a modern library service should look.

## 2. SCRUTINY APPROACH

2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board approved the establishment of a task and finish group to review library modernisation at its meeting on 25 July 2012.

### 2.2 Task and Finish Group Aims and Objectives

2.2.1 The aims and objectives of the library modernisation review were to –

- Maintain and enhance the citywide network of library buildings and services;

- Expand the role of libraries to provide council information and services and those of its key partners, such as the NHS;
- Establish a blueprint for development which improves literacy, and by improving literacy improve employability;
- Create a service which remains sustainable in the face of future reductions in expenditure;
- Embed the “cooperative council” concept to the way communities contribute to decision making about the service;
- Consider an approach to the use of volunteers which is appropriate to Plymouth and its communities

2.2.2 The objectives of the task and finish group were to make recommendations on how the aims and objectives of the new service could be achieved, with particular emphasis on accessibility for people who do not have a local library and attracting people who do not currently use the service. The project initiation document (PID) is attached as appendix A to this report.

### 2.3 Task and Finish Group Membership

2.3.1 The task and finish group had cross-party membership comprising the following -

- Councillor Tuffin (Chair)
- Councillor Casey
- Councillor Jordan
- Councillor Martin Leaves

2.3.2 In addition, in order to broaden and enhance the group’s knowledge and experience, a co-opted representative was appointed from Cornwall Council -

- Sue Benjamin-Fast, Business Development Manager, Cornwall Library Services

2.3.3 For the purposes of the review, the task and finish group was supported by -

- Darin Halifax, Community Cohesion Coordinator (Lead Officer)
- Katey Johns, Democratic Support Officer

### 2.4 Task and Finish Group Methodology

2.4.1 The task and finish group convened over five sessions to review the documentation submitted as evidence and to hear from a number of witnesses.

2.4.2 Meeting dates –

- 13 December 2012
- 17 December 2012
- 20 December 2012

- 5 February 2013
- 12 February 2013

### 2.4.3 Witnesses -

- Councillor Peter Smith, Deputy Leader
- Chris Goddard, Library Services Manager (Delivery) and Sally Walsh, Library Manager (Customer Relations)
- Andrew Stephens, Assistant Director for Customer Services
- George Plenderleith, Chair, Communities and Social Action Plymouth
- John Butcher, Campus Director, Wood View Learning Community
- Mel O’Leary, Early Years Advisory Teacher, and Ernie Edgcumbe, Children’s Centre Manager
- Dan Thomas, Commercial Manager, SW Trading Routes
- Sarah Heffernan, Professional Youth Worker
- Jane Gosling, Head of Library and Digital Support, Plymouth University
- Debbie Butcher, Head of Service (Commissioning), Joint Commissioning and Adult Social Care, and Rachel Silcock, Commissioning Officer
- Lucy Stapleton, Operational Partnership Manager, Job Centre Plus

2.4.4 Full details of the evidence provided by each witness are attached at Appendix B to this report.

## 3. FINDINGS

3.1 The busier a library is the cheaper it is to run. By increasing user numbers, the difference between the cost of providing Plymouth’s library service and the amount of income it generates can be reduced. The current budget for 2012/13 is £3.03m with an estimated income generation of approximately £270k. The largest portion of the budget (two thirds) is spent on staffing costs.

3.2 Service delivery is focused on the following four key objectives which are directly linked to city and corporate priorities –

- develop a literate population and workforce for the benefit of both the economy and culture;
- develop an informed population which values learning;
- reduce the inequality gap, particularly in health, between communities;
- work with partners to maximise resources and make internal efficiencies.

3.3 A number of successful initiatives operate across the city to encourage and support reading from birth, including –

- Bookstart (delivered in partnership with Booktrust, health visitors, Early Years services and Children’s Centres) which recognises the educational, cultural, social and emotional benefits that an early

introduction to books can achieve and aims to inspire a love of books from as early an age as possible;

- Rhymetime and Storytime sessions in every library;
- Chatterbox reading groups for children aged 8 – 12;
- Headspace groups (delivered in partnership with Youth Services) in Efford, Devonport and Plympton

3.4 The panel heard about the benefits of the partnership working between the Early Years' service and Children's Centres whose work was focused on improving children's early year foundation profiles and narrowing the gap. Approximately 75 per cent of families with children aged between 0-3 access children's centres, many of whom cannot afford books. By providing access to these vulnerable families, the service hopes to better the life chances of those children through improved communication, language and literacy. Headlines of their achievements include improved performances against National Indicators 72 and 92 as follows –

NI 72 – increased from 56 per cent to 61 per cent

NI 92 – narrowed the gap by 1.3 per cent to 29.6 per cent (better than the national average)

3.5 By encouraging children to use libraries it is also then possible to capture their parents, many of whom have poor literacy skills themselves. The panel also heard about joint working with PACLS (Plymouth Adult Community Learning Services) who provide training / support for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills which, in turn, can help towards improved parenting.

3.6 In addition to providing access to books and, in order to keep up with modern demands and expectations, many libraries now offer a range of other facilities such as photocopying, DVDs, CDs, computers and have on-site cafes/access to refreshments. However, none of the city's libraries are currently wi-fi enabled nor are they able, due to licensing issues, to offer an e-book service.

3.7 Libraries are more likely to be used by young children and the older generation, with many older people making the trip to the library more of a social occasion where they will stay and chat to library staff. Older children prefer to buy their books, use their school libraries, which are very well stocked, or download books rather than use public libraries which they think will be obsolete in the future.

3.8 The traditional perception of libraries being places of absolute quiet is no more with many now having cafes on site, holding activity/reading groups and providing computer lessons as well as providing accommodation for meetings to take place. The panel heard that Plymouth University library is open 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year, is wi-fi enabled and has 1,100 study spaces. It too has its own café which creates quite a lively atmosphere but is zoned (with moveable/flexible furniture) so as to provide quiet areas where required or clusters where students wish to study in groups. Many students enjoy being in the company of others but can create their own quiet space by listening to music through their i-pods. The University library has 450,000 print books, 12,000 e-books (content not devices) as well as providing

access to 16,000 academic journals on line. With many students not based on campus, the ability to provide digital lending is essential.

- 3.9 Plymouth library service has been commissioned to provide a health information service by the Council's Adult Social Care team. Investing £200k over two years, they will be delivering health and social care resources, information prescriptions and using libraries for a range of support and health promotion activities. Health experts will work with librarians to select new resources to be added to the library collections and these will be used by GPs as part of an information prescription scheme being piloted in Devon. Library spaces and facilities will be available free of charge to a range of providers and voluntary health groups who will be running health related activities and increasing capacity of the libraries to run reminiscence work in care homes supported by volunteers.
- 3.10 The panel heard details of a joint project between the central library and Job Centre Plus whereby £10k had been invested to up-skill library staff and provide computers so that they could run 'back-to-work' courses for the unemployed. Whilst it had made a very positive start, the project had not achieved the number of people anticipated and it was not known if funding would be available to continue the project. With changes to welfare reform and particularly the introduction of universal credits, libraries can play a part in providing access to computers for the unemployed to search for jobs as required under the universal credits scheme.
- 3.11 There are currently more volunteers running libraries in the UK than there are paid staff. The community and voluntary sector has a wealth of knowledge and experience which it already shares with the council and its partner organisations, particularly around health and healthcare issues, and it welcomes the opportunity to work further with the council to consider an approach which is appropriate to Plymouth and its communities. There is also benefit to be gained from shared use of buildings.
- 3.12 Recent moves by a number of County Councils to make substantial reductions to their library services have resulted in judicial reviews where the High Court ruled that the proposals were unlawful. It is clear from this judgment that any substantial changes to a public library service must take account of the authority's duties under the Equality Act 2010 in, in particular, the "protected characteristics" of age and disability.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Libraries are a valuable public resource, much more than just about books. Anyone can walk into one of the city's libraries without being a member and can read a book, watch a film, use a photocopier, look at old photos of Plymouth, attend a talk, take part in a readers group, research their family history, or simply just sit somewhere dry and warm and have a cup of coffee. The new modern library service needs to be better marketed so that there is a greater awareness of all the facilities and services on offer. In order to encourage greater use, and ensure libraries have a future, the traditional image of libraries needs to be eradicated.

- 4.2 There is now considerable evidence that libraries also provide not only an essential level of support to vulnerable people but maintain an invaluable form of face-to-face contact with groups in society who may not otherwise engage in any other form of social interaction during their daily lives. These values should not be overlooked nor underestimated. The partnership working with Adult Social Care to establish community hubs should be encouraged and developed further so that the programme can be rolled out across the city. This could be expanded to include one-stop shops to provide customers with better access to council services and for signposting them onto other agencies.
- 4.3 Whilst many libraries now provide access to computers, it is clear that the lack of wi-fi provision is a barrier to many potential users. By making libraries wi-fi enabled, many people would be able to bring in and use their own portable devices.
- 4.4 The 'back-to-work' joint project with Job Centre Plus should be explored more fully. Universal credit is not just about encouraging people into work but also about aiming for higher paid work. If libraries can provide computer/wi-fi access the unemployed will be able to come into their local libraries in order to log into the direct.gov job search site. This would contribute towards achieving two of the city's priorities of reducing inequality and raising aspirations, particularly in the more deprived areas of the city.
- 4.5 Whilst this Council remains committed to providing an excellent library service and has publicly declared its commitment not to close any, there is little doubt in the minds of the panel that it is not cost-effective to retain some of its existing facilities given their current condition, the lack of funds to undertake necessary refurbishment/repairs and the fall in user numbers.
- 4.6 Creating a model library that fits all neighbourhoods is not going to be the answer as different communities will want and need different things. Community engagement will be key to delivering the services needed and in a way that is required.
- 4.7 It is clear that any proposals to make changes to the city's library services will have to be handled sensitively given the threat of possible judicial review. The fact that some buildings are no longer fit for purpose does not necessarily mean that the building should close and the service be withdrawn. Alternative options can be explored that could ensure the retention of service provision without the financial burden, such as –
- the building being offered up for a Community Asset Transfer;
  - making more use of volunteers such as in the 'Beacon' project at North Prospect;
  - negotiating with partners the possibility of providing libraries in shared accommodation

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The task and finish group recommend –



1		the council introduces wi-fi access to all of its libraries as soon as possible;
2		consideration is given to transferring ownership of premises, under the community asset transfer scheme, where it is no longer financially viable to maintain solely as public library, subject to extensive community consultation and engagement prior to any such transfer taking place;
3		local access to a library is maintained regardless of whether service provision remains in its current location or is relocated elsewhere in the neighbourhood in order to ensure that all premises fit with the vision of a future modern library service;
4		the option of using volunteers is explored further with the community and voluntary sector;
5		consideration is given to developing a library marketing strategy promoting the facilities and services on offer with a view to rebranding them as community resource centres;
6		the provision of e-books be explored, subject to licensing constraints, with a view to introducing e-lending to the library service;
7		the installation of one-stop shops to enable easier access for customers to council services, such as the issuing/renewal of bus passes, payments (including the recharging of utility key cards), reporting issues/complaints and for signposting customers onto other agencies;
8		discussions with Job Centre Plus continue around further developing the 'back-to-work' project with a view to rolling it out to targeted libraries in the city;
9		work with other partner agencies continues with a view to identifying service areas that would benefit from joint working in shared accommodation, such as credit unions, to further reinforce the council's commitment of providing easier access to services for its citizens;
10		the Cabinet Member with responsibility for libraries provides an update to the panel on progress with the library service review and the above recommendations in six months' time.

# REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME ITEM



**PLYMOUTH**  
CITY COUNCIL

	<b>Title of Work Programme Item</b>	<b>Library Modernisation</b>
2	<b>Responsible Director (s)</b>	Adam Broome (Director for Corporate Services)
3	<b>Responsible Officer Tel No.</b>	Darin Halifax (Community Cohesion Co-ordinator) Tel ext 5446.
4	<b>Relevant Cabinet Member(s)</b>	Cllr Peter Smith (Deputy Leader)
5	<b>Objectives</b>	<p>Public libraries are changing nationally and internationally at great speed. Many different approaches are being trialled, some with the intention of reducing expenditure and the level of services. There is currently a review process taking place looking at library modernisation in Plymouth with the aims and objectives to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and enhance the citywide network of library buildings and services</li> <li>• Expand the role of libraries to provide Council information and services and those of its key partners, such as the NHS</li> <li>• Establish a blueprint for development which improves literacy, and by improving literacy improve employability</li> <li>• Create a service which remains sustainable in the face of future reductions in expenditure</li> <li>• Embed the “Co-operative Council” concept in the way communities contribute to decision-making about the service</li> <li>• Consider an approach to the use of volunteers which is appropriate to Plymouth and its communities.</li> </ul> <p>The objectives of the task and finish group is to make its recommendations on how the aims and objectives of the new service could be achieved, with particular emphasis on accessibility for people who do not have a local library and attracting people who do not currently use the service.</p>

6	<b>Who will benefit?</b>	<p>The scrutiny is an opportunity to consider how we use libraries in the city to the benefit of library users, council departments and partners. It would also specifically look at why people do not use libraries and what can we do to attract them.</p> <p>The task and finish group will enhance the current review process and will provide a particular opportunity for members and others to make their recommendations to cabinet/council.</p>
7	<b>Criteria for Choosing Topics (see table at end of document)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High budgetary commitment</li> <li>• Issue consistently identified by Members as key through constituency activity</li> <li>• Public interest issue covered in local media</li> </ul>
8	<b>What will happen if we don't do this review?</b>	There would be no independent scrutiny of the library modernisation programme.
9	<b>What are we going to do?</b>	Task and finish group
10	<b>How are we going to do it? (witnesses, site visits, background information etc.)</b>	<p>Background information ( to include RIEP report and recommendations on the review of library services in the SW and experiences of other councils that have recently undergone a similar exercise)</p> <p>Scrutiny reports supplied by officers</p> <p>Potential site visits</p> <p>Witnesses.</p>
11	<b>What we won't do.</b>	The task and finish group will not be an alternative for future community consultation should that need arise.
12	<b>Timetable &amp; Key Dates</b>	<p>Task and Finish Group meetings – Sept/Oct 2012</p> <p>Task and Finish Group report to Customers and Communities OSP – 7 Nov 2012</p> <p>Task and Finish Group report to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (Delegated authority required)</p> <p>Task and Finish Group report to Cabinet – 13 Nov 2012</p>
13	<b>Links to other projects or initiatives / plans</b>	Corporate plan
14	<b>Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel / Membership if Task and Finish Group (to be decided by OSP before submission to OMB)</b>	Customers and Communities OSP Task and Finish Group comprising Councillors Casey, Jarvis, Jordan, Martin Leaves and Tuffin.
15	<b>Where will the report go? Who will make the final decision</b>	Task and Finish Group report to be considered by Cabinet on 13 November 2012 who will make final decision.
16	<b>Resources (staffing, research, experts, sites visits and so on)</b>	<p>Staffing – particularly from library services</p> <p>Research</p> <p>Witnesses</p>

17	<b>Is this part of a statutory responsibility on the panel?</b>	N/A
18	<b>Should any other panel be involved in this review? If so who and why?</b>	N/A
19	<b>Will the task and finish group benefit from co-opting any person(s) onto the panel.</b>	Yes – Co-opted person to be decided.
20	<b>How does this link to corporate priorities?</b>	The library modernisation programme links directly to Raising Aspiration, Reducing inequalities and Value for Communities.

## LIBRARY MODERNISATION – WITNESS SUMMARIES

## B1 GEORGE PLENDERLEITH, CHAIR, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ACTION PLYMOUTH (CASAP)

- CASAP currently represents approximately 170 voluntary and community organisations across the city
- A vast amount of knowledge, experience and skill exists in the voluntary sector
- The way forward requires a strategic approach to engaging in further partnership working with the voluntary sector
- The voluntary sector has been heavily involved with health and the work of healthcare practitioners for some time with a huge amount of work being undertaken by volunteers
- There are benefits to be gained from the co-location of services to shared accommodation and further creative negotiation is needed on sharing facilities
- There are more volunteers running libraries in the UK than there are paid staff
- Welfare reform will have a significant impact on the city and any improvements to access to services/advice for claimants will be welcomed
- Demographics will play a part so it would be pertinent to target libraries in the right areas

## B2 JOHN BUTCHER, CAMPUS DIRECTOR, WOOD VIEW LEARNING COMMUNITY

- Woodview Learning Community is a partnership formed around three schools; Sir John Hunt Community Sports College, Woodlands Community Special School and Whitleigh Community Primary School and also includes a children's centre, nursery, pupil referral unit for young parents, a residential short break service, a youth centre and adult education. It aims to provide and deliver a cohesive range of service to the children, young people and their families within the north west of Plymouth
- Whitleigh has considerable challenges. With many adults in the community lacking literacy skills, the schools' emphasis is to focus on reading to develop and nurture a love of reading in the young in order to ensure it remains during the transition to adulthood
- At the heart of the campus lies a good quality library facility which is shared by all three schools
- Use of the library has trebled since the campus opened and, the introduction of some new reading programmes, such as the 'renaissance' has seen a dramatic difference in the quality of reading ability
- In terms of education, it is easier to capture, motivate and engage with children up to Year 6 after that it gets tougher and more difficult as they become teenagers
- Libraries traditionally are used by the older and younger generations with the age gap in-between accessing information online
- Libraries need to be located within attractive and pleasant environments and have good quality books in order to encourage use. Waterstones is always popular – have to ask the question 'why'?
- It can be difficult to get some people to access facilities on a school site and see the school boundary as a barrier, particularly those whose memories of their school years are not particularly fond ones

- Venues, if used more creatively, can be used for much more than just a library – job clubs, meeting rooms, signposting etc.
- Consideration could be given to opening up the library to the community as a pilot scheme to test the demand – outside of school hours, evening and Saturday opening being the preferred option
- Important to listen to communities and what they want – will be different depending on the demographics
- With significant changes being made to modernise libraries, the name no longer accurately reflects the nature of the service provision and consideration should therefore be giving to changing it

**B3 MEL O'LEARY, EARLY YEARS ADVISORY TEACHER, AND ERNIE EDGCUMBE, CHILDREN'S CENTRE MANAGER**

- Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up
- The EYFS Statutory Framework sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life
- In order to support the Early Years' initiative, children's centres have been established to contribute towards the Government's commitment to provide –
  - The best start in life for every child
  - Better opportunities for parents
  - Affordable, good quality childcare
  - Stronger and safer communities
- There are currently 17 children's centres operating in Plymouth predicated on improving children's life chances from the ages of 0-4. Staff and volunteers work with children and their parents towards improving the early year foundation profiles and narrowing the equalities gap. They offer a range of activities including –
  - Childcare
  - Playtime
  - Drop Ins
  - Health Support
  - Employment Support
  - Training
- Approximately 75 per cent of families with children aged between 0-3 access children's centres, many of whom cannot afford books
- Providing access to vulnerable families can better the life chances of children through improved communication, language and literacy
- Achievement to date include improved performances against National Indicators 72 and 92 as follows –
  - NI 72 – increased from 56 per cent to 61 per cent
  - NI 92 – narrowed the gap by 1.3 per cent to 29.6 per cent (better than the national average)

- Encouraging children to use libraries means it is also then possible to capture their parents, many of whom have poor literacy skills themselves
- The children's centres work with PACLS (Plymouth Adult Community Learning Services) who provide training / support for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills which, in turn, can help towards improved parenting
- Children's centres are community hubs and libraries fit that bill too. People are comfortable about coming into these environments where they don't feel judged. Need to tap into this valuable resource and make better use of it eg, training facilities, parenting projects, signposting to other services
- Libraries need to be less school-like, relaxed café culture atmospheres with room to socialise (like Waterstones) and provide appropriate changing facilities for babies

#### B4 SARAH HEFFERNAN, PROFESSIONAL YOUTH WORKER

A group of young people who included the current Members of Youth Parliament, the election candidates and Youth Cabinet members were asked the following questions.

Do you use your library?

What would encourage you to use them?

What are your thoughts on libraries and the future of libraries?

Here are their responses.

##### **Do you use your library?**

Eight people answered yes with one adding but I don't use them very often because you only get 3 weeks and I always need longer.

Seven answered no giving the reasons below:

- No because I either buy the books or use the school's library.
- No because it's not appealing for teenagers. It's aimed at small children and adults. There is a small range of books for teenagers.
- No because it shuts too early and I prefer the idea of buying my own books.
- No because it's easier to download a book on topics such as microeconomic oligopolistic market diagrams for my course than it is to trawl from my house to the nearest library and then look through hundreds or thousands of books.
- No because I don't read very much plus there isn't much as you can download books on your phone.
- No because I don't have enough time and my local library is too far away.
- No because I don't like reading.

##### **What would encourage you to use them?**

- A wider variety of books – they didn't have any 'Poe' in the Plymouth library.
- Unreleased films to be available to loan on download.
- A home delivery service, my library is a good 20 minute walk away.
- You could advertise the libraries around the area. Some people might not know where it is, or even if there is one in their area. A location status would help make libraries a place for people to hang out quietly as well
- Even more books! And also activities like writing groups and reading groups as I can't seem to find many of these. Library opening times, especially for small libraries such as Tothill should be either more regular or more widely known (or both).

- The staff should be more friendly and helpful.
- Maybe better books
- If there were special days dedicated to young people.
- Private coffee shops inside.
- If I had more time or if it was easier to get to.
- If more libraries had interesting young people friendly spaces that actually appeal.
- The books.
- Computers and fun stuff.
- Nothing to be honest. There won't be much of a chance to win be back from the simple downloading of books.
- Making them more colourful.

### **What are your thoughts on libraries and the future of libraries?**

- I think that libraries will become less used unless something is done to make them more accessible, they will be more likely to be used more than what they are.
- I've heard (unsure if it's true) that some libraries are getting Wiis and Xboxes. Personally I feel that this is disgusting. Libraries should be places of peace, quiet and books. We do not need even more electronic equipment to distract people. It is bad enough in most homes. I accept the need for computers but I think that the future of libraries should be a sanctuary of quiet and other worlds in this busy time.
- I think libraries are a great idea but I think that with the creation of e-books, libraries are dying out because people find it easier to download them than go out and get the books.
- They'll all shut down because technology is taking over.
- Libraries are good but innovation is needed to help keep them alive.
- That you will be able to rent books via eBooks and kindles. As well as the in the far future not using library's at all and using eBooks just via the internet.
- I think that libraries are a useful tool for encouraging young people to read and that they should be prepared as much as possible.
- Unfortunately and sadly I think the use of them is dying out to better internet access.
- I dunno...maybe there needs to be more libraries so people are able to visit more local libraries whenever they want.
- If it keeps on going like this only school libraries will exist.
- Kindles have replaced books now; however taking away the stigma of old people and libraries would be better for young people.
- They will be obsolete within ten years. The internet age, as with many other things has killed the library.
- You need brighter buildings.
- Libraries are really useful especially as with books you don't always want to spend money on one before you've read it but I think if they don't become more accommodating fewer and fewer people will use them.
- They are good for uni students and A-level students and for people who like ready. For the future there will probably always be libraries.



B5 JANE GOSLING, HEAD OF LIBRARY AND DIGITAL SUPPORT, PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY

- The remit of the university library is to support its staff and students with the library content and services aimed at the needs of the courses being taught and research for academics
- Increasing the library's digital content is very important as the purpose of the library is to transfer information into knowledge, it also assist with the aim of ensuring access is available at any time, from anywhere as, whilst many of the students are based on campus, some are based overseas and in partner colleges
- The library is open to members of the public for reference purposes however if they wish to borrow books to take out on loan they have to pay an associate membership fee of £60 per annum. There are currently 400 associate members
- The library is very well used by students during the day and early evenings and sometimes it is difficult for them to find workspace. Whilst members of the public are welcome to use the facilities this would not want to be encouraged to the detriment of the university's students
- The library is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks of the year and operates on a self-serve basis with a security system. It has –
  - 1,100 study spaces, 188 of which have computers
  - internet and powerpoint access at each desk
  - wi-fi provision
  - 450,000 printed books
  - 12,000 e-books (content not devices)
  - access to 16,000 academic journals online
- Having undertaken a survey of its students' requirements for a library service, the facility does not have a traditional, quiet and studious atmosphere. Some of the furniture is moveable and students are free to move it around to suit their studying needs. Quiet areas are available but many students create their own quiet space by listening to music through their headphones whilst still being able to enjoy the company of others.
- Whilst the library does have its own café, students can still bring in their own food and drink (not hot food)
- Students are permitted to use their phones but not in the quiet areas

B6 DAN THOMAS, COMMERCIAL MANAGER, SOUTH WEST TRADING ROUTES

- Established in 2011, South West Trading Routes is a community interest company based in Mount Wise. It is a trading arm of Routeways which is a Plymouth based local charity that champions community projects funded by local and national funding streams. These projects serve to enhance the social, emotional and economic well-being of local communities by providing choice and opportunity to individuals across a diverse range of people from the very young to the more mature
- One of the community projects 'Diggin It' at Penlee Allotment, aimed at teaching people about the cost and health benefits of growing your own food, provides fresh produce for the café operating out of St Aubyn library at Devonport
- St Aubyn café is also a community project with any money generated being reinvested back through Routeways to support other community initiatives
- Libraries are much more than just about lending books, they can be used to hold various classes and clubs and provide access to other services. Examples include –

- a work club which is shortly to start at St Aubyn aimed at helping people to find work, learn about acquiring job skills, and volunteering opportunities without having to go into the job centre
- healthy eating / cooking on a budget classes
- Routeways run Senior Net which is about helping older people get online with their own computers, this could be expanded through libraries if they all had wi-fi
- Free wi-fi in libraries will provide internet access to many who otherwise would have no access, particularly in the city's more deprived areas
- Many libraries already provide free computer access but with the installation of wi-fi this could be further extended to use of tablets which could also be booked out for 30-minute slots at a time for anyone just wishing to surf the net
- Many opportunities exist for partnership working with libraries being able to play a key role in introducing services into less intimidating venues/environments
- The voluntary sector has a big part to play in helping take the library modernisation agenda forward

**B7 DEBBIE BUTCHER, HEAD OF SERVICE – COMMISSIONING, JOINT COMMISSIONING AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE, AND RACHEL SILCOCK, COMMISSIONING OFFICER, ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

- Adult Social Care is investing £200k over two years to link libraries to the wider social care agenda
- Funding has to date paid for a part-time member of staff to help coordinate the scheme, training for library staff, new book stock on health-related issues and production of a health calendar highlighting events taking place at various libraries across the city and the use of meeting rooms which has created a number of new groups who now meet regularly, such as befriending, supporting people with dementia and carers groups
- As part of the health and social care vision for libraries they will –
  - Act as community hubs providing high quality information and support on a range of issues and services
  - Support the self-management of long-term conditions by the provision of good quality health and social care information
  - Form part of a network of outreach locations through which advice services can provide more in-depth advice in venues near to where people live
  - Help tackle health inequalities by providing access to those who are digitally excluded in the provision of health information
- Libraries are well positioned to support the delivery of the Council's vision for information and advice which is to build on existing resources and develop a universally accessible and strategically aligned network across the city
- The free access that libraries provide for the population to technology is a vital and increasingly important function

**B8 LUCY STAPLETON, OPERATIONAL PARTNERSHIP MANAGER, JOBCENTRE PLUS**

- Jobcentre Plus is part of the Department for Work and Pensions. It provides services that support people of working age from welfare into work and helps employers to fill their vacancies. It also plays a major role in supporting the Department's aim to promote opportunity and independence for all through modern, customer-focused services
- Promoting access to digital channels was a shared objective of Jobcentre Plus and the council as it enabled customers to search for work and find support and advice

- With changes to Welfare Reform, and particularly the introduction of Universal Credits, libraries can play a role in providing access to computers for the unemployed to search for jobs as required under the Universal Credits scheme, particularly as many people would prefer to access their local libraries rather than visit the job centre
- Universal Credits is the keystone to the Department for Work and Pensions Welfare Reform. It is not just about encouraging people into work but aims to encourage them to seek higher paid work - claimants are required to access direct.gov and universal job match sites
- Jobcentre Plus has invested £10k in a programme to up-skill library staff and provide additional computers to facilitate 'back-to-work' courses for the unemployed
- Discussions are currently ongoing with the council about establishing job/work clubs, the first of which has taken place in Devonport library, although the lack of wi-fi provision across the library service as a whole is an issue
- Claimants currently have to visit the job centre in order to sign on for receipt of benefits however, whilst any decision on co-location of services would have to be taken at a national level, the use of libraries for this was a possibility

**Background Documentation:**

Plymouth Libraries A Review : December 2012

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43228/Plymouth%20Libraries%20-%20A%20Review%202012.pdf>

Plymouth Library Profiles:

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43229/Central.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43230/Crownhill.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43231/Efford.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43232/Eggbuckland.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43233/Ernesettle.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43234/Estover.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43235/Laira.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43236/NorthProspect.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43237/Peverell.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43238/Plympton.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43239/Plymstock.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43240/Southway.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43241/StAubyn.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43242/StBudeaux.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43243/Stoke.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43244/Tothill.pdf>

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s43245/WestPark.pdf>

Library Consultation Response:

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mglInternet/documents/s42249/Library%20Consulation%20report%20v1%201.pdf>

LGA : Local solutions for future local library services:

[http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=fe4e381a-17ff-4138-9499-dc7241805636&groupId=10171](http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=fe4e381a-17ff-4138-9499-dc7241805636&groupId=10171)