

# CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

8 September 2011



**PLYMOUTH**  
CITY COUNCIL

## Report from Commission on School Libraries

This report outlines developmental work to date to ensure the sustainability of Plymouth Schools Library Service (PSLS) with reference to the School Library Commission report, and in response to the independent review of PSLS undertaken in September 2010 by senior colleagues from Berkshire Education Library Service and Dorset Schools Library Service.

Our work can be grouped as follows:

- Resources – thinking wider than books and exploring multi-media and electronic provision
- Training – to support school staff and improve the quality of libraries in schools
- Staff – streamlining working practices and ensuring all staff in a small team are working flexibly and to full capacity
- Future business models

Plymouth Schools Library Service has maintained an 81% buyback from Plymouth schools.

### Resources

#### Multi-media

- We have introduced DVD, Storybag and Role-play costume collections.
- We have purchased Listening Books subscriptions for Standard package subscribers
- We are working in partnership with the Stiltskin Creative Theatre Group to provide multi-media resource boxes and creative workshops
- The project to introduce artefacts has been put on hold because it was not generally supported by the head teachers who were consulted.

#### E-learning

- We have developed our website and now provide downloadable advisory support, accessible only to our subscribing schools
- We have consulted regarding the provision of e-learning resources and there was insufficient interest for us to pursue this option.

### Training

We continue to hold the PLAN (Plymouth Librarians Advisory Network) themed training sessions which are well attended.

We are not currently running other training courses at our centre due to insufficient interest and have built training into the advisory time spent in Primary schools on a 1:1 basis or on 'whole staff' basis where requested.

We now have a regular "Happy Hour" event at the Centre to highlight new resources and services we offer and ensure schools are getting the best value from us.

## Staff

- As part of the public library restructure and to ease PSLS budget pressures PSLS Manager has reduced hours at the Schools Library Service and works some hours for the public library service. The combined role has the added advantage of increasing joint working and streamlining working practice.
- Recharge has been reduced from £45,000 to £35,000
- The role of the Senior Adviser has broadened to encompass website development
- Support staff are receiving training to provide practical support in school libraries

## Future business models

The Schools Library Services in the South West are exploring joint working opportunities as a lead into possible mergers in the future.

## Summary of buy-back 2011-2012

81% of Plymouth schools subscribe to PSLS. (82% 2010-2011).

One school that withdrew its subscription in 2010 has found that it needed the service and therefore renewed their subscription this year. Two schools did not renew their contract.

2010/2011	2011/2012
18 schools chose the light package	24 schools chose the light package
58 schools chose the standard package	51 schools chose the standard package
Total subscribers = 76	Total subscribers = 75

11 schools reach the end of a subscription period March 2012

48 schools reach the end of a subscription period March 2013

16 schools reach the end of a subscription period March 2014

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