LIBRARY MODERNISATION

PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

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

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APPENDICES

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

	Title of Work Programme Item	Library Modernisation
2	Responsible Director (s)	Adam Broome (Director for Corporate Services)
3	Responsible Officer Tel No.	Darin Halifax (Community Cohesion Co-ordinator) Tel ext 5446.
4	Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Cllr Peter Smith (Deputy Leader)
5	Objectives	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 - 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 "Co-operative Council" concept in 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. 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.

6	Who will benefit?	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. 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.
7	Criteria for Choosing Topics (see table at end of document)	• High budgetary commitment • Issue consistently identified by Members as key through constituency activity • Public interest issue covered in local media
8	What will happen if we don't do this review?	There would be no independent scrutiny of the library modernisation programme.
9	What are we going to do?	Task and finish group
10	How are we going to do it? (witnesses, site visits, background information etc.)	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) Scrutiny reports supplied by officers Potential site visits Witnesses.
11	What we won't do.	The task and finish group will not be an alternative for future community consultation should that need arise.
12	Timetable & Key Dates	Task and Finish Group meetings – Sept/Oct 2012 Task and Finish Group report to Customers and Communities OSP – 7 Nov 2012 Task and Finish Group report to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (Delegated authority required) Task and Finish Group report to Cabinet – 13 Nov 2012
13	Links to other projects or initiatives / plans	Corporate plan
14	Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel / Membership if Task and Finish Group (to be decided by OSP before submission to OMB	Customers and Communities OSP Task and Finish Group comprising Councillors Casey, Jarvis, Jordan, Martin Leaves and Tuffin.
15	Where will the report go? Who will make the final decision	Task and Finish Group report to be considered by Cabinet on 13 November 2012 who will make final decision.
16	Resources (staffing, research, experts, sites visits and so on)	Staffing – particularly from library services Research Witnesses

17	Is this part of a statutory responsibility on the panel?	N/A
18	Should any other panel be involved in this review? If so who and why?	N/A
19	Will the task and finish group benefit from co-opting any person(s) onto the panel.	Yes – Co-opted person to be decided.
20	How does this link to corporate priorities?	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 thought 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 marker diagrams for my course than it is to trawl from my house to the nearest library and then look though 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 thought 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 oversees 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 –

- o 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
  - o 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 –
  - o Act as community hubs providing high quality information and support on a range of issues and services
  - o Support the self-management of long-term conditions by the provision of good quality health and social care information
  - o 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
  - o 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/mgInternet/documents/s43228/Plymouth%20Libraries%20-%20A%20Review%202012.pdf

Plymouth Library Profiles:
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43229/Central.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43230/Crownhill.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43231/Efford.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43232/Eggbuckland.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43233/Ernesettle.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43234/Estover.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43235/Laira.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43236/NorthProspect.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43237/Peverell.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43238/Plympton.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43239/Plymstock.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43240/Southway.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43241/StAubyn.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43242/StBudeaux.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43243/Stoke.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43244/Tothill.pdf
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s43245/WestPark.pdf

Library Consultation Response:
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/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