

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

Subject: Plan for Libraries **Scrutiny recommendations on Plan for Libraries**
Committee: **Cabinet**
Date: **13th June 2017**
Cabinet Member: **Cllr Glenn Jordan**
CMT Member: **Andrew Hardingham**
Author: **Faye Batchelor Hambleton**
Contact details **Tel 01752304480**
 Email faye.batchelor-hambleton@plymouth.gov.uk

Ref **PFL 2017 - 2010**

Key Decision: **No**

Part: I

Purpose of the report:

This report provides responses to the recommendations of the Select Committee review into the proposals for the Plan for Libraries and subsequent consultation process.

The final proposals for the Plan for Libraries will be considered at:

- Cabinet on Tuesday 20th June
- Full Council on Monday 3rd July

The Corporate Plan 2016 - 19:

This report aligns to the Corporate Plan in that:

Caring Plymouth – We will work with our communities to have happy, healthy and connected Communities where people lead safe and fulfilled lives – Reduce health inequalities

Pioneering Plymouth – We will be innovative by design and deliver services that are more Accountable, flexible and efficient – New ways of working, quality services focused on customers' needs

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

Full details will be included in the Cabinet Report for final Plan for Libraries

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

N/A

Equality and Diversity

A high level summary of the equalities impact our Plan for Libraries is included as Appendix E to our Plan for Libraries. It responds to the recommendations made by the Select Committee held on the 15th May 2017 and incorporates the key findings from our detailed Equalities Impact Assessments, which were carried out-

- on the public consultation in relation to the Plan for Libraries
- on each of our 17 libraries
- on the proposals contained within the Plan for Libraries

It concludes that there are no disproportionate equality impacts from the proposals in our Plan for Libraries, which are not adequately mitigated, and in relation to our wider Public Sector Equality Duty, that the proposals will help to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:

Cabinet to note the contents of this report

Alternative options considered and rejected:

N/A

Published work / information:

For a full discussion of libraries as a statutory service see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-libraries-as-a-statutory-service/libraries-as-a-statutory-service>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-local-inquiry-into-the-public-library-service-provided-by-wirral-metropolitan-borough-council>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-library-report-for-england>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/libraries-deliver-ambition-for-public-libraries-in-england-2016-2021>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/libraries-deliver-ambition-for-public-libraries-in-england-2016-to-2021>

Background papers:

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

Sign off:

Fin	sa17 18.34	Leg	lt/2738 8/cabr 1/3105	Mon Off	lt/2738 8/cabr 1/3105	HR	n/a	Assets	n/a	IT	n/a	Strat Proc	n/a
Originating SMT Member: Andrew Hardingham													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the contents of the report? Yes													

COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

**The Committee convened on Monday 15 May and heard from witnesses, Councillors and Officers and had the opportunity to ask questions on the consultation process.
Recommendations as below:**

Agreed that:

The committee notes the statutory 12-week consultation and independent analysis of the results and that it has been carried out in line with, and has satisfied, the Public Sector Equalities Duty and guidance in relation to the Libraries Act 1964;

The committee recommends to Cabinet that:

1. In future consultation exercises, the council aspires to greatly enhanced consultation activity, with simplified engagement with young people through schools and groups with protected characteristics;

Response: Noted

2. Needs assessment criteria should be reassessed to reflect context in which the current library estate operates (e.g. opening times, number of computers available should be a consideration in ranking);

Response: The assessment criteria used for the Plan for Libraries Public Consultation was consistent, wide ranging (10 criteria covering a range of differing data sets), and was based on best practice currently used in many other public consultations in relation to library services. The assessment criteria were defined to clearly show the context of the existing service and we therefore do not believe a reassessment of these criteria is required.

3. Needs assessment criteria should be weighted, with the greater weighting applied to criterion that reflect the aspiration for improved outcomes as a result of the Plan for Libraries;

Response: As at 2 above and in addition the needs assessment was not weighted to ensure that the unbiased data set was put into the public domain to give the public the true picture for them to make an informed decision. Any weighting could be seen as trying to influence a particular outcome and for this reason we therefore do not believe any changes to the weighting should be applied. We will however apply a change in weighting when assessing the libraries identified for closure.

4. All libraries currently subject to closure should be ranked to additional criteria which could include –
- a. an assessment of accessibility for each building, paying regard to areas of growth within the city;
 - b. information from partner organisations gathered through the consultation;
 - c. the use of libraries by educational institutions and the impact of any closures on the education of Children and Young People and protected groups;
 - d. Sustainability and cost of building leaseholds, and previous investment committed to the estate;

Response: This will be incorporated and included in the final Plan for Libraries

5. When final proposals for changes to Library Services are presented to council they should be accompanied by;
- e. a high level Equalities Impact Assessment for the entire Plan for Libraries;
 - f. draft performance measures for the new library service;
 - g. delivery plan, to include any transitional measures for customers impacted by proposed closures;
 - h. draft capital budget requirements for improvements to the library estate;
 - i. impact assessment for all staff, including temporary staff;
 - j. draft communications and marketing plan for the future of services.

Response: This will be incorporated and included in the final Plan for Libraries

In addition: The Council provides a diverse range of services to the community. To operate these services, the Council must be able to efficiently and effectively resource its workforce, including the ability to flex its staffing needs to meet demands using a contingent labour force. Temporary workers are often used to cover vacancies during transitional periods to protect permanent employment for existing workforce, and to mitigate the costs of pensions and redundancy if those posts are no longer needed.

Agency workers are not employees of the Council, but are contracted to work for our Master Vendor Agency contractor. There is therefore no requirement for Plymouth City Council to undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment for those workers.

6. The Plan for Libraries, subject to agreement by council, is scrutinised on an annual basis by the relevant committee.

Response: This will be added to the Council's Scrutiny Select Committee forward plan