

Cabinet

7 December 2017

Warwick District Libraries and the Future of Sunday Opening in Libraries

Recommendations

That Cabinet

- 1) Authorises the Joint Managing Director (Resources) to relocate Whitnash Library to the new Hub Facility to be managed by the Whitnash Town Council at Acre Close in Whitnash on terms and conditions which are acceptable to him.
- 2) Subject to approving recommendation 1, Cabinet recommends to Council that £150,000 of the capital receipt from the sale of the current library be invested in a new library facility at the Whitnash Hub facility at Acre Close, Whitnash.
- 3) Notes the position regarding opening hours at Whitnash and Lillington libraries and Sunday opening at Leamington, Nuneaton and Rugby libraries.

1. Review of One Stop Shops by Warwick District Council

- 1.1 Warwick District Council (WDC) and Warwickshire County Council (WCC) work in partnership to deliver a "One Stop Shop (OSS)" Service across five sites in the District, at Riverside House, Leamington Spa; Shire Hall, Warwick; Kenilworth Library; Whitnash Library and Lillington Library. This joint working arrangement has been in place since 2005.
- 1.2 WDC have undertaken a review of these One Stop Shops, approved by WDC Executive on 8 February 2017. The recommendation of the review report was to change the approach to service delivery at these sites. Final agreement to the proposals will be sought from WDC Executive in March 2018.

2. Warwick District Council Proposals

- 2.1 The District Council is proposing the following:
 - To withdraw WDC OSS staff and services from Lillington and Whitnash Libraries
 - To withdraw WDC OSS staff and services at Shire Hall from 1 pm on Saturdays
 - To continue to deliver a face-to-face service at Kenilworth Library, Shire Hall and Riverside House

- To implement self-service technology at Riverside House, Kenilworth Library and Shire Hall to access WDC services in line with their digital agenda
- 2.2 With respect to timelines WDC will take their final report to its Executive Committee in March 2018. If accepted, the District Council will implement its proposals during June next year.
 - 2.3 WCC will continue to manage the remaining services and staff on behalf of WDC.
 - 2.4 The withdrawal of the WDC OSS service and staff from Lillington and Whitnash Libraries will result in a reduction in opening hours from 32 hours to 22 hours at Lillington Library (this includes 2 hours one-off funding from Leamington Town Council) and from 25 hours to 15 hours at Whitnash Library. The funding for Lillington Library from the Leamington Town Council to open an additional two hours per week is for a year. With reduced staffing there will no longer be any face-to-face delivery of WDC or WCC one stop shop services at these sites. Maintaining the current hours would cost £13,000 per annum for each library.
 - 2.5 The reduction in service at Shire Hall on Saturday afternoons from 1pm will mean there will no longer be face-to-face delivery of WDC or WCC one stop shop services from this time - a reduction of 3 hours. The level of customer demand for one stop shop services on Saturday afternoons is low.
 - 2.6 At the two remaining WCC sites (Shire Hall and Kenilworth Library,) the current layout will need to be assessed to see if it can accommodate installation of self-service technology and investment by WDC may be needed to accommodate this. Further detail is awaited on the type of technology being considered, whether it can also deliver WCC Services and whether any additional staffing resource is required to manage the use of technology by the public.

3. Whitnash Community Hub

- 3.1 Whitnash Town Council is currently based in Whitnash Library. In January 2019, the Town Council will move to a newly built Whitnash Community Hub. Warwick District Council has invested £0.5m in the Hub.
- 3.2 There is an opportunity to relocate Whitnash Library to the new Whitnash Community Hub when it is built and open to the public in January 2019. This option is based on the current offer from Whitnash Town Council (WTC), costs, benefits, assumptions and timescales as set out in detail below:

Capital Costs	<p>A capped contribution of £150,000 will be invested to cover build costs at the Hub for the new library accommodation of 85 sq m (which would include library space and a workroom). This is based on a cost of £1,765 per sq m including fees, risk and contingency. This capital cost will be funded from the sale of the existing Whitnash Library.</p> <p>An additional source of capital will be needed to cover the removal and fit out costs at the new location. This will be funded using the Customer Experience Capital Fund.</p>
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<p>Revenue Costs</p>	<p>Occupation at the Hub would be on the basis of a long leasehold interest. WCC's assumption is that this will be for a term of 99 years to reflect the significant capital investment. WTC has indicated that the rent payable under the lease will be a peppercorn to reflect the initial capital investment.</p> <p>WTC has provided an estimate of running costs for the new building of £55 per sq m. Based on a total library area of 85 sq m this equates to £4,675 per annum. A breakdown of the costs has not been obtained and further clarity will be required to confirm what is included within this figure. WCC's assumption is that running costs should not exceed the current costs at Franklin Road which are £13,000 per annum.</p> <p>WTC has stated that there will be no additional costs payable by the Library Service for access to and use of shared and communal areas within the Hub.</p>
<p>Benefits</p>	<p>Moving to the new Hub enables WCC to relocate the library to a multi-use building allowing for integration with a wider range of services and the opportunity of increased footfall.</p> <p>Occupation within a multi-use building offers the possibility of shared staffing arrangements and management by WTC outside the opening hours. This would be advantageous in light of the WDC proposals to withdraw OSS staff and services from Franklin Road and the re-location of WTC staff to the new Hub.</p>
<p>Assumptions</p>	<p>WCC's recommendation is based upon a capital investment of £150,000 which is to be capped. This figure is based on a realistic estimate of value of the current library site.</p> <p>The lease terms will need to be sufficiently flexible to enable WCC to manage future changes in Library Service delivery, for example a transfer of services to partner organisations or the creation of a community managed library.</p> <p>Although the library accommodation at the Hub will be a significant reduced in space in comparison to Franklin Road, WTC has agreed that the Library Service will have priority use of shared areas within the building and full access to communal facilities as required.</p> <p>At this stage only outline lease terms have been discussed and detailed Heads of Terms will need to be agreed and approved if the relocation is to proceed.</p>

Timescales	<p>WTC has appointed architects and building surveyors to progress the project design and build and this does not currently include the library service accommodation.</p> <p>The project is on a very tight schedule to submit a full planning application by the end of the year or soon after.</p> <p>In order to commit to relocate to the Hub a summary of final requirements and the basis for funding of works will need to be agreed as a matter of urgency.</p>
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4. Sunday Opening at the Hub Libraries (Rugby, Leamington and Nuneaton)

- 4.1 As part of the One Organisational Plan 2014-18 for Customer Service, the Library Service was required to make progress against a range of specific savings. These savings included:
- CS-D/G/J - Improve the effectiveness of the whole library network. A saving of £100,000 for the Library service.
- 4.2 £54,000 of this saving was to be achieved by the withdrawal of the Sunday Library Service which is delivered at the three main hub libraries of Rugby, Leamington and Nuneaton. The withdrawal of Sunday opening hours would enable enhanced payments and salary reductions to be offered as a saving.
- 4.3 A public consultation was carried out in the period January to March 2016 to gauge public reaction and feed into the final decision making process. The results of the survey were presented to Overview and Scrutiny in June 2016
- 4.4 During the budget setting process of February 2016 Council granted the service a one-off budget enhancement of £108,000 to allow the 3 libraries to remain open on Sundays for a further two years. This one-off funding ends on 31 March 2018.
- 4.5 Without a source of permanent funding to retain Sunday opening beyond 31 March 2018 the Service will be seeking permission following public consultation to withdraw Sunday opening from 1 April 2018. Otherwise, funding to retain Sunday opening will need to be considered as part of the 2018/19 budget discussions.

Background Papers

None

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Tracey Baker	traceybaker@warwickshire.gov.uk 01926 742741
Head of Service	Kushal Birla	kushalbirla@warwickshire.gov.uk 01926 412103
Joint Managing Director	David Carter	davidcarter@warwickshire.gov.uk 01926 412564
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Kam Kaur	cllrkaur@warwickshire.gov.uk 07985 251851

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Cllrs Boad, Falp, Warwick, Timms, Roberts, Simpson-Vance, Dahmash, O'Rourke, Roodhouse, Butlin, Webb, Gifford, Davies, Western, Chilvers, Clarke, Olnier, Gissane, Golby, Kondakor, Morgan, Sargeant.