



Committee and Date

Environment Services  
Scrutiny Committee

Time: 2pm

Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015

Item

7

Public

## **UPDATE - FUTURE COMMISSIONING AND PROVISION OF LIBRARY SERVICES**

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### **1. Summary**

- 1.1. This report summarises progress made on the county-wide redesign of library services since the last update to the Environment Services Scrutiny Committee meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2014.
- 1.2 Shropshire Council is developing as a commissioning council and to set out its future commissioning intentions. Alongside this, the council is considering which parts of its business might be best delivered locally and will seek to reflect this within its future commissioning intentions.
- 1.3 Specifically, the council is working with partners to re-design existing face to face customer focused services in order to provide places that residents can easily access services and get information and advice that both meets their needs and enables them to help others within their community.
- 1.4 The council's vision is that traditional face to face services will be delivered by community based organisations that will harness and maximise the resources available within each locality and create welcoming and accessible hubs of activity.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Scrutiny Committee members provide feedback and comment in respect of the council's approach to the redesign the library service, including moving the management of services and buildings into new community based arrangements, progress made to date and the next stages of the library redesign work.
- 2.2 That the Scrutiny Committee receives a further update in respect of library service redesign and the development of Community Hubs in spring 2016.

## REPORT

### 3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 A risk management log is being maintained for all aspects of work associated with transition of the library redesign. This enables identification and assessment of risks and associated mitigating actions.
- 3.2 Human Rights: An Equality & Social Inclusion Assessment (ESIIA) will be created for each library redesign project and these will accompany consultation documents. Carrying out ESIIAs will ensure that, as far as possible, the council is taking actions to meet the general equality duty placed on us by the Equality Act 2010 to have *due regard* to the three equality aims in our decision making processes. These are: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations. The ESIIAs are living documents and will continue to be updated as the projects develop.
- 3.3 Redesigned library services delivered by community organisations should offer greater flexibility in the way local people use them – particularly when they are part of a wider hub of services. This will enable the creation of a range of opportunities for existing and new library and hub users and the organisations involved in delivering services and activities.
- 3.4 Environment: No adverse impact expected.

### 4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 2014/15 savings of £520k have been achieved through efficiency savings, improved operating arrangements and through voluntary redundancies.
- 4.2. Savings totalling £670k are required to be delivered in the next two years and this will be done through transferring the management of libraries to new community based management arrangements or by working in partnership with community based organisations to manage provision differently. This will result in reduced back office and management costs and reduced costs of directly delivery.
- 4.3 The redesigned model will leave a remaining net controllable library service budget of £2.3 million.
- 4.4 £520k of external funding is available by through a Transformation Challenge Award (TCA) to facilitate the transfer of 6 libraries to new community based management arrangements in 2015/16.

### 5. Background

- 5.1 The redesign of library services is part of wider work to maximise community assets and resources to develop Community Hubs where existing face to face customer focused services can be delivered. The Hubs will be places that local residents can easily access services and get information and advice that both helps them and enables them to help others within their community. The creation of Community Hubs will underpin the changing way in which services will be delivered in the future. Co-

locating services, activities and the people who deliver these fosters greater local community activity and brings residents, the local business community, and smaller organisations together with the aim of improving the quality of life in their areas.

- 5.2 We have adopted the following approach to the development, and ultimately implementation, of detailed local proposals.
- 5.3 We are engaging with local groups, service users and individuals within informal soft market testing exercises to explore the art of the possible and to co-design local solutions - looking at all existing community assets - buildings, publicly or privately owned, organisations, individuals and resources. We are using our local governance structures to provide a forum for local discussion on proposals that are created. We are engaging with local town and parish councils, with other public services and with local voluntary organisations to refine these proposals. Once agreement on a proposed new management arrangement has been reached by all parties, a statutory six week consultation on the proposals is designed and delivered. Following the consultation the final Shropshire Council decision on any proposed change is made by the Portfolio Holder for Business, ip&e, Culture and Commissioning (North) alongside appropriate local decision making.

## **6.0 Progress to date**

- 6.1 Progress is being made with developing proposals for new management arrangements for libraries across the county. Attached at Appendix 1 is the summary of progress divided into: :
- a. transferred to community management
  - b. confirmed proposals for community management
  - c. proposals for community management under development
  - d. principal Community Hub sites

## **7.0 Project Management**

- 7.1 A Project Board to support the redesign of library services, the implementation of the TCA funding in support of the development of Community Hubs and the transition to new management arrangements at specific libraries has been set up. It is led by the Area Commissioner South and attended by the Head of Commercial Services, the Strategic Asset Manager and services leads across a number of areas including the library service, customer services and locality commissioning.
- 7.2 We continue to work with local communities and stakeholders, including town and parish councils and members of the voluntary and community sector, to identify potential models and solutions for new local management arrangements. Management of individual projects takes place locally and management of the overall programme is co-ordinated through the Project Board.
- 7.3 A risk management log with a RAG rating is being maintained for all aspects of work associated with the service redesign and transition to new management arrangements. This enables identification and assessment of risk and associated mitigating actions.

<p><b>List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)</b></p> <p>Future Commissioning and provision of Library Services – December 2014</p>
<p><b>Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):</b></p> <p>Councillor Steve Charmley</p>
<p><b>Local Member:</b></p> <p>All local Members</p>
<p><b>Appendices</b></p> <p>Appendix 1 - Summary of Redesign of Shropshire Council "face to face" customer services</p>