

Cleobury Mortimer Library Consultation

Introduction – what is this consultation about?

Shropshire Council is working with partners to re-design existing face to face customer focused services, to create places where residents can easily access services and get information and advice that both helps them and enables them to help others within their community. This is to help us to create and maintain resilient communities at a time of reducing public service budgets and increasing pressure on services due to the changing demographics of the county.

Important elements of the Resilient Communities approach are the creation and development of Community Hubs and the provision of advice, information and signposting at an early and preventative stage that supports the health and well-being of both individuals and communities.

In Shropshire's market towns our vision is that traditional face to face services will be delivered through community enterprises that are already active within those communities. A community enterprise is the same as a social enterprise, i.e. an organisation trading for social purpose with any profits reinvested rather than going to shareholders. A community enterprise is based in, and provides benefits to, a particular local neighbourhood or community and is an organisation run for the community. These enterprises are best placed to utilise their links into communities and therefore maximise every contact that is made with them.

This work is also linked to savings, and therefore we are working to ensure that through redesign we find ways to continue to deliver high quality services, at a lower cost, but with a better overall outcome for the individuals and communities.

Over the last year, Shropshire Council, with key local partners including Cleobury Country Ltd, have been discussing and developing opportunities regarding new ways of delivering and improving the services currently housed at the Cleobury Country Centre. This includes the library service.

Shropshire Council is now seeking responses to proposals relating to the future delivery of the library service in Cleobury Mortimer. These proposals are detailed in this consultation document. We want to stress that as no formal decision has yet been made, there is also an opportunity for alternative proposals to be made. The information we receive through the consultation will be used to inform any decision making on the future delivery of the library service and the management of the library building within the Cleobury Country Centre.

The potential impact of the proposals on library users, particularly those who might be impacted more by any change is being assessed through the completion of an Equality & Social Inclusion Impact Assessment.

This period of consultation will run from Wednesday 26th August until Wednesday 7th October 2015. Completed forms can be returned to the Cleobury Country Centre.

Comments can also be submitted online by going to www.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved and searching for Cleobury Mortimer Library Consultation.

A set of answers to Frequently Asked Questions is also available and copies will be available alongside this consultation document.

Background to existing services in Cleobury Mortimer

Cleobury Country Centre

The Cleobury Country Centre is located in Love Lane in Cleobury Mortimer, and is run by Cleobury Country Ltd, a social enterprise that supports and nurtures a variety of business and community development schemes in the town and surrounding area.

The Cleobury Country Centre itself provides a range of services including an IT Centre and training room; business support; meeting rooms; equipment hire for local businesses and community groups,. There are also business units and offices at the site which are let to local businesses and organisations.

Cleobury Mortimer Library

The library offers the following services –

- Free membership for all
- The lending of adult books, audio books and DVDs
- A children's library area and range of books for children
- A collection of books for teenagers
- A selection of books in large print
- Regular exchange of books with other libraries
- Request service - obtaining books from other libraries requested by customers
- Free access to public computers for library members
- Trained staff to issue and return books, answer enquiries, help people to choose books and use computers
- Online services on the library website for use 24/7
- Regular events such as story-times, rhyme-times, class visits from local schools, reading groups, author talks and social events in partnership with the Library Friends' group.

What the consultation is for - what proposals are being made?

Two proposals are included in this consultation document, together with the opportunity for you to put forward your own ideas on how the library could be delivered in the future.

Shropshire Council's preferred proposal for the future delivery of the library service in Cleobury Mortimer is to transfer the responsibility for its day to day management to Cleobury Country Ltd. This would result in the service continuing to be delivered in its current location in the Cleobury Country Centre., The council's library service would continue to provide the books, library management system and the support of a librarian based in Ludlow. The library would be run under an agreed Service Level Agreement between Shropshire Council and Cleobury Country Ltd.

The proposal includes creating a confidential customer service point with direct access to Shropshire Council services.

The library service and Cleobury Country Ltd would be jointly committed to providing all the existing library functions with opportunities to further develop services. The result for Cleobury Mortimer of these changes would be a robust library service with a secure future.

Whilst this is the council's preferred option, it does not have a closed mind to other proposals or suggestions that are made through this consultation period.

The second proposal included in the consultation document is that Cleobury Mortimer Library will continue to be run by the Shropshire Council's library service with the hours that the library is staffed reduced from the current 23.5 hours per week to 19 hours per week. Self-service access would be available outside these hours when the Centre is open. There would be no internal changes to the building.

The results of the consultation will be collated, analysed and considered by Shropshire Council and used to inform any decision making on the future delivery of the library service in Cleobury Mortimer. If you would like to be kept updated on this work please include your contact details at the bottom of this form.

This period of consultation will run from Wednesday 26th August until Wednesday 7th October 2015.

Consultation forms and copies of the answers to Frequently Asked Questions are available at the Cleobury Country Centre and responses can be left there.

When considering these proposals it will be helpful to bear in mind the Shropshire Council vision for community hubs and the role of libraries in the future, and also what the Council's statutory duties to deliver libraries are. These are listed below.

Clarification of the council's statutory duties to deliver library services

Section 7 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 ("the PLMA")

Under the provisions of the PLMA, the Council, as a library authority, has a statutory duty (not a discretionary power) to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons wishing to make use of it.

The PLMA does not define what is meant by "comprehensive and efficient". However it does provide that the library authority must make facilities for borrowing books and other materials available to people who live, or work, or are undergoing full-time education in Shropshire. It also provides that in fulfilling the duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service, it shall in particular have regard to the desirability of:

- Providing facilities for the borrowing of, and reference to, books and other printed matter, pictures, gramophone records, films and other materials in sufficient quantity and quality to meet the general requirements and any special requirement both of adults and children; and
- encouraging adults and children to make full use of the library service, providing advice as to its use, and making available such bibliographical and other information as may be required; and
- securing co-operation between the library authority and others exercising public functions within the county.

The options proposed within this document will meet this statutory duty. Other alternative proposals made as part of the consultation would also have to meet this statutory duty.

Details of the current library service and building

	Y/N	DETAIL
Management organisation		Shropshire Council
Area of floor space		150 sq m
Hours that the library service is staffed (self-service access is available during the Centre's opening hours)		Monday 9.00 – 1.00 and 2.00 – 7.00 Wednesday 9.00 – 1.00 and 2.00 – 5.00 Friday 9.00 – 1.00 or 2.00 – 5.00 (every other week) Saturday 9.00 – 1.00 Total = 23.5 staffed hours (average over 2 weeks)
Parking		Public parking on site.
Access to IT		Public computers available free to library members.
Information and advice about other services		Yes
Space for community activities		The Library is used for meetings of Friends of the Library group, Friends' social events, author events, children's story-times and activities and class visits from local schools.
Volunteers to support the service		Volunteers from the Friends' group organise events and fundraising activities. Library volunteers help with shelving of books.
Wi-fi		Available in the building.
Impact on the use of the building		N/A
Direct running costs for Shropshire Council		£29,450

Option One – the management of the library is transferred to Cleobury Country Ltd

Shropshire Council will transfer the day to day running of Cleobury Mortimer Library to Cleobury Country Ltd, who will run the service under a 3 year Service Level Agreement. The library will remain in its existing location in the Cleobury Country Centre and Cleobury Country Ltd will run the same range of library services currently available to users of the library.

Some alterations to the Cleobury Country building will be made to give confidential telephone access to Shropshire Council services.

	PROPOSED DETAIL
Management organisation	Cleobury Country Ltd
Area of floor space	150sqm
Hours that the library service is staffed (self-service access is available during the Centre's opening hours)	Monday to Friday 9.00 – 5.00 Saturday 10.00 – 12.00 TOTAL – 42 hours per week
Parking	Increased number of public parking spaces on site
Access to IT	Public computers available free to library members
Information and advice about other services	Yes – with increased confidentiality when needed
Space for community activities	The library space will remain available for meetings of Friends of the Library group, Friends' social events, author events, children's story-times and activities and class visits from local schools.
Volunteers to support the service	Volunteers from the Friends' group organise events and fundraising activities. Library volunteers help with shelving of books
Wi-fi	Available in the building
Impact on the use of the building	None
Direct costs for Shropshire Council per annum	£23,500
Value of income to be generated by Cleobury Country Ltd through library activity per annum	£980
Total budget available to Cleobury Country Ltd to deliver the service	£24,480

1. Do you agree with Option 1?

Yes

No

If you answered no please give your reasons why here...

Option Two – stays under Shropshire Council management with reduced staffing hours

Cleobury Mortimer Library will continue to be run by the Shropshire Council's library service with the hours that the library is staffed reduced from the current 23.5 hours per week to 19 hours per week. Self-service access would be available outside these hours when the Centre is open. There will be no internal changes to the building.

Proposed hours that the library would be staffed:

Monday 9.00 – 1.00 and 2.00 – 5.00

Wednesday 9.00 – 1.00 and 2.00 – 5.00

Friday 9.00 – 12.00 **or** 2.00 – 5.00

Saturday 10.00 – 12.00

TOTAL – 19 hours

Direct annual running costs for Shropshire Council: £25,940

Do you agree with Option 2?

Yes

No

If you answered no please give your reasons why here...

3. Please indicate if there are other alternatives Shropshire Council should consider for the delivery of a library in Cleobury Mortimer, which would assist the council in meeting its required outcomes in reducing costs and delivering a sustainable library service.

This period of consultation will run from Wednesday 26th August to Wednesday 7th October 2015. Completed forms can be returned to the Cleobury Country Centre.

Comments can also be submitted online by going to www.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved and searching for Cleobury Mortimer Library Consultation.

If you would like to be kept informed about this work as it progresses, please complete your name and contact email address below.

Name.....

Email address.....