

REPORT FOR DECISION



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| DECISION OF: | CABINET |
| DATE: | 19 OCTOBER 2016 |
| SUBJECT: | RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE KEY PRINCIPLES FOR THE BURY LIBRARY SERVICE AND NEXT STEPS |
| REPORT FROM: | COUNCILLOR SANDRA WALMSLEY CABINET MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC HOUSING AND SUPPORT SERVICES |
| CONTACT OFFICER: | KLARE RUFO ASSISTANT DIRECTOR LEARNING AND CULTURE |
| TYPE OF DECISION: | KEY DECISION |
| FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS: | FOR PUBLICATION |
| SUMMARY: | This report will inform the Cabinet of the summarised outcomes following the public consultation on the 6 principles and seeks approval for the next stage of the review to be conducted as outlined. |
| OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION | To give approval for the next stage of the consultation timeline to be conducted as detailed below. |
| IMPLICATIONS: | |
| Corporate Aims/Policy Framework: | All work is being conducted to conform with the policy framework of the council. Under Community and Partnerships: <i>Build capacity in (and with) communities to encourage empowerment and reduce demand on services.</i> |
| Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations: | There are no financial considerations arising from this report. |
| Health and Safety Implications | Set out any impact in terms of Health, Safety and Welfare. |
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| Statement by Executive Director of Resources (including Health and Safety Implications) | There are no wider resource implications. |
| Equality/Diversity implications: | The Council has a requirement to have due regard to its public sector equality duty and other equality obligations under the Equality Act 2010. |
| Considered by Monitoring Officer: | <p>Yes There are 3 matters that the Council needs to be consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service pursuant to the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 2. The requirement to have due regard to its public sector equality duty and other equality obligations under the Equality Act 2010 3. That the consultation process is fair and thorough. <p>Legal advice has been sought at an early stage in the review process and will continue to be provided throughout.</p> |
| Wards Affected: | All |
| Scrutiny Interest: | Overview & Scrutiny |

TRACKING/PROCESS

DIRECTOR: Mark Carriline

| Chief Executive/ Strategic Leadership Team | Cabinet Member/Chair | Ward Members | Partners |
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| Scrutiny Committee | Cabinet/Committee | Council | |
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.0 In response to the continued pressure on Council budgets as a result of the 2016/17 Comprehensive Spending Review, the Council must find ways of delivering savings over the next four years whilst continuing to meet its legal duties to provide Bury residents with comprehensive and efficient services.

1.1 The Council remains fully committed to retaining a high quality Library Service in the borough but anticipates that there will need to be changes, including the possibility of a reduction in the number of libraries. Despite this the Council will continue to provide a service that meets its legal duties and supports the

aspirations of residents of all ages for development of reading skills for the youngest, lifelong learning and access to books and information.

1.2 In developing options for change, the Council will consider the contribution that digital technologies can make to developing and improving its Library Service. This is in line with recent guidance from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on libraries as a statutory service. Inspiring and enabling all Bury residents to take advantage of digital opportunities will be another consideration for the review.

1.3 The Council also recognises the importance of libraries as community spaces and wishes to explore ways of working together with local communities to strengthen the role their local library plays in meeting community needs.

2.0 RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

2.1 The council have now concluded two separate initial consultations.

2.2 The first, an online and paper survey completed by 3537 respondents and demonstrates a very positive response to all 6 principles with between 69.71% – 98.14% of respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing with each one.

| | % Strongly Agree/Agree |
|-------------|------------------------|
| Principle 1 | 98% |
| Principle 2 | 94% |
| Principle 3 | 73% |
| Principle 4 | 89% |
| Principle 5 | 70% |
| Principle 6 | 81% |

(See Appendix 1)

Principle 1

To provide a Library Service across the borough which provides all residents and those working or studying in the borough with access to libraries and to electronic services sufficient in number, range and quality to support reading for pleasure, lifelong learning, the development of new skills and the effective use of information.

Principle 2

To ensure that the needs of more vulnerable residents and groups protected by Equalities legislation are taken fully into account in the review process.

Principle 3

To ensure that the resources committed to the Library Service are used as efficiently as possible by exploring options to reduce running and maintenance costs and to share premises with Council and other services.

Principle 4

To explore options for investing in technology to improve access to the Library Service, for example by extending opening hours, increasing our digital offer and enhancing provision for those with sensory impairments.

Principle 5

To welcome the contribution that members of the community can make to the Library Service as volunteers, supporting both traditional and digital services.

Principle 6

To meet local aspirations for a network of community spaces across the borough in which the Council and local communities can work together as partners in meeting local needs.

Additional questions allowed us the opportunity to focus on more detail and key information has been taken from this.

Q8 asked respondents about additional principles to guide the review. 1163 people chose to provide further information. For ease we have grouped the comments together by associated words and the three items most commented on were **Community involvement** – (Use and provision of space) - 267 responses, **reading and books** – 284 responses and **services for children** – 165 responses.

Q13 gave some options for extending or changing opening hours to see if this would make it easier for you to visit the library. 2,707 people gave some preferences (Before 9am 8.87% , Lunchtimes 21.98%, 5pm- 10pm 57.70%, Saturdays 45.25%, Sundays 31.70%).

Q17 asked gave respondents the opportunity to make further comments – 1059 people took this opportunity. For ease we have grouped the comments together by associated words and the three items most commented on were **Staff - level, qualifications, ability** etc (227)), **reading and books** (181) and **Community** (148). (APPENDIX 1)

- 2.3** The second consultation was conducted by Mott MacDonald. In order to gain wider insight from across the borough into library use, views on a future library service and to encompass residents who may not currently use the library service Mott MacDonald undertook a random telephone survey of 500 residents using the same questionnaire as was developed for the Public Consultation. The sample was representative of the borough's demographics in terms of gender, age structure and disability status. (APPENDIX 2 – Summary report –and APPENDIX 3 - Full report)

This survey indicated even further than the public one, high levels of agreement for each of the six principles, with this ranging from 80% (Principle 3) to 96% (Principle 1). For example 93% agreed that the needs of more vulnerable residents and groups be taken fully into account in the provision of services (Principle 2) and the same proportion agreed that options for investing in technology to improve access to the Library Service should be explored (Principle 4). A separate question indicated that 91% of respondents agreed that the Library Service should help everyone to take advantage of new technologies. There was also support for extended opening hours, with more than half of those sampled indicating that both evening and Saturday opening (5-8pm) would make it easier for them to access the library service. With respect to volunteering, a third indicated that they would consider volunteering to support the library service.

40% of those sampled reported using the library service at least once a month and close to 50% at least twice a year. This level of usage is significantly higher than national figures from the DCMS for 2014/15 which indicated that 34% of adults had used a library within the last 12 months. Of the 41% of

those sampled in Bury who indicated that they did not use the library service, approaching half (45%) said that they had either no need or interest in doing so.

APPENDIX 4 is a side by side comparison of the two surveys

2.4 As part of the initial brief we have also commissioned Mott MacDonald to deliver a report using the following criteria. We will have a full report by the end of September.

- A socio-demographic mapping of Bury.
- Qualitative analysis to explore drivers behind library usage patterns, barriers to access, and trends in need and demand for particular services using Bury, GM and national data as relevant.
- An accessibility review of libraries in Bury based on access by public transport.
- A review of Bury library membership data in order to build a better understanding of the potential impact of any options for change on existing user groups.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

3.1 The first part of the consultation has secured a positive response and a baseline agreement from library users and residents around the 6 principles. We will now use these principles alongside the commissioned reports from Mott MacDonald as a basis on which to build a review of the library service.

We are now proposing to move to the next phase of public consultation

3.2 To offer the opportunity to facilitate one workshop with a group of stakeholder representatives at each library to discuss the priorities they have for a library service in the future. Each library will publicise these events to ensure community groups, regular library users and partners are involved and representative of service users. This part of the consultation process is to take place between the end of October – December 2016

3.3 A report will be developed outlining a number of potential models / options for library provision in the future incorporating the public consultation and Mott McDermott consultation findings. This report will be presented for Cabinet discussion on 18 January 2017.

3.4 The revised timeline

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| Report to Cabinet on Consultation outcomes | 19 October 2016 |
| Second part of Public Consultation | Within the period October 2016 to December 2017 |
| Report to cabinet on proposed models / options for change | 18 January 2017 |
| Public Consultation on proposed models / options for change | January – March 2017 |
| Final Report to Cabinet on decisions to be taken | 8 March 2017 |
| Staff consultation | Within the period April 2017 to May 2017 |

Background documents:**For further information on the details of this report, please contact:**

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Appendix 1

Summarised results of the online/paper survey

Appendix 2

Summary report of the Mott MacDonald random sample telephone survey

Appendix 3

Full report of the Mott MacDonald random sample telephone survey

Appendix 4

Comparison report between the conducted public survey and the random sample of Bury residents