

Report to:	CABINET
Report of:	Acting Strategic Director of Place
Date of Decision:	14 FEBRUARY 2017
SUBJECT:	COMMUNITY LIBRARY SERVICE TIERED DELIVERY MODEL
Key Decision: Yes	Relevant Forward Plan Ref: 002921/2017
If not in the Forward Plan: (please "X" box)	Chief Executive approved <input type="checkbox"/> O&S Chairman approved <input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant Cabinet Member(s) or Relevant Executive Member	COUNCILLOR IAN WARD, DEPUTY LEADER
Relevant O&S Chairman:	COUNCILLOR ZAFAR IQBAL, ECONOMY, SKILLS AND TRANSPORT
Wards affected:	ALL

1. Purpose of report:
<p>1.1 Following a decision at Cabinet on 18th October 2016 to consult on a tiered library model, this report summarises the consultation response and sets out the changes to the model that have arisen as a result.</p> <p>1.2 Appendix 1 contains the detail of the amended future model for community libraries. This Cabinet report seeks approval for the tiered model and authorises its implementation.</p>

2. Decision(s) recommended:
<p>That Cabinet :-</p> <p>2.1 Agree the Tiered Library model, as detailed in Appendix 1, noting the main changes to the model (section 6.1 and 6.2, Appendix 1) following the consultation exercise.</p> <p>2.2 Authorise the implementation of the Tiered Library model from 1 April 2017, as set out in Appendix 1, sections 6.2 and 6.3 (tables 2 and 3) noting that volunteers and partners will play a key role in both Tier 3 and Tier 2/3 libraries.</p> <p>2.3 Agree that the management of the Library of Birmingham and Birmingham's Community Libraries are brought back together and that the Acting Strategic Director of Place be delegated to enact this and the designation of a City Chief Librarian by 1 June 2017. (See Appendix 1 section 0.4)</p> <p>2.4 Note that, subject to the confirmation of funding from Sutton Coldfield Town Council, this report maintains a library service at Sutton Coldfield; should it subsequently not be possible to develop a partnership solution, then a report will be forthcoming recommending its closure by 31 August 2017.</p>

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3. Consultation

- 3.1 Following the cabinet report in October there has been a comprehensive public consultation exercise undertaken on the proposals for a Tiered Community Library Service. This has run from 25th October 2016 to 27th January 2017 and has involved
- 4 public meetings
 - 33 facilitated sessions at community libraries
 - 13 ward or district committee meetings
 - 24 other meetings

The full list is set out in Appendix 2.

This has resulted in 1947 responses submitted via the Be Heard database as well as 72 responses (see appendix 3c) submitted via other forms, letter, e-mail, 9 petitions and the 1675 responses to the children's survey.

Alongside the public consultation there has also been a formal consultation ongoing with staff and trade unions. Trade Unions and staff have formally submitted their proposals for amending the model and these have been considered and where appropriate changes reflected in the revised model. The formal consultation with Trade Unions will close after Cabinet have agreed the model.

3.2 Internal

- 3.2.1 Consultation commenced with staff and Trade Unions on the 10th October 2016. Following a period of consultation Trade Unions were asked to submit their final detailed response to the model by 13th January 2017, this is attached in Appendix 3.
- 3.2.2 A meeting took place with the Overview & Scrutiny Chairman for Economy, Skills and Transport on the 2nd February to provide an overview.
- 3.2.3 During the consultation process, the views of local members have been sought through a range of meetings. The proposals have been discussed at 13 ward/district meetings and in addition local members have also been present at many of the 37 public meetings/facilitated sessions.
- 3.2.4 The Head of Library Services and the Assistant Director, Culture and Visitor Economy have been consulted on the report.

3.3 External

- 3.3.1 Individuals and groups were able to submit their views on the proposals via the BeHeard system and via the questionnaire. The consultation had a strong response with 1947 questionnaires completed. Appendix 3 sets out the detail of the public consultation.
- 3.3.2 Furthermore 1675 children responded to a specific questionnaire which sought to gain information on travelling to libraries, times of use as well as what the library was used for.

3.3.3 In order to ensure the impacts of the proposed model were explored further and better understood there was also a series of 6 focus groups. These concentrated on Sutton, Aston, Disability and a further three on wider impacts of the proposed changes.

There have clearly been a number of responses on individual aspects of the model and indeed the proposals for specific libraries. In addition to this we have had a small number of responses from organisations making comment on the overall model. These include Friends of the Library of Birmingham, Unison, the Library Lobby, etc and these submissions are also attached in Appendix 3.

In the run up to the commencement of our local consultation. Other bodies such as the National Library Task Force have recognised that nationally authorities are having to make difficult decisions in light of their limited budgets but, if short-term savings really are required, it needs to be clear how the proposals developed sit alongside - and in the context of - the overall strategic direction of travel and a future-facing vision. They should not prejudice longer-term ambitions.

3.2.4 The responses to the consultation (detailed in Appendix 3) have helped shape the final model for consideration by cabinet. The main amendments made to the model as a result of the consultation analysis are set out in Appendix 1 sections 6.1 and 6.2.

4. Compliance Issues:

4.1 Are the recommended decisions consistent with the Council's policies, plans and strategies?

4.1.1 The recommendation enables delivery against the savings proposals that were part of the 2015/16 budget decision and consulted on at a high level at that time.

4.1.2 Libraries have a key role to offer in supporting three of the council's policy priorities of children, jobs & skills and health and this is reinforced in the proposed model by a new service focus on the Society of Chief Librarians' five Universal Offers of Reading, Learning, Health, Digital and Information.

4.2 Financial Commentary

4.2.1 Background and Context

- The report that was presented to Cabinet on 18 October 2016 outlined the financial implications relating to the proposed Future Operating Model (FOM) that was published for consultation.
- In summary, the proposals were fundable within the provisional cash limits for the service to 2019/20 (after taking into account planned savings and adjustments for approved pay and pension pressures). In addition, the financial projections also included the corporate funding of the prudential borrowing costs for the investment of £0.8m for new technology to improve self-service.

4.2.2. Provisional Service Cash Limits 2017/18 to 2019/20 (Appendix 4)

- The provisional cash limits for the service have been updated to take into account the City Council's Medium Term Financial Plans – in summary, this now includes provision for pay and pensions, corporate funding for the prudential borrowing and the re-phasing of the savings of £0.388m that were planned for 2017/18 into 2018/19 on an ongoing basis.
- The revised cash limits for the service are now £4.450m for 2017/18 and reducing to £4.062m for 2018/19 onwards (this reflects the saving of £0.388m that has been deferred for 2017/18). The cash limits for 2018/19 onwards may be adjusted as part of the annual budget process of the Council to take into account pay and pension costs and potential new savings for example – the new Future Operating Model of the City Council.

4.2.3. Summary of Financial Implications following the Completion of the Consultation and the Revised Proposed Model

- The additional estimated costs of the new potential proposed FOM (for a full year from 1 April 2017) are estimated at £0.14m per annum on an ongoing basis for the next 3 years from 2017/18 to 2019/20 and the major components of these costs are set out below:
 - additional employee costs of £0.18m (this reflects 12 more staff at a cost of £0.3m and savings of £0.1m on agency costs and including Sutton Library)
 - premises and operational costs of £0.19m (including Sutton Library)
 - additional pension strain costs of £0.13m (payable per annum for the next 3 years)
 - additional income of £0.36m (including a proposed contribution of £0.15m from Sutton Town Council for the operation of the Library for 5 months pending the completion of a long term business case, anticipated income of £0.18m from commercial rents, £0.09m from community services and reduced income of £0.05m following the cancellation of the proposed reservations charge)
- The financial analysis indicates that the new model can be operated within the provisional cash limit of £4.450m in 2017/18 (including the set aside of a one-off provision for transitional costs of £0.29m in 2017/18 to manage any short term risks).
- There is a marginal annual shortfall of £0.09m from 2018/19 to 2019/20 (due primarily to the additional pension strain costs that will be payable over 3 years to 2019/20) - this is not expected to continue beyond 2019/20 as the pensions strain liabilities will have been discharged). Mitigations to cover this shortfall will be identified within the Place Directorate approved budget.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 The Council has a statutory duty pursuant to the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 to provide a “comprehensive and efficient Library service” to all those seeking to make use of it. This duty is discharged through a combination of services across the city including for example the Library of Birmingham and 37 Community Libraries. Cabinet must be satisfied that the proposals set out in this report are compliant with the statutory duty.
- 4.3.2 The model being consulted on retains City Council involvement in 37 libraries (The Library of Birmingham and 36 libraries proposed as Tiers 1-3) of the 38 libraries in the city. This figure includes Sutton Coldfield Library on the basis of it being retained if a sustainable solution can be delivered by 31 August 2017. The new model additionally establishes a grant pot of £20,000 to support aspects of further library provision (in addition to the Mobile Library and Library Services at home). At present there are live discussions with 4 organisations around Tier 4 provision.
- 4.3.3 Equality considerations and duties have been paramount to the consultation process and should be central to the decision making process and the proposals relating to the library service, members will need to give careful consideration to the information set out in paragraph 4.4 and Appendix 5 of this report when making their decision.
- 4.3.4 Analysis of the consultation process has been used to advise and ensure that the resultant model put forward to Cabinet to make a decision delivers a comprehensive and efficient library service with the equality duties and considerations at its heart.

4.4 Public Sector Equality Duty

- 4.4.1 The initial Equality Assessment is attached as Appendix 5, along with additional supporting documentation in Appendix 6 including a Needs Assessment, map, and individual Library & Catchment Area Profiles. The Needs Assessment has been updated to reflect feedback that deprivation should be given an enhanced weighting, the model now uses a 50% increased weighting for this criteria.
- 4.4.2 The main potential impacts resulting from the originally proposed model related to
- closure of Aston and Sutton Coldfield libraries and
 - reduced hours of operation across the service
- The amended model retains a library service at Aston and also maintains a service in Sutton Coldfield prior to further consideration during the next 5 months. The current impacts have been largely mitigated. The closure of Kents Moat is mitigated by an increase in provision at Glebe Farm.
- There has been no evidence that the service wide reduction in opening hours of 155 hours (14%) has a disproportionate effect on any group with a protected characteristic. The model was generated from 11 criteria which included a weighted figure for deprivation.
- 4.4.3 A full equality assessment has been carried out using information gathered from the consultation exercise.

5. Relevant background/chronology of key events:

- 5.1 From 2004 to 2015 Community Libraries were managed through District Committees. The library service in Birmingham is now managed within the Place Directorate and needs to design a service that is fit for the 21st Century which is financially sustainable and is underpinned by transformational change to deliver on a modern set of outcomes.
- 5.2 The first phase of change is necessary as a result of the budget limitations within the Community Library Service. As a result in October 2016 Cabinet agreed to an extensive consultation taking place on the proposal for a Tiered Library Service. The proposals which were consulted on for a 12 week period set out to maximise accessibility to library services across the city and in doing so sought to maintain a significant library provision and where appropriate it would work with partners to deliver this.
- 5.3 The consultation response has been significant with 1947 responses submitted via the questionnaire on Be Heard. In addition to this there have also been 74 sessions around the city whereby those involved in developing the model have heard directly from residents their views. The Council has been in listening mode and has given serious consideration as what changes could be made to the model whilst still operating to its required budget levels. The full detail of the consultation responses is set out in Appendix 3, however a summary of the key consultation responses and the city council's response to these is set out in Appendix 1 section 6 and table 2 and highlighted below

This model has secured;

- 36 of the 37 community libraries in the city and in doing so re-establishes two sites that have been temporarily closed
- a significantly increased expenditure on books etc than has been the case in previous years. An expenditure budget of £380,000 has been allocated whereas in recent years around £140,000 has been spent.
- A £50,000 increase for repairs and maintenance.
- investment in self-service technology at our sites

And the model has responded to the consultation with the following key amendments

- Giving an additional weighting to the criteria for deprivation used in the Needs Assessment. Although this altered rankings it did not significantly impact tiering.
- In addition the amended model suspends the decision on the future of Sutton Coldfield Library by up to 5 months. In this time the City Council will work in conjunction with Sutton Coldfield Town Council, the Library Lobby and other partners to see if a sustainable partnership solution can be established within the available resources of all parties.
- The model being considered for Sutton Coldfield Library is based on achieving additional income through property rental if this is achieved in addition to providing a Tier 1 budget for Sutton Coldfield. Library Services at Aston and Glebe Farm would be enhanced and the charge for reservations not progressed. Therefore the amended model suspends the decision on the introduction of reservation charges by up to 5 months, as this is provisional on the Sutton Coldfield business case.

- Withdrawing the proposal to enhance Birchfield to a Tier 1 site (maintaining it at Tier 2) and utilising the resource released by this alongside anticipated extra rental income from Sutton to run Aston Library as a Tier 3 site
- Working in partnership with the local community to ensure the sustainability of continuing to deliver library services from the current site at Stirchley as well as seeking to work more closely with the adjacent Stirchley Baths
- Enhancing the opening hours at Glebe Farm library from the 15 originally proposed to 21 by withdrawing the proposal to replace Kents Moat with a Tier 3 service. As with Stirchley Library this will require community or organisational support.
- The expectation that at least four community sites will offer additional access to some library services under the proposed Tier 4 offer

The consultation exercise and the ambition of working with local communities and partner organisations has therefore been positive and produced some beneficial results.

- 5.4 The City Council currently has 38 main libraries in the city alongside a range of further library services such as the prison library service, mobile library service and library services at home. The 38 main libraries consist of the Library of Birmingham, and then 20 community libraries (open 5 days/ week) and 17 community libraries (open 4 days/week). There is one further community library being run through a partnership with Castle Vale Tenants and Residents Alliance. Of the 38 libraries, two are temporarily closed.
- 5.5 The starting point for the model (Appendix 1, Section 5) was to carry out an assessment using an objective mechanism to prioritise the 37 community libraries (Appendix 1, Section 4). This was undertaken by officers using 11 criteria drawn from library reviews that have taken place in other authorities. In the original proposal all the criteria had an equal weighting, however following consultation this has been amended to provide a higher weighing for deprivation, it now has 50% more weighting than the other 10 criteria.
- 5.6 The authority commenced the consultation exercise with an ambition to maximise the coverage and accessibility of library services across the city. This remains its core principle supported by a number of other concepts behind the model including:
- The library service provision should be prioritised using proven methods used by other library authorities
 - Retaining a local library service with reduced hours is preferable to a closure
 - Libraries should focus on delivering the main outcomes associated with the universal offers:
 - Reading
 - Learning
 - Health
 - Digital
 - Information

With the main libraries offering a wider range of services either delivered through the City Council or by partners.

- Where it is necessary to close a library, additional opening hours and/or services should be offered from a neighbouring library or libraries.
- Where community groups are able to take on the operation of a library, they will be provided with 15 hours a week of operational support from Birmingham City Council library staffing.
- Customers should be encouraged to undertake routine and less complex tasks such as borrowing and returning items themselves with Cabinet already having supported the investment of £824,000 to improve self-service/kiosks in our libraries.
- Library Services do not have to be delivered from the current library buildings, if better property solutions exist and more integrated service provision delivered this will be considered.
- Community involvement will be welcomed in all libraries and all options for working in partnership will be actively considered. A Community Library Partnership has been established for those organisations wanting to support delivery of this approach. The response so far has been heartening with a dozen organisations involved in the last meeting.
- A small pump priming grant totalling £20,000 will be made available for service proposals contributing to the universal offer outcomes.
- Securing investment to modernise the library offer remains a priority.

5.7 The above principles were supported through the consultation exercise and have resulted in the development of a Tiered model of library service delivery.

- Tier 1: Main Library – these would be open for 35 hours, more likely to be delivered from the current library building and have other services delivered from the site such as the benefit verification service. All will have investment in installing self-service equipment. The proposal is for 18 sites to be in this category, with a successful business case for Sutton increasing this to 19.
- Tier 2: Community Library – these would be open for 21 hours, likely to be delivered from the current library building although options may exist to increase hours of operation by working with partners. The proposal is for 10 sites in this category.
- Tier 2/3: These 2 sites would be open for 21 hours but will need the involvement of communities or other organisations to be sustainable.
- Tier 3: Supported Community Library – these would be run by a community organisation, from either their own premises or via a transferred facility. The City Council’s library service will work in partnership to support the organisation through 15 hours of operational support, through the provision of books and investment in self service equipment. The proposal is for 6 sites to be in this category.

- Tier 4: Community Initiated Library Services – the proposal under Tier 4 is to ensure that any local schemes put forward that increase access to one of the universal offers (Digital, Learning, Information, Reading and Health) are considered for support i.e. this could be organisations wanting to loan books or providing free internet access etc. There is no proposed number for the local offer this will be dependent on the ideas that come forward and the number that can be supported through the £20,000 small grant budget available or indeed locally members may wish to support through the Local Innovation Fund. Caste Vale Library already delivers under a Tier 4 type approach and Tyburn Ward has initiated a second Tier 4 provision through use of the Local Innovation Fund.

As a result of the consultation process the rigidity of definition of the four tiers and the clarity of distinction between them and indeed areas of overlap have grown. This is detailed further in Appendix 1, but in essence adopts a more flexible approach to ensure we deliver what works best in a specific set of circumstances.

- Library closures: The proposal is that one of the 37 Community Libraries in the city (Kents Moat) should close and that financial sustainability of another site (Sutton Coldfield) will be considered over the next 5 months as partners work together to see if a sustainable solution can be found. If it can't then two libraries will close. Under the revised model it is proposed that Kents Moat Library closes and the previously proposed budget transfer to Glebe Farm Library to increase its opening hours. Sutton Coldfield Library will remain open for up to 5 months whilst a sustainable partnership solution is sought. If a business case is not workable then a report will be forthcoming recommending closure on 31 August 2017.

5.8 Sites were originally placed into Tiers 1-3 based on the initial scoring matrix using 11 criteria drawn from reviews that have taken place in other authorities. These have been amended following consultation to reflect feedback regarding the need to weight the criteria measuring deprivation – this has now been increased by 50% see Appendix 1, Section 4.

A map showing the proposed geographical spread is set out in Appendix 1, Section 6

5.9 The detail of the proposed model is set out in Appendix 1 however by tiering the service provision and by looking to maximise the opportunities for working with others, whether that be additional service provision, co-location or working alongside local interested organisations, the tiered model offers to protect a wider range of provision than could otherwise have been the case.

6. Evaluation of alternative option(s):

6.1 The main alternative options coming forward through the consultation responses were to

- Hand over the six Tier 3 sites to the community/other organisations without any support from the city council in order to use that resource in the other 29 libraries
- Temporarily fund Sutton Library through the capital resources.

Neither of these options were deemed viable alternatives.

The main alternative options considered at the time of formulation of the October 2016 consultation report were to (a) implement open plus technology/have libraries that can operate in unstaffed mode, (b) to close a number of 'lower priority' libraries across the city, or (c) to deliver the service via a staff led mutual. The initial option appraisal that was completed, suggested that the latter was not a financially viable model in the short term.

6.2 The introduction of a tiered model does not require or preclude the option of a staff led mutual.

7. Reasons for Decision(s):

7.1 Changes are needed to the community library service in order to address the £1.95m cumulative saving allocated to the service. The model achieves this by working with other organisations in a partnership setting and in doing so maximises the spread of and access to library services across the city. A second phase of transformational change to library services in Birmingham remains necessary and work has been initiated with the Birmingham Innovation Hub to drive this.

Signatures	<u>Date</u>
Cabinet Member	
..... Cllr Ian Ward, Deputy Leader
Chief Officer	
..... Jacqui Kennedy, Acting Strategic Director of Place

List of Background Documents used to compile this Report:

List of Appendices accompanying this Report (if any):

- 1. Amended Tiered Delivery Model for Libraries in Birmingham
- 1a Needs Analysis – Key Performance Indicators
- 2. List of consultation sessions
- 3. Consultation Analysis
- 3a Focus Group Analysis
- 3b Children’s Survey Analysis
- 3c Additional Consultation Comments
- 3d Notes of Public Consultation Meetings
- 3e Friends of Library of Birmingham Response
- 3f Unison Response
- 3g Library Lobby Proposal for Sutton Coldfield
- 4. Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17-2019/20
- 5. Equality Assessment
- 5a Equality Assessment Appendix
- 6. Needs Assessment
- 6a Map indicating 2 Mile Radius
- 6b. Individual Library & Catchment Area Profiles