
Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education
26th October 2009

Report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services

Update on the Modernisation of Library Service

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Select Committee on the Modernisation programme for Dudley Library Service.

Background

2. The Library Service in Dudley has been through a number of reviews including an internal policy committee review in 1998/1999 and a peer review by the Museum, Library and Archive Council in October 2005. Each of these reviews identified that the service had a number of strengths, but needed to look at significant re-provision and remodelling of major elements of the overall service to make it into a modern and effective service.
3. The first step in developing a modern service was to define a new vision for the Library Service, 'Open and Accessible to All' and the ten principles which would underpin this vision. The vision and principles were approved by Cabinet in September 2006.
4. In September 2007 Cabinet agreed to a significant plan to change and invest in Dudley Library Services including closing 5 libraries, providing 4 Library Link facilities, increasing borough wide opening hours and investing in a development programme for the service.
5. This Select Committee called in the decision to modernise the Library Service and subjected it to scrutiny on the 24th October 2007. The Committee resolved *'that this Committeesupport the proposed modernisation of the Library service and ask that all of the views expressed here tonight are fully taken into account during the consultation stage of the process and that we further ask that the Cabinet ensure that, where appropriate, the re-provided facilities are put in place before any libraries are de-commissioned.'*
6. An update report was brought to this Select Committee on the 27th October 2008 and a request was made that a further update be brought in 2009.

Progress to date

7. Lye Library has extended its opening hours by 10.5 hours a week and the Quarry Bank service moved to Quarry Bank Library Link in January.
8. Wordsley Library refurbishment has been completed and the library re-opened with 10.5 extra opening hours and Radio Frequency IDentification (RFID)

technology and launched in February 2009. This including the introduction of a new service - ipod books called 'Playaways'. Since that date the range of activities at the library have been extended to include: job club; computer club; complex needs reading group; teenage reading group; and the police use the library for local surgeries now

9. The layout at Halesowen Library has been changed including putting in RFID technology, reducing the number of public floors, creating a better entrance and social services have moved from their offices to the space released in April. There was consultation with teenagers about their area and the children's library has moved to main entrance floor. The library extended its opening hours to 61.5 hours a week including Sundays in May 2009.
10. Kingswinford Library has been extended with funding from LSC and reopened on Monday 14th September with RFID technology. There has been consultation on what courses the local community require, the courses have now started. The official launch is planned for 20th November.
11. Dudley library has been partially rewired and rearranged, including moving the counter to make a more welcoming entrance, taking down a partition and installing our Tenants Choice Showroom. A range of doors, kitchens and bathroom items are on display in the library. Dudley is unique in providing a Tenants Choice Showroom for housing tenants to use to choose their options when they are having replacement items in their home.
12. Dudley have worked with the other three Black Country Library Authorities to establish a single Black Country book stock contract which came into operation in April 2009.
13. The Library Management system has been improved to enable an EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) process for purchasing books and managing the stock contract and improved cash management which has removed the need for separate tills in each library.
14. All of the Public Access computers have been either upgraded (34) or replaced (150) by the end of June 2009.
15. In January 2009 the library service have run, with Adult and Community Learning, a second successful '6 book challenge' project which encourages adults who are not confident readers to read 6 books.
16. User groups have been set up for the Brierley Hill and Halesowen areas, and ones are in the process of being established for Stourbridge and Dudley areas.
17. Consultation with reading groups led to changes in the way reading collections are managed and the groups suggesting books to purchase for future reading collections
18. Dudley Libraries Bookstart Co-ordinator has engaged with a wide range of parents, child-minders and children in early years settings outside the libraries to do an '8 rhyme challenge' with preschool children. It has been proved that learning rhymes helps shy children and helps them to mix better with their peers; rhymes help children concentrate, boost their language development, memory and auditory skills, helps with mathematical concepts, it also helps their motor skills and coordination. This engagement with libraries outreach is

encouraging use of the libraries and use of books and all the people engaged have joined the library

19. Teenagers have been involved in stock selection - £1000 is allocated to each of the 5 localities each year for teenagers to choose stock for their local library. They spend time with the Children and Young People's Librarian selecting the books they would like to see in their libraries. This year the following groups were involved:
- The Wordsley School, Teenage mums group from Netherton Children's Centre, Castle High, Halesowen Youth Club, Windsor High, Coseley School.

Evaluation of the success to date

20. The results of the 2009 Home Library Cipfa Survey have been compiled. 400 of our users were asked about what books they like to read and their satisfaction in several areas:
- 92% of users thought that the staff knowledge, helpfulness and reliability of the service was very good
 - 39% of the respondents had first heard about the service from friend, neighbours or family.
 - 25% had heard about the service from a library
 - 9% had heard through social services.
 - Of the respondents 87% were female and 42% were ages 85 – 94.

The Home Library Services is looking into ways to develop the service in relation to the comments received and will then communicate back to the service users on and what we will do in response to their comments.

21. Successful activities in libraries over the last year have included Sustrans bike maintenance; Hearing dogs for the deaf; consultation coffee mornings for transforming social care; Dudley Library Centenary events as well as a regular programme too long to mention.
22. Issues have started to increase in libraries when their opening hours have been extended
23. There have been visits and phone calls from many other library services who are looking at our Library Link service model, and an article in the professional press (Public Library Journal).
24. The national 2008 Year of Reading report included a Dudley case study about our outreach work in Merry Hill to encourage new members to join the library.
25. The summer reading scheme has been successful this year with over 3,182 children began against a target of 2000 and of this 1705 (54%) complete the challenge of reading at least six books.. This year, for the first time, we worked with teenage volunteers supporting the scheme.
26. Library Links have been mentioned in Museum, Library and Archive Council (MLA) report on Swindon Libraries as good practice. They have interviewed Kate Millin about the modernisation programme and will be publishing the information on their website as good practice in managing change.

Finance

27. The net library revenue budget for 2008/09 is £5.25 million. The proposals and actions contained within the report will continue to be carried out within the available resources. The Library Service also has a capital programme allocation of £2.63 million split over 2008/09 and 2009/10. All capital works planned will be contained within these resources.

Law

28. Under the requirements of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, the Council is a Library Authority with a requirement to provide 'a *comprehensive and efficient library service*' as defined by the setting of Public Library Service Standards. The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) set these standards on behalf of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). A revised performance management framework for public libraries, drawn up by the Museums, Libraries & Arts Council, has been created to replace the Public Library Standards.

Equality Impact

29. A stage one Equality Impact Assessment was completed for the whole modernisation programme and will be reviewed before the end of March 2010.
30. The continual implementation of service enhancements will enable Dudley Library Services to provide effective services for children and disadvantaged communities in Dudley through the provision of service focussed on geographical communities, and a team of staff who can also provide services for communities with more specific requirements across the borough.
31. The implementation of the Library Modernisation programme means that the library service is working more effectively to address the needs of all communities and takes positive steps to encourage reading and library use amongst them all.

Recommendation

32. It is recommended that the Select Committee:

- Note the report and the progress to date of the Library Modernisation Programme.



Linda Sanders.

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List of Background Papers

Leisure and Development Committee Paper *Best Value Review of the Library Service – the final report* 9th February 1999

Cabinet Paper *Providing a Modern Library Service in Dudley MBC – a strategy for the future* 13th September 2006

Corporate Board Paper *Providing A Modern Library Service In Dudley MBC* 25th April 2006

Decision Sheet *Dudley Libraries Blueprint for the Future Remodelling of staffing structure* 19th January 2007

Decision Sheet *Dudley Libraries Blueprint for the Future Remodelling of senior management team structure* 2nd March 2007

Cabinet Paper *Providing a Modern Library Service in Dudley MBC – a modernisation programme* 12th September 2007

Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education *Responses to Members questions on improvement plans for Dudley Library Services* 24th October 2007

Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education *Update on the Modernisation of Library Service* 27th October 2008

DCMS *Framework for the Future; Libraries, Learning and Information in the next decade* 2003

IdeA/MLA *Library Service Peer Review Benchmark* 2005.

DCLG *Developing the local government services market to support a long term strategy for local government* 2007

DCLG *Stronger and prosperous communities* 2007

MLA *Community engagement in public libraries: a report on current practice and future developments*

MLA *A blueprint for excellence* 2007

MLA *A new libraries performance management framework* 2007

Patrick Conway *‘Professional Standard of Service report’* Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, May 2008

Appendix 1 – programme of opening hours extensions and library closures

Date	Library	Hours Lost	Hours Gained	Total hours open per week	
				<i>Staffed hours p.w.</i>	<i>Total hours available p.w.</i>
Total number of opening hours per week 31st March 2008				672.5	672.5
<i>June 2008</i>	Dudley Library opening hours extended to 7 days Stourbridge Library opening hours extended to 7 days Gornal Library opening hours extended to 6 days Kingswinford Library opening hours extended to 6 days Closed the Library at Brook School (the former Amblecote Library) Closed Wall Heath Library	- 47	+ 39.5	665	665
<i>July 2008</i>	Transfer Library service to Dudley Wood Library Link	- 22	+ 10 staffed + 39.5 open	653	682.5
<i>Sept 2008</i>	Brierley Hill Library opening hours extended to 7 days Cradley Library opening hours extended to 6 days Long Lane Library opening hours extended to 6 days Sedgley Library opening hours extended to 7 days Transfer Library service to Woodside Library Link	- 26	+66.5 staffed + 47.5 open	693.5	760.5
<i>Oct 2008</i>	Coseley Library opening hours extended to 6 days		+ 12.5	706	773
<i>Jan 2009</i>	Lye Library opening hours extended to 6 days Transfer of service to Quarry Bank Library Link	-25	+ 20.5 staffed +24 open	701.5	782.5
<i>Feb 2009</i>	Wordsley Library opening hours extended to 6 days a week		+10.5	712	793
<i>May 2009</i>	Halesowen Library opening hours extended to 7 days		+ 10	722	803