

Halesowen Area Committee

9th September 2010

Halesowen Library Locality Panel

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Halesowen Area committee about the planned establishment of the Halesowen Locality Library Panel as requested at the committee meeting on the 10th March 2010. This panel will be a pilot with a view to developing the model across the borough as part of the ongoing engagement and consultation for Dudley Libraries.
2. To request the committee to nominate Councillors to become members of the panel.

Background

3. The library service were requested by the Halesowen Area committee at their meeting on the 10th March to consider establishing a Library Forum on a more formal and structured basis using the Housing Forum model.
4. The committee requested that a further update report be submitted to the September meeting of the Area Committee with a view to giving consideration to concerns raised and any feedback.
5. The Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services undertook to consider the issue and to investigate the possibility of piloting such a Forum in the Halesowen area covering Halesowen, Long Lane and Cradley Libraries. Decision sheet number DACHS/026/2010 has now been signed by the Director and Cabinet Member to formalise this undertaking.
6. An important part of the Library modernisation process has been to engage communities and consult on services. Major work has been undertaken to consult about convenient opening hours and has resulted in successful extended opening hours including Sundays.
7. Communities have been consulted on the book stock and services to be provided at Library Links which has shaped the provision planned for these new models of service. Ongoing engagement and consultation is now part of the development and delivery of the library engagement programme. It is envisaged that the establishment of Library Locality Panels will further strengthen this consultation and engagement.
8. Housing colleagues have been consulted regarding governance and administration of their panels and the model set out in this paper reflects the established housing model adapted to library business.
9. The administration for the Halesowen Locality Library Panel will be done by the Heads of Service Personal Assistant. The Halesowen Locality Manager will be responsible for minutes and agendas and for attending the meeting as the responsible officer.
10. The Halesowen Locality Library Panel will cover all library matters within the locality and service wide matters where appropriate. The Halesowen Locality Library Panel

will consist of 5 library users with an additional place available for a disability representative. There will also be up to 5 Councillor representatives as agreed by the Halesowen Area Committee.

11. Library users will be elected by library members. Nominations will be invited by the use of posters in each section of Halesowen Library and in Long Lane and Cradley Libraries. Every effort will be made to encourage a wide range of representation including young people and computer users. These will be followed by elections carried out in each library Councillors nominated by the Halesowen Area Committee.
12. Observers will be allowed, and the meetings will be held quarterly
13. The Constitution for the Locality Library Panels is included as Appendix 1
14. The suggested date for the first Halesowen Locality Library Panel is *Monday 15th November 5pm-7pm at Long Lane or Cradley Library*. It is intended to review the panel in spring 2011. The Director of Adult and Community Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Housing, Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning will carefully examine feedback from the experience of the early pilot to ensure that the experience informs the development of other panels across the borough.

Finance

15. The Locality Library Panels will be delivered within existing budgets.

Law

16. 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'

Equality Impact

17. The panel will be set up to enable as wide a range of library users to have the chance to engage with the process.

Recommendation

18. It is recommended that the Halesowen Area committee:-

- Note the introduction of library panels as a key engagement mechanism with library users.
- Nominate the Councillors to be their representatives on the Halesowen Library Locality Panel



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List of Background Papers

Appendix 1 – Locality Library Panel
Constitution