

REPORT OF THE GROUP MANAGER, LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES AND INFORMATION

A STRATEGY FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE'S LIBRARIES – 6 MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Members on implementation of the strategy for Nottinghamshire's Libraries.

Information and Advice

2. The 'Strategy for Nottinghamshire's Libraries' was approved by County Council on 15 December 2011.
3. Since its approval the strategy has under-pinned the service business plan for 2012/2013. A number of specific actions have been completed or have made progress during the first 6 months of the strategy.
4. The strategy outlined 10 key pledges and a 10 point action plan for the future.
5. The following table summarises progress over the first 6 months of 2012 in relation to the 10 key pledges made within the strategy.

Pledge No.	Pledge Summary	Achievement and Progress
1.	We will invest to put libraries at the heart of their communities by maximising the use of library services and our buildings as a key face to face service of the County Council.	<p>NCC Customer Service points at Mansfield, Eastwood and Newark, with plans to locate in Worksop Library</p> <p>NCC Children's Centre provision at Cotgrave, Ladybrook, Mansfield Woodhouse, Misterton, Ruddington, West Bridgford and Warsop Libraries</p> <p>NCC Registrar services at Beeston, Southwell, Sutton in Ashfield and Stapleford Libraries</p>
2.	We will provide services where people live, through an extensive network of libraries and specialist mobile libraries.	All 60 Libraries and 3 mobile libraries are fully operational – non-planned closure was 0.01 % of total opening hours

3.	<p>We will respond directly to local needs in developing libraries and ensure our libraries meet community need. We will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - libraries are open at convenient times - a wide range of library books and information sources are available across the network - we consult with customers and communities in making changes to service provision. 	<p>Changes in opening hours were made in January and April following customer feedback and analysis of management information. Total opening hours were also increased by 6% from 1,395 hrs per week to 1,482</p> <p>Sunday opening is now available at 3 strategic libraries: Mansfield Central, Southwell and Worksop.</p> <p>In addition to consultation in relation to opening hours, a specific survey was undertaken in relation to changes made at Beeston Library</p>
4.	<p>We will increase community involvement in the shaping and delivery of libraries provision.</p>	<p>Community Partnership Libraries (CPL) continue to develop, including a range of volunteering opportunities</p> <p>Co-location of Burton Joyce Parish Council office into the Library in May came out of the CPL initiative.</p>
5.	<p>We will keep local communities and customers at the centre of all we do.</p>	<p>Libraries continue to play a significant role in the life of communities, recently supporting Jubilee celebrations, the Olympic torch relay and local community events.</p>
6.	<p>We will be dynamic, innovative and share best practice.</p>	<p>Nottinghamshire Libraries play an active part in regional and national networks.</p> <p>In partnership with The Reading Agency (TRA) and the Publishers Association (PA), Nottinghamshire is one of 5 national pathfinders in a 'Digital Marketing Skills Project' funded by the Arts Council England (ACE) A report will be presented to Culture Committee on 30 October 2012.</p>
7.	<p>We will provide excellent customer service every time, and maintain our high satisfaction levels.</p>	<p>Within the business plan for 2012/13 there is a focus on customer service to re-visit standards and practice across the service.</p> <p>Customer feedback remains good. Specific survey and mystery customer work is planned for the next 6 months.</p>

8.	We will ensure that libraries contribute to positive social, economic and educational outcomes for individuals, communities, local business and culture in Nottinghamshire.	Within the business plan for 2012/13 there are specific tasks related to improving outcomes. A specific project involves small focus group and individual feedback to identify the value and benefit of library services and initiatives. A report will be presented to Culture Committee following the completion of this work.
9.	We will continue to develop new audiences for our libraries by exploiting the use of customer insight data and by adopting a targeted approach to our cultural programmes.	Southwell Library Poetry Festival received excellent ticket sales and media coverage. A regular programme of events has been maintained at Worksop Library and an emerging planned programme for Mansfield will be established during the autumn. Planning work for the programme activity following the opening of West Bridgford Library is progressing well.
10.	We will continue to explore new operating models to provide the best possible libraries service for Nottinghamshire.	The recent LGA report 'Local solutions for future local library services' and the ACE consultation on 'Envisioning the library of the future' enters its third phase (July – October 2012) - both provide a strategic background for any future options appraisal for Nottinghamshire.

6. The following table summarises progress over the first six months of 2012 in relation to the 10 point action plan.

Action Number	Action	Achievement and Progress Jan – June 2012
1.	Investing in, developing and remodelling Nottinghamshire libraries.	Mansfield Central Library re opened following an investment of £3.4 m with over 3,000 new members joining with overwhelmingly positive customer feedback. Minor improvement works completed in Beeston, Bilsthorpe, Blidworth, Burton Joyce, Huthwaite, Newark, Retford, Selston and Southwell Libraries.
2.	Locating library services in the best location for local communities and library users	Work continues to co-locate – Annesley Woodhouse, Balmoral, Inham Nook and Tuxford.

3.	Providing resources and access to services in partnership with local communities and customers.	<p>2011/12 actual bookfund spend amounted to £1.4 m, with £1 m spend projected for 2012/13.</p> <p>A new joint book supply contract with 4 other services has resulted in improved discounts and levels of service.</p> <p>The book donation scheme continues to provide a useful stream of additional new stock.</p> <p>Re-organisation of book stock into categories and improved guiding at all libraries completed.</p> <p>CPL volunteering activity and improved use of self service technology has resulted in increased opening hours since January 2012.</p>
4.	Continuing to develop the 'core' libraries offer to provide inspiration to read, create knowledge through access to information, learning and the Nottinghamshire story, enhance community life and stimulate cultural activity.	<p>All libraries maintain an ongoing programme of displays, exhibitions, promotions and events to inspire customers and local communities.</p> <p>From large events attracting 300 hundred families, the 170 supported book groups, the 100% of new babies reached through Bookstart and the 500,000 information requests dealt with in 2011/12, libraries are fulfilling their core purpose.</p>
5.	Maximising the use of new technology such as e books and self service.	<p>The 39th self service library went live in January with the average transaction rate well over 80%.</p> <p>The use of public access computers remains high with over 233,000 sessions in the first 6 months of 2012.</p> <p>Plans are in place to expand the coverage of Wi-Fi to all 12 level 1 libraries and undertake a refresh of IT hardware in 8 libraries.</p>
6.	The further development of planned cultural, heritage and learning programmes.	The majority of programme development work has been related to establishing Mansfield Central library as a venue.

7.	Maintaining and further developing work with children and young people.	<p>Summer reading challenge 2012 has again proved popular with an estimated 8,000 children joining the scheme. Bookstart, the book gifting programme for babies and toddlers, continues to operate at a high level. The new Bookstart bear club is now available at all libraries with over 1,600 registrations since it was launched in June. Regular Storytimes and Rattle, Rhyme and Roll sessions are available in all larger libraries.</p> <p>The TRA/PA digital skills project is working with young people in West Bridgford.</p>
8.	Supporting staff development and empowerment.	<p>Library staff continue to provide a welcoming and customer friendly service.</p> <p>Briefing and development sessions with staff have been undertaken specifically to communicate the strategy and the business plan.</p> <p>A staff development and training plan has also been included in the business plan for the first time.</p> <p>Eight candidates supported this year towards completion of the ACLIP qualification (Associate of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals).</p> <p>Briefing sessions for all library managers on new NCC competency framework.</p>
9.	Developing 'community library partnerships' (CPLs)	<p>Since the report on the small library provision report presented to Culture portfolio in March 2012, the number of volunteers has continued to increase.</p>
10.	Developing mobile and community based library services to those who cannot visit static library sites.	<p>Following the implementation of the new mobile library service in April 2011, the service is undertaking a communication and promotional project to ensure potential customers are aware of the service.</p>

7. In summary the library service continues to deliver its core service to a high standard and is developing the service in line with the agreed strategy.

Other Options Considered

8. As this is a report for noting, it is not necessary to consider other options.

Statutory and Policy Implications

9. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

10. The detailed work undertaken in relation to the delivery of the strategy aims to improve the accessibility and quality of library and information services. Customer satisfaction levels remain high. Annual customer survey work will be undertaken during the next reporting period, additionally work is underway to meet the Customer Excellence Standard.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the report be noted.

Peter Gaw
Group Manager, Libraries, Archives and Information

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Peter Gaw
Group Manager, Libraries, Archives and Information
T: 0115 977 4201
E: peter.gaw@nottscc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments

11. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (NDR 09/08/12)

12. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers

A Strategy for Nottinghamshire's Libraries - Nottinghamshire County Council Dec 2011

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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