

REPORT FOR DECISION

Agenda Item	
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DECISION OF:	CABINET
DATE:	10th APRIL 2013
SUBJECT:	PLAN FOR CHANGE: PROGRESS OF LIBRARIES REVIEW
REPORT FROM:	Councillor Jane Lewis, Cabinet Member for Leisure, Tourism and Culture
CONTACT OFFICER:	Graham Atkinson, Executive Director of Communities and Neighbourhoods
TYPE OF DECISION:	KEY DECISION
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:	This paper is within the public domain
SUMMARY:	<p>This report details further progress of the review of the Library Service since the Cabinet’s decision on 28 November 2012, which followed consultation and a range of research and analysis. The Cabinet previously approved the strategy for the review of the Library Service and key principles to frame further work focused on co-location of library and other services.</p> <p>Several neighbouring Library Services, are already benefitting from existing co-locations, and have identified a “Community Hub” model as a sustainable way forward for retaining services. Bury’s Library Service currently facilitates a range of partner and community activities and shares buildings with other Council services. The proposals contained within this report are largely based around developing close partnerships with Adult Care Services through a co-located model.</p> <p>This report sets out how the proposed development of an initial 4 'hubs' can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the retention of the Council’s 17 libraries

	<p>and services;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a sustainable operating model for future service delivery across the Borough; and • achieve the savings target agreed within the Plan for Change budget programme. <p>All library services will be retained across the borough</p>
OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION	<p>Option 1</p> <p>1. The report seeks approval from Cabinet to consult with all stakeholders on the proposals outlined in the report, to establish four Community Hubs,</p> <p>2. Note the commitment to report back to Cabinet in June 2013 (after the stakeholder consultation exercise has been completed).</p> <p>Option 2</p> <p>Do nothing</p> <p>Cabinet is recommended to approve Option 1</p>
IMPLICATIONS:	
Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:	Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? Yes
Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations:	<p>This report outlines the required savings from the Libraries Service under the "Plan for Change".</p> <p>Cabinet approved Phase 1 proposals on 28th November 2012.</p> <p>This report outlines core principles of the Phase 2 review and seeks approval to consult further upon these with service users and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Final proposals will be drafted in light of;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The outcome of consultation - Development of detailed business cases - Technical / structural surveys - Assessment of impact upon the wider asset portfolio. <p>Proposals will then be brought back to Cabinet for formal approval.</p>
Statement by Executive Director	The proposals for co-location of a range of services provide opportunities for more

1.0 BACKGROUND

This report sets out a proposed Phase 2 re-structure of the library service in Bury following review. The principles that underpin the development of Phase 2 were set out in the report to Cabinet on 28 November 2012. The outline proposal set out will be the subject of public consultation and will be reported back to Cabinet in June 2013.

1.1 Brief summary description of current library service

Bury Library Service has 17 libraries, sited across the Borough, with a variety of opening hours, ranging from over 45 hours per week, to less than 10. Bury's current library core offer, based on the recommendations of the Society of Chief Librarians, is listed below. The needs assessment and consultation work that has guided Phase 2 of the Libraries review also included a review and possible re-definition of the libraries core offer in the future, as put forward in the "Plan for Change: Progress of Libraries Review " Cabinet report of 28th November 2012.

- (i) **Reading and literacy** - We offer free access to multi-media reading resources for people for enquiry, learning, inspiration and recreation. As information is now available in different formats, we also provide e-resources such as web based content, social media, and e -audio as well the traditional large print format and in some community languages.
- (ii) **Lifelong Learning - space, support and skills** - We support lifelong learning through access to knowledge, content and study space. We work with other learning providers to signpost and create gateways from informal to formal learning.
- (iii) **On line and virtual services** - We provide access to a range of on-line resources such as family history, business, health and provide remote access to the library catalogue, request service and renewals.
- (iv) **Self Service:** We are developing existing self service provision to improve and expand customer access to services.
- (v) **Information and signposting to other services**-we provide access to guidance from information experts, on site or remotely.
- (vi) **Digital skills and services** - we are developing and enhancing our information services by providing internet access We help residents to develop skills to make use of digital public services resources independently.
- (vii) **Free community spaces** - We encourage the increased use of community spaces and resources available in libraries and work actively with local library communities to develop services appropriate to their local needs. We encourage local communities to assist with that provision, including by volunteering.
- (viii) **Advice and support** - we offer space within libraries for partners and other agencies to deliver advice sessions for members of the local community. Libraries also host Councillor surgeries.
- (ix) **Access for residents to Council Services** - libraries host Council Information Points. This includes library staff providing first point / face to face contact to other council services including payment facilities and advice.
- (x) **Services for targeted audiences** --through appropriate stock selection, activities and access to other services libraries target groups including families, children & young people and older people. Activities include a housebound service for older people,

Bookstart, summer activities for children, Summer Reading Challenge, visits to and from schools and Rhyme Time activity sessions.

- (xi) Local and family history resources** - We enable access to the wide range of resources available both within the service and on-line via including a paid for research service and support for those who wish to do their own research.

The Service regards core service provision as including:

- free access to books
- online access to a range of resources, including access to information, the ability to carry out library transactions such as book renewals and catalogue access, and the loan of books – Bury currently loans e-audio books and is currently introducing e-books
- information and signposting
- expert advice and support
- multimedia resources
- community outreach services
- specialist provision for targeted audiences (for example children and young people, families, older people)
- learning space and support
- Archives, local and family history resources.

1.1.1 In addition to this core library provision, specialist services are currently provided as follows:

- Housebound Library Service (delivery of library materials to people's homes where they are unable to visit libraries themselves)
- Schools Library Service (delivery of library materials to schools across the Borough)
- Sensory Unit at Whitefield Library (supports visually and hearing impaired people with staff and resources)
- Archives Service (provides access to local council, business and organisation records).

1.1.2 The service also currently hosts and facilitates a range of other partner/community activities and shares buildings with other council services, partners and 3rd sector /community groups. This includes space and support for an extensive range of partner /3rd sector activities facilitated by library staff e.g. access to employment /housing support agencies and activities to improve health and well-being, reading groups and mums and toddler support

1.1.3 Libraries in Bury are open to everyone who lives, works, studies or visits the Borough, including the Boroughs population – currently 185,100 people. The most recent data for 2011- 2012 shows that the total registered membership of the libraries was 79,603, of which 30,376 (38.16%) are described as active members (i.e. have borrowed any item within the last 12 months) and 40,473 are described as active members including computer users (50.84%). In addition 17,035 adults attended activities in 2011/12, and 266,550 information enquiries were answered.

1.1.4 The annual spend on Bury Library Service was £3.2 million in **2011/12**. The majority of spend (63%) was on staff; 26% on other costs e.g. supplies materials & premises, 11% income from fines and fees and central overheads.

The libraries expenditure has already been reduced to meet previous savings by approximately 17% over the past 2 years.

1.1.5 Satisfaction with the service is rated high, with 96.1% of adults surveyed (3779 respondents) in the most recent Adult CIPFA survey rating the service as good or very good. This places the service in the top quartile nationally.

1.2 **Changing role of Library service /key service drivers**

1.2.1 The challenge for Bury Council's library services is mirrored right across the country, which is to ensure that it provides a "comprehensive and efficient" service for everyone who wants to use it, and to reflect the needs of those who live, work or are in full time education in the Borough

1.2.2 The way in which people view and use libraries is facing unprecedented levels of change both from the rapid development of smart technology but also what people want from a 21st Century library service.

1.2.3 The transformation in how people acquire books and access all forms of written and digital information is in full swing and is changing more rapidly than at any time since the advent of printed books. Intense competition in the publishing industry and high street experience has resulted in wider choice and lower prices. The internet has radically changed the way people access information and has given many people instant access to digital information at very low cost. The emphasis has moved from physical materials such as printed books and delivery from fixed buildings, to virtual access via the web and to electronic media supply such as via e-books, information/reference sites such as Wikipedia and more widely huge search engines such as Google and Yahoo. It is essential therefore that the library service modernises and develops innovative ways to maintain its relevance to continue to deliver positive outcomes for individuals and communities. This requires library services to embrace innovation and opportunity drivers, including:

- new technologies such as eBooks and on-line information
- the introduction and expansion of self-service technology
- co-location of buildings with a range of services that act as 'community hubs'.

1.2.4. Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) is now a tried and tested self service technology. It is a key enabler of the savings described in this and in the previous Phase 1 report and will be implemented during 2013/4. RFID is a popular method of remotely storing and retrieving data using devices attached to a product, that has been successfully used in libraries in Asia, Europe and North America for over a decade. The latest RFID-enabled checkout machines allow users to return and renew materials, check the status of reserved items and pay charges.

1.3 **Plan for Change / strategic context**

1.3.1 The Government is reducing funding to local authorities and as such all Council services need to reduce how much they spend. The Plan for Change set out the strategic direction for the Council to manage the financial challenges ahead. The Plan for Change and Our Corporate Plan 2012-2015 has established a vision for the Council 'to lead, shape and maintain a prosperous, sustainable Bury that is fit for the future'.

The Library Review continues to link to the following strategic values from the Plan for Change:

- **Putting residents first** – We will put our residents first – understanding what matters to them and how we meet their needs
- **Empowering and supporting communities** – We will empower and support our communities to forge their own futures and make real changes to their neighbourhoods.
- **Openness and Transparency** – We will operate in an open and transparent way, and actively seek people’s views, listening to ideas and, where possible, acting on those ideas, to design and improve services
- **Supporting People in severe need/ the vulnerable** – As we look at how we can change, we will need to ensure that services for people in severe need or vulnerable people continue to be of paramount importance.

1.3.2 The library service will play a key role in supporting these values and they will help positively shape the future direction of the work which is undertaken. The library service will also help the council to deliver the outcomes of the Plan for Change, which are:

- Reducing poverty and its effects
- Supporting our most vulnerable residents
- Making Bury a better place to live

1.4 **Future financial position**

1.4.1 Within the budgetary reductions requirements of the Council, savings have been identified and the Library Services contribution to these comes from a total library budget of £3,002,600. It is estimated that this will need to reduce by a further £570,000 if an affordable position is to be reached. The Council is used to generating savings by re-designing what it does; and certainly through doing things differently the Service has managed to find savings already and this work will continue. Since November 2012, the Council has undertaken a voluntary severance exercise and the library service has taken the opportunity to reduce staffing. It will, however, be possible to deliver a comprehensive and efficient library service that meets customers’ needs with alternative ways of working.

1.5 **Progress on library review / Consultation findings**

1.5.1 As part of the Library Service Review the Council undertook a 6 week library specific public consultation exercise and gathered a range of valuable information (for example a user needs assessment; data about numbers of registered borrowers; use of facilities etc) to guide the Council in reviewing the library service.

1.5.2 This consultation was evaluated along with a wide range of other information sources. There were 3978 responses of which 95% came from users. The majority of the usage of the library service is to loan items. The key headlines identified during the consultation are:

- 87% of respondents said they used libraries to borrow items
- 78% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the idea of having a library and other services in one place

- 74% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with being able to make more use of libraries for community activities or meetings for a small fee
- 50.9 % of respondents said they used libraries to find information
- 33.4% of respondents said they used libraries to use computers
- 21.2% of respondents said that wider range of on-line services e.g. e books would encourage them to use library services more
- 19.7% of respondents said they used libraries to attend a community activity
- 19.4% of respondents said they used libraries for children and young peoples services
- 48% used a library on a weekly basis
- 84% said they went to a library to borrow items and 50% said to find information.
- Users are satisfied with current service standards
- 78% thought that combining libraries and other services in **one place within communities** provided better services for customers
- 75% thought that the community should be able to **use buildings for their own activities** for a small fee
- 61.7% thought that **volunteers** should be able to get involved in the development and delivery of local library services alongside library staff
- **Co-location** and **self service** should be developed.

1.6 Principles to guide overall service review

1.6.1 The results of the public consultation have helped to ascertain what residents need from a library service and have identified a set of key principles to drive the libraries review, as follows:

- (i) Library service users retaining proximity to library provision in their township;
- (ii) Fit for purpose provision to meet service user's needs;
- (iii) Working with partners and communities to look at all reasonable proposals to retain library services in the community;
- (iv) develop co-location of services and alternative ways of working.

Additionally the review should seek to minimise any detrimental impact on those people that need the library most.

1.7 Improved use of Assets

1.7.1 The Council's Asset Management Plan has the objective of improving the Council's overall asset management by reviewing its assets and seeking efficiencies/ co-locations which will allow services to consider reducing their own buildings infrastructure and the cost of maintaining them.

1.7.2 This shared usage could be in existing library buildings or a library service could be relocated into a Council or partners building, allowing the costs of the building to be shared and a potentially increase in the number and extent of services at a given location.

1.7.3 The Libraries review will link to other area based asset reviews, including for example, the review of the Borough's civic suites and the provision of Adult Care services across the Borough. This work will enable retained property to be used to its utmost potential and maximise opportunities for increased "agile working" by Council staff. It will also have to pay due regard to trends in local

Government Finance, such as the proposed retention of Business Rates at a local level and its impact on Bury.

1.8 Legal and Statutory considerations

1.8.1 There are specific legal matters which Members need to consider regarding the proposals, in addition to general public law principles relating to decision-making. The first is the Council's duty in relation to libraries, as set out in the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 (Section 7), which provides that it shall be the duty of the Council as library authority, to "provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof". What was deemed to be comprehensive and efficient in 1964 has radically altered in 2012, as a result of electronic and social media etc. The duty arises in relation to persons who are resident, work in or are in full time education in the Borough. The Council currently delivers this duty through seventeen public library points across the Borough. In fulfilling this duty the Council has to have regard to the desirability of:

- i) Securing that facilities are available for borrowing books, records, films etc sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the needs of all, and the special requirements of adults and children.
- ii) Encouraging adults and children to make full use of the service and provide advice.

The Secretary of State (for Culture, Media and Sport) has powers to intervene in library services if there is a complaint that an authority is running an inadequate service and in breach of the Act. This happens infrequently, but in 2009 an enquiry was held into the decision taken by Wirral MBC and it concluded that in deciding how to provide a "comprehensive and efficient library service", an authority must make a reasonable assessment of and take into account local needs. This includes the needs of adults and children and the need for a strategic plan.

Members must, therefore, have regard to the assessment of need in considering any proposals, to ensure they will provide a comprehensive and efficient library service; but judged on the basis of the Council's overall provision. For example, the view of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, is that the closure of one or even a small number of library branches is not necessarily a breach of the legislation, as long as an authority ensures a better more efficient service across its whole area. In a legal case (involving Brent Council), where closures were challenged, the Court felt that it was clearly relevant that the Council also considered improved ways in which the expectations of users might be met and recognised that the duty contemplates flexibility in meeting the needs of users. Cases are judged on the basis of the Council's overall service provision and, therefore, Phase 2 of the review should be considered in this context. Details from the needs analysis are set out in this report and in the Equality Analysis Form attached to this report.

1.8.2 The second duty is in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and the Council must have "due regard" to the matters set out in relations to equalities, when considering and making decisions on the provision of library services. Due regard means that Members must understand the public sector equality duty and consciously apply it to the facts in this report, when considering and reaching any decisions. Due regard must also be had to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by

the Equality Act 2010. The Council must also advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The protected characteristics defined in the Act are: Age; Gender reassignment; Pregnancy/Maternity; Race; Religion or Belief; Gender/Sex; Sexual Orientation; Marriage and Civil Partnership; Disability. (Bury Council also recognises the characteristic of Caring Responsibilities).

The equality duty arises where the Council is deciding how to exercise its duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 in providing a comprehensive and efficient library service, since the provision of this is a Council function. The potential equality impact of these proposals has been assessed and addressed in this report and a careful consideration of this assessment is one of the key ways in which Members can show that they have had "due regard" to the relevant matters. Members should, however, be aware that the duty is not to achieve the objectives or take the steps set out in the Equality Act, but rather to bring these important objectives relating to discrimination into consideration. "Due regard" means the regard which is appropriate in all the circumstances in which the Council is carrying out its functions and this means that Members may also pay regard to any counterbalancing factors which it is proper and reasonable to consider. Budgetary pressures, economics and practical factors will often be important and the weight attached to these in the decision-making process is a matter for Members.

- 1.8.3 In undertaking the review the Council must ensure it meets its statutory duties as outlined.

2.0 PROGRESSING THE NEW LIBRARY OFFER

2.1 Progress on the implementation of Phase 1

Proposals for Phase 1 of the Libraries Review were approved by Cabinet on 28 November 2012 and focussed primarily on the remodelling of services at Bury Library. Proposals were agreed and work is underway to implement the service changes.

2.2 Phase 2 proposals

The issues set out have provided a focal point for not just developing options for a remodeled Library Service, but a more general rethink on service delivery options across communities, of which library services would be an integral part. This refocusing is centered on providing a range of diverse services in one place instead of many; via a 'one stop shop' approach to service delivery, by means of the development of Community Hubs.

2.3 Community Hubs: bringing communities together

'Community hub' is a generic term. A Community Hub is a welcoming, accessible community building, consolidating a range of organisations in the one location. They are for everyone who lives in the community - children, families, young people and older people. They can provide a range of services and activities that focus on health, well-being, education, community, arts, cultural and heritage activities. They are also places that encourage social gathering and are designed to provide spaces for people to meet together in both planned and incidental ways.

The development of community hubs is one that is becoming the way forward for many councils across the country, as they seek to not only protect services but at the same time achieve essential efficiencies. There are many examples of councils across the country that can provide evidenced benefits from developing this type of service delivery, from the London boroughs to Doncaster, Wolverhampton and Kirklees and Devon to name just a few.

Why create a community hub?

There are four primary objectives of community hubs. These are:

- Service coordination and delivery – with the goal of enhancing both coordination among services and access to them by the community
- Place making – to reinforce a place’s identity and make it a more attractive environment for people to gather and interact with each other
- Community building – enhancing the connections and relationships among people in order to strengthen common values and promote collective goals
- Financial sustainability – with the goal of providing quality services and facilities in a way that is economically viable over time.

Community Hubs can not only provide better services for residents and communities, they can also enable the Council to ensure that its services represent good value for money.

At a time of diminishing resources, by consolidating resources onto fewer sites instead of many, by reducing the number of buildings requiring significant resources to maintain and by using the capital receipt from the sale of redundant buildings, it is possible to support the development of fewer, high quality single-site services across the Borough.

An existing example between Adult Learning and Adult Care Services has already demonstrated the excellent benefits that developing this model can bring. During 2012 the services commenced the first co-location between ACS learning disability service and Adult Learning by creating a centre for people with learning disabilities within the main Adult Learning Centre at Haymarket Street. This has tested the model and has proved highly successful. Learning disabled customers have access to use some of the specialist training facilities at the centre to develop their skills and access opportunities which they would otherwise not have been able to take part in due to their care needs. This includes developing independent living skills via sessions in the specialist teaching kitchen, and developing dexterity, hobbies and interests through sessions in the Art and Craft rooms. They have successfully integrated with the existing Adult Learning customers. As an additional benefit some adult learning customers with disabilities have been able to informally access the centre socially which has given them greater confidence to access the mainstream programs on offer.

Even though investment is required to physically remodel buildings to accommodate new arrangements, it has to be remembered that this will provide renewed buildings, fit for purpose for the next 10-20 years. This is against the continuing and increasing need to spend a stream of resources on maintaining ‘not fit for purpose’ buildings containing only single services.

Although the proposals included in this report are in the main concentrated on facilities and services in the south of the Borough, should the commitment to deliver this revised service delivery model be agreed, it would provide the future blueprint for service delivery across the rest of the borough. Any further proposals will be put forward to Cabinet via future reports at the appropriate time, if any further opportunities for the development of additional Community Hubs come forward.

2.4 **The new model for Libraries**

Although all of the Borough's libraries were considered during the Phase 2 review and opportunities assessed, 4 libraries currently offer the most favourable prospects to retain services in communities whilst making savings within the prescribed short timescale. Having assessed the service and its delivery points the proposal is the re-modelling of services, at Radcliffe, Unsworth, Prestwich and Whitefield libraries based on the Community Hub model. This can be achieved via proposals to formally co-locate library services with partners.

If this model is developed all of the Borough's libraries will be assessed for inclusion in the development of any additional future Community Hubs in other areas of the Borough.

It should be noted that all libraries, including the libraries in these proposals, already share their buildings with other services, e.g. Adult Learning and Children's Centre staff and activities and with other partners on less formal ad hoc arrangements such as the Police (Tottington). Libraries are also used as sites for a range of other Council, voluntary and health partnership activities e.g. Dementia Café, etc.

All libraries also already offer their premises as locations for agile working for council staff which also provides benefits for the council via officer time saved and building costs reduced, alongside savings in mileage/transport costs and carbon emissions. This together with other efficiencies and increasing use of technology will ensure that the Service is more sustainable.

It should be noted that although there will be a significant reduction in the 'footprint' of library services within the Community Hubs, via these proposals, library services will still be retained and accessible locally for residents. National library initiatives and social trends in society have brought about changes in the delivery of library services. For example a national reduction in book borrowing and the development of a more significant on-line presence has meant that a reduction in service space does not necessarily compromise the effectiveness of the service on offer. Additionally, although individual areas will be designated for particular services, within the 'Hub', all areas of the buildings will be available for use by all services on a flexible basis, resulting in the greater use of facilities.

This proposal will retain all libraries services across the Borough.

2.4.1 **Radcliffe Library**

It is proposed to relocate the library from its current Stand Lane site to Radcliffe Civic Hall. The new library will be located in the space currently occupied by the Charter Room as its core, with additional space accrued from extending into space which is currently used as the foyer. The move represents

a reduction in the size of the library, however it should be noted that although service space will be reduced, library services will still be available in Radcliffe Town Centre.

Radcliffe library is currently open 39.5 hours per week and from the initial consultation, it is recorded as the 4th most used/visited library.

Services offered at the library include core library service provision; Adult Learning services; Council Information Point; Housebound Library Service; public access computers; councillor and partner surgeries; local history resources; reading groups and services and activities for children..

There is slightly higher proportion of younger people within 1 mile of the library (88%) in comparison to the borough average (84%) and the library has a range of activities for younger users, including homework support, toddler groups and weekly term-time story times.

As with the analysis of the needs of all people with protected characteristics, it is felt that due to the retention of core services and existing opening hours, it is not anticipated that the change will affect people with protected characteristics negatively. For example, support for worklessness and help for benefit claimants will continue, including support for people affected by the government's 'Digital By Default' agenda.

Libraries at Dumers Lane and Coronation Road in Radcliffe also provide additional support.

- Core library provision will be maintained
- Current library opening hours will be maintained and it may be possible to provide additional access to services, when other activities are underway at the Hall, via the use of library self-service technology. (e.g. existing library currently closed on Wednesday and Sunday)
- Access to the lending resources of the Library Service will still be offered via the Service's free internal request service.
- The new location of the library retains services in the Radcliffe East ward which includes some of the most deprived in the Radcliffe township.
- The new location retains access within the town centre and provides accessible accommodation that is closer to Bury Primary Care Trust Health Centre and Clinic on Blackburn St and the Metrolink Station than the current premises
- Dumers Lane and Coronation Road libraries also remain in Radcliffe and will continue to provide services to local communities.
- Free parking will be retained
- The move will also retain public access computers which can be used to support education and the search for employment.
- Adult Learning opportunities will also be maintained and improved access to the larger Civic Hall spaces for additional activities with partner agencies can also bring benefits to the whole community.
- Council Information Point services will be retained
- Radcliffe Civic Hall also offers public toilets for users (not currently available in the existing library) and is fully accessible.
- In addition, it is also the intention to adapt additional space in the Civic Hall to become a base for Adult Care Learning Disability Day Services. Income from the use of this space by Adult Care will contribute to savings targets as well as opportunities for joint working across both libraries and Civic Halls services.

2.4.2 Unsworth Library

It is proposed to relocate the library from its current position on Sunnybank Road to the Sunnybank Community Centre also situated on Sunnybank Road. The Community centre currently operates as an Adult Care day centre but also offers a range of additional provision for the community, including evening events such as yoga classes and other activities for adults and children during the week and at weekends.

It is proposed to extend the existing Community centre building to provide a new library space, which will be a reduction in the size of the existing Library Service space. This existing library is currently open 35.5 hours per week and from the initial consultation it is recorded as the 7th most visited/used library. Services offered by the library include core library services; Council Information Point; public access computers; Housebound Service; small local history collection; councillor surgeries; and reading group.

As with the analysis of the needs of people with all protected characteristics, it is felt that due to the retention of some services at the Sunnybank Centre and services in the same township at Whitefield Library, with the same level of opening hours overall, it is not anticipated that the change will affect people with protected characteristics negatively, for example, the library and community centre are on the same bus route and support for worklessness will continue, including support for people affected by the government's 'Digital By Default' agenda.

In addition, the immediate library location is within the second least deprived quintile in the borough.

- Book-lending library provision will be maintained
- Current library opening hours will be maintained and it may be possible to offer additional access to services, when other activities are underway at the Centre, via the use of library self-service technology.(e.g. existing library currently closed on Wednesday and Sunday)
- Access to the lending resources of the Library Service will still be offered via the Service's free internal request service.
- The move will also retain public access computers which can be used to support education and the search for employment.
- Although formal staffed hours will be reduced significantly, the library space will function alongside the other services offered at the Community centre.
- Sunnybank Community Centre also offers users public toilets for users (not currently available in the existing library) and is fully accessible.
- Library service Council Information Point (CIP) services will not be available but will remain available at Whitefield Library and Adult Learning Centre within same township.

2.4.3 Prestwich Library and Adult learning Centre

It is proposed to relocate library services onto one floor to enable space to be made available to Adult Care Services, who will be using this site for the delivery of their Learning Disability Day Services.

The library will be remodelled to provide a new open plan library that will continue to offer all existing services, but within a reduced footprint. The move represents a reduction in the size of the service to be offered, however library services will be retained in the township.

Prestwich Library is currently open 50 hours per week and in the initial consultation 2011/12, was recorded as the 3rd most visited/used library

Services offered by the library include core library service provision; Adult Learning classrooms; a Museum; Council Information Point (elements of this are particularly well used at this library, eg freephone, housing benefit enquiries and Report a Problem); Housebound Library Service; public access computers; art exhibitions; councillor surgeries; partner surgeries; library-based and external reading groups.

There is a significant Jewish community in the area (Sunday opening was originally introduced to support the Jewish community and the museum is the only one in the borough regularly open to the public on Sundays).

As the intention is to retain the core library service provision, the existing opening hours (including Sunday opening for the Jewish community) and the range of services on offer at the existing site, it is not anticipated that the change will affect people with protected characteristics too negatively and support for worklessness and help for benefit claimants will continue, including support for people affected by the government's 'Digital By Default' agenda.

- Core library provision will be maintained
- Current opening hours will be retained, including Sunday opening and it may be possible to provide additional access to services, when other activities are underway at the Longfield Suite, via the use of library self-service technology.(e.g. library currently closed on Wednesday pm)
- Access to the lending resources of the Library Service will still be offered via the Service's free internal request service.
- Public access computers which can be used to support education and the search for employment
- Improvements will be made to improve access to first floor services, including the provision of a new lift and a new shared entrance directly from the rear car park will also provide for a safer, more customer friendly access to all services on site.
- The existing Adult Learning classrooms will still be provided and it is hoped to improve access to users within the scheme.
- Council Information Point services will be retained
- The Heritage Museum will be relocated from its current location, possibly to the new entrance area.

2.4.4 Whitefield Library and Adult Learning Centre

It is proposed that an area of Whitefield library will be reassigned for use by Adult Care Learning Disability Day Services and although there will be some reduction in Library space, core library services will be retained.

The proposed plan include Adult Care occupying the existing quadrangle space and the space currently allocated to the Sensory Impairment Unit.

It is proposed to relocate the Sensory Services unit to an adjacent space within the building. with retained direct access from the rear entrance.

These two services on one site will bring complementary benefits to both Adult Care and Library Service Sensory Impairment customers.

The needs of the Sensory Service users are clearly recognised, alongside their preference for a space solely allocate to their needs. The existing space has caused sensory service users some anxieties, as general library users are required to walk through the Sensory area to access the library's public toilets. The suggested new location for the service would remove this issue as the new space would not need to be accessed by non-service users and is therefore an improvement on the existing location.

Whitefield library is currently open 39.5 hours per week and in the initial consultation. 2011/12 was recorded as the 5th most visited/used library

Services include core library services; Council Information Point; Adult Learning classrooms; public access computers; Housebound Service; services for Deaf/visually impaired people; small local history collection; partner surgeries (eg HMRC tax workshops); councillor surgeries; reading groups; Police and community Support Officers (PCSO) base; coffee morning and craft sessions.

As the intention is to retain the core library service provision, the existing opening hours and the range of services on offer at the existing site, it is not anticipated that the change will affect people with protected characteristics too negatively. For example, support for worklessness and help for benefit claimants will continue, including support for people affected by the government's 'Digital By Default' agenda.

- Core library provision will be maintained
- Current opening hours will be retained and it may be possible to provide additional access to services.(e.g. library currently closed on Wednesday)
- Access to the lending resources of the Library Service will still be offered via the Service's free internal request service.
- Public access computers which can be used to support education and the search for employment
- Adult Learning classrooms will remain.
- Council Information Point services will be retained

3.0 Developing the Community Hub model

- 3.1 As mentioned it is proposed to further implement RFID self-service at libraries, including those in the proposed Community Hubs. This will enable the continuation of services, including the retention of existing opening hours, against a backdrop of significant staff savings.
- 3.2 To achieve the required savings of £570,000 as part of Phase 2 of the Libraries review, it will be necessary to significantly reduce the number of staff at all levels within the service. This will include front line staff, such as Library Assistants and Library Supervisors, back office posts, specialist and professional posts and senior managers. This will have an effect on the overall delivery of the service and will require a significant restructuring of services; but the primary aim is to ensure that the Council discharges its statutory duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service by its own provision.
- 3.3 At all 4 venues the community hub model includes Adult Care Services as a key partner. As such Adult Care Services have worked in partnership to develop these proposals to ensure that they have the potential to work to the benefit of all services involved. All centres would involve co-location with the Adult Care Services Learning Disability Day Service core bases. These are centres where small/medium sized groups of customers are supported to undertake meaningful activities and develop their independence within the community. The modernisation agenda in this service area has for some years been working towards creation of community hubs which are more integrated with local communities and away from the more traditional large day centre settings. Significant progress has already been made with one of the three main day centres being vacated in the past 12 months, and the second being vacated in spring 2013. Aligning this successful modernisation programme with the libraries community hub model provides an opportunity to maximise opportunities for both service's customers.

Co-location between libraries, adult learning and adult care learning disabilities will directly contribute towards the corporate priority of supporting vulnerable people. It contributes to break down traditional barriers to community services encouraging integration and improved understanding and relationships between groups within the community which is positive in terms of the Council's considerations around equality. It also provides increased opportunities for learning disabled customers to get involved in activities within the library/adult learning and to potentially undertake volunteering and work experience which will develop their skills as there will be a staff team in situ at the centre to support their care needs.

- 3.4 To develop this type of model costs will be incurred, not just for the capital costs of the project (to be confirmed), but for additional considerations, including loss of income for Civic Halls and libraries, and project management costs, for example. Any contribution to building related costs by Adult Care Services will also need to be agreed. These costs would need to be met from the existing budgets of the centres that would be involved in the co-location and could not cost more in combination across the 4 hubs than it currently costs to operate their existing bases. There will also be disruption to services whilst the work is undertaken. There will not be any disruption to adult care services during the period of work as they would remain in their existing venues until work is complete. However, it should be noted that this project

will reduce on-going revenue risk costs for aging 'unfit for purpose' buildings that will no longer be occupied should this project go ahead.

The new Community Hub buildings would be fit for purpose for 10-20 years and should need no significant maintenance during that period, making on-going revenue savings on buildings budgets across the three services included in this proposal: Adult Care, Civic Halls and Libraries. Costs those services would have had to make in the future can be held against the costs of this project.

Capital receipts for buildings no longer occupied can be used to offset the capital costs of this proposal, as well as on-going revenue saving benefits.

These proposals will allow library services to continue in all areas of the Borough and will not deprive residents of services as has happened or is threatened in many other authorities, for example Bolton has closed 5 libraries, Brent has closed 6, Doncaster proposes to close 12 or transfer to the voluntary sector. Dorset has transferred 7 libraries to the voluntary sector. The result of the proposal will be fewer, high quality buildings that offer quality services to their communities.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The next stage in supporting the decision making process is to undertake a consultation exercise. This consultation will allow the public, staff and other interested stakeholders to be kept informed and enable opportunities for individuals to submit comments and suggestions on the proposals. In line with the council's commitment to openness and transparency the consultation will seek to allow for the widest possible sources of information to be considered. The views gathered by the consultation will contribute to the decision making process and help ensure that the final proposals reflect community need.
- 4.2 If agreed the consultation process will commence on 11th April 2013 and run for six weeks. There are three key strands to the consultation exercise: public, members of staff and partners. In addition, Adult Care Services will undertake consultation to run in parallel with customers, carers and families of centres who could be involved in the community hubs.
- 4.3 The **public consultation** will progress in two formats, a questionnaire and a series of public events.

The consultation questionnaire will provide an overview of the proposals and will be available in all libraries and also online on the council website.

Supporting information will also be available at each library and online to explain more about the consultation process, why it is important this exercise takes place and how people can make their views known.

This questionnaire will be circulated to Bury Council's consultation contact database. Information and the consultation questionnaire will also be sent to the council's Citizen Panel.

It is proposed that a series of focus groups will take place at the libraries specifically referenced in this report to ascertain the views of service users at each location. Dates and times of the focus groups will be promoted online, in the local media and in each library. Individuals will need to sign up to attend focus groups to ensure that they are not oversubscribed. The effectiveness of

the consultation success will be judged by: numbers of returns, breadth of coverage across all locations, demographics and protected groups.

4.4 Adult Care Consultation

Extensive consultation with customers, families, carers and interest groups has taken place with regards to the modernisation of learning disability day services over the past 7 years. There is a strong track record of involvement and consultation with regards to transition of customers from one location to another and established robust arrangements to facilitate this in a way which maximises choice and control and minimises risk. Experience tells us that it works best to consult with stakeholders in two phases:

Phase 1 (prior to decision 11 April for six weeks) – initial information and gathering of feedback on the proposal to co-locate with library services at the specified venues

Phase 2 (after decision in principle – After June 2013) - detailed consultation and involvement on the proposal and how it could be implemented. This could include:

- potential layout of allocated spaces at the venues
- facilities available
- which customers would be proposed to attend each centre (based on it being their most local centre)

Consultation at all stages will be via accessible formats which are appropriate for the individuals concerned and could include one to one discussions, group discussions, and visits to proposed venues.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The report recommends to Cabinet proposals to develop Community Hubs in four locations.
- 5.2 These proposals will enable the development and remodelling of a range of services onto one site, of which libraries will form only a part, but which offer the potential to modernise services for communities, make revenue savings and improve access for all service users.
- 5.3 Some of the reduction in service capacity that the proposals will bring can be mitigated by the increased use of self service technology and Ebooks.
- 5.4 A full consultation will be undertaken on the proposals, as detailed in Section 4 of this report, as a basis for a jointly authored report from the two main service areas (Libraries and Adult Care Services) being presented for discussion at Cabinet in June 2013.

List of Background Papers:-

<http://www.bury.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=6816>

Contact Details:-

Graham Atkinson, Executive Director, Department for
Communities & Neighbourhoods – g.atkinson@bury.gov.uk