

REPORT FOR DECISION



Agenda Item	
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DECISION OF:	CABINET
DATE:	8 JUNE 2016
SUBJECT:	PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE KEY PRINCIPLES FOR THE BURY LIBRARY SERVICE
REPORT FROM:	CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES AND REGULATION
CONTACT OFFICER:	KLARE RUFO ASSISTANT DIRECTOR LEARNING AND CULTURE
TYPE OF DECISION:	EXECUTIVE (NON KEY DECISION)
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:	THIS PAPER IS WITHIN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN
SUMMARY:	The Council is seeking the views of the public on six key principles that could be used to provide the framework for a full review of Bury's Library Service in 2017. A detailed consultation process on the principles is outlined.
OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cabinet approves consultation with the public on the six key principles that will drive the review of the Bury Library Service 2. Cabinet approves the consultation but based upon agreed amendments to the key principles 3. Do not approve the consultation <p>Option One or Two are the recommended options</p>

IMPLICATIONS:	
Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:	They conform with the policy framework of the council. Under Community and Partnerships: <i>Build capacity in (and with) communities to encourage empowerment and reduce demand on services.</i>
Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations:	The costs of undertaking this review will be funded within existing budgets.
Health and Safety	Health & Safety issues will be considered at all stages throughout the review, and as specific proposals are developed.
Statement by Executive Director of Resources:	All wider resource issues, e.g. assets, IT, and HR implications will be considered at all stages of the review.
Equality/Diversity implications:	The Council has a requirement to have due regard to its public sector equality duty and other equality obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Further details are outlined at section 7 of the report
Considered by Monitoring Officer:	Yes There are 3 matters that the Council needs to consider: 1. The duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service pursuant to the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 2. The requirement to have due regard to its public sector equality duty and other equality obligations under the Equality Act 2010 3. That the consultation process is fair and thorough. Legal advice has been sought at an early stage in the review process and will continue to be provided throughout.
Wards Affected:	All
Scrutiny Interest:	

TRACKING/PROCESS**DIRECTOR: Executive Director of Children,
Young People & Culture**

Chief Executive/ Strategic Leadership Team	Executive Member/Chair	Ward Members	Partners
Scrutiny Committee	Committee	Council	

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1** In response to the continued pressure on Council budgets as a result of the 2016/17 Comprehensive Spending Review, the Council must find ways of delivering savings over the next four years whilst continuing to meet its legal duties to provide Bury residents with comprehensive and efficient services.
- 1.2** The Council remains fully committed to retaining a high quality Library Service in the borough but anticipates that there will need to be changes, including the possibility of a reduction in the number of libraries. Despite this the Council will continue to provide a service that meets its legal duties and supports the aspirations of residents of all ages for development of reading skills for the youngest, lifelong learning and access to books and information.
- 1.3** In developing options for change, the Council will consider the contribution that digital technologies can make to developing and improving its Library Service. This is in line with recent guidance from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on libraries as a statutory service. Inspiring and enabling all Bury residents to take advantage of digital opportunities will be another consideration for the review.
- 1.4** The Council also recognises the importance of libraries as community spaces and wishes to explore ways of working together with local communities to strengthen the role their local library plays in meeting community needs.
- 1.5** The scope of the current Library Service in Bury is detailed in Appendix 1.

2.0 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 2.1** The strategic direction for the service is based upon three priorities. The first two are defined by the Council's statutory duties with respect to libraries. The third by a recognition that within Bury the Library service has developed an important community function, including that of promoting digital learning and inclusion.
- 2.2 Strategic priority 1:** To provide a Library Service across the borough which provides all residents with access to books, physical and electronic resources

sufficient in number, range and quality to support lifelong learning, the development of new skills, including digital skills and the effective use of information. Also to ensure that the needs of more vulnerable residents and groups protected by Equalities legislation are taken fully into account in the provision of such services.

- 2.3** The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 requires the public library service to be '*comprehensive and efficient*'. However recent legal judgements have clarified that this '*cannot mean that every resident lives close to a library...*' but that the local authority is '*delivering a service that is accessible to all residents using reasonable means, including digital technologies.*'
- 2.4 Strategic Priority 2:** To provide a comprehensive and cost effective library service
- 2.5** Investing in technology is relevant to the provision of both a 'comprehensive' and 'cost effective' service and overlaps with Strategic Priority 1. Technology now exists which allows the introduction of partially staffed libraries, extended opening at physical sites; the extension of existing on-line services to increase remote access; and a better digital offer for customers including those with sensory impairment.
- 2.6 Strategic Priority 3:** To meet local aspirations for a network of community spaces across the borough in which the local authority and communities can work as partners in meeting local needs.
- 2.7** This priority addresses not just community aspirations, but a corporate aspiration to promote community empowerment and self reliance, as stated in the new Corporate Vision, under the Communities and Partnerships objective - 'Build capacity in (and with) communities to encourage empowerment and reduce demand on services.'
- 2.8** Linked to this is the Council's interest in encouraging volunteers across the Library Service, supporting the delivery of both traditional and digital services.

3.0 SIX KEY PRINCIPLES

- 3.1** Arising out of the Strategic Priorities the Council has devised a set of six key principles to guide a review of the library service in 2016.

Principle 1 - To provide a Library Service across the borough which provide all residents with access to libraries and electronic services sufficient in number, range and quality to support reading for pleasure, lifelong learning, the development of new skills and the effective use of information.

Principle 2 - To ensure that the needs of more vulnerable residents and groups protected by Equalities legislation are taken fully into account in the provision of these services.

Principle 3 - To ensure that the resources committed to the library service are used as efficiently as possible by exploring options to reduce running and maintenance costs and to share premises with Council and other services.

Principle 4 - To explore options for investing in technology to improve access to the library service for example by extending opening hours, increasing our digital services and enhancing provision for those with sensory impairments.

Principle 5 - To welcome the contribution that members of the community can make to the Library Service as volunteers, supporting both traditional and digital services.

Principle 6 - To meet local aspirations for a network of community spaces across the borough in which the council and local communities can work together as partners in meeting local needs.

These principles provide an indication of the Council's direction of travel for the Library Service. They would thus form the basis for a full consultation with Bury residents to allow them to feedback their views and help to inform future decisions.

- 3.2 The Council will also have due regard during this review of the Library Services of its Public Sector Equality Duty, and will ensure that any equality issues are fully considered, in particular where changes in service might have a negative impact on a vulnerable group of residents or a group protected by the Equality Duty legislation.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1** It is proposed to carry out a 12 week consultation with Bury residents on the six key principles outlined above. The consultation will seek to gather the views of both current library users and non-users.
- 4.2** The consultation will be based around a survey which is included in this report as Appendix 2.
- 4.3** There will be electronic dissemination of this survey through the Council and Library website, through the Council's Social Media accounts on Facebook and Twitter, through an e-zine, through the Council intranet to council employees and to schools and colleges
- 4.4** During the consultation period public meetings will be arranged at a number of libraries and special meetings will be organised with key stakeholders including those representing sensory impaired library users and more elderly people. There will also be opportunities for community groups to organise and hold meetings of their own on the consultation, and consultation with the Youth Cabinet.
- 4.5** An external consultancy will be employed to support the consultation process and to carry out an extensive telephone survey to supplement the survey and meetings.
- 4.6** It is planned that following this consultation proposals for changes to the Library Service will be developed resulting in a further report to Cabinet. There will then be a second public consultation on any proposals agreed by Cabinet.

4.7 The proposed timetable is as follows. Dates are indicative at this stage:

Report to Cabinet for Consultation	8 June 2016
First Public Consultation	13 th June to 5 th September 2016
Report to Cabinet outlining proposed changes resulting from consultation	19 th October 2016
Second Public Consultation	Within the period November 2016 to February 2017
Final Report to Cabinet on decisions to be taken	8 th March 2017
Staff consultation	Within the period April 2017 to May 2017
Implementation	From 1 July 2017

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The consultation process will be funded through the resources of the Department for Children, Young People and Culture.

5.2 In order to ensure that the consultation captures the views of as many residents as possible, both current library users and non-users, it is proposed to employ an external organisation to advise on and carry out part of the consultation. This organisation will have a track record of mobilising strong representative responses from public consultations and on the use of digital media for supporting the consultation process. The likely cost of this support will be £13,000.

6.0 RISKS

6.1 Along with the potential challenge to the final decisions made regarding the Library service on equality issues, the other key risk associated with a consultation activity such as this is a legal challenge to the process and consequential reputational damage to the Council.

6.2 Recent case law relating to consultations, in particular related to Library Services, has shown that Councils should develop through the process a vision for the service and key principles which may then be used to develop options for change. In cases of legal challenge Councils have presented a series of options, often based upon financial requirements, without first developing a vision for the future of the service to which stakeholders are able to contribute.

6.3 The recommended option in this report is to consult with all stakeholders on six key principles for the Service. This will mitigate the potential for legal challenge.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 7.1** The consultation process, with support from an external agency, will seek to capture fully representative views of the residents of the Borough and in line with the authority's Public Sector Equality Duty. This will provide the Council with an accurate and legally defensible measure of the Bury public's views on which to base future decision making.
- 7.2** A study of Bury library users carried out by Mott MacDonald in 2014 has shown that the over 65 Bury population would be the most likely of the protected groups to face accessibility issues from any future rationalisation of Library services. The consultation process will be designed to ensure that the views of over-65s are appropriately represented as a result of the various planned activities outlined in Section 4.0.
- 7.3** A full equality impact assessment will be carried out to accompany any recommended changes to provision resulting from the proposed consultation.

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1** Bury has a strong and well respected Library Service which has developed innovative ways to promote reading, learning and entrepreneurship amongst Bury residents. It provides important services to Bury's vulnerable groups and in many townships the Library acts as an important community hub.
- 8.2** The need to find on-going and substantial savings due to central government pressures means that the Library Service, alongside other council services, will need to be reviewed in the future to establish the level of provision needed and the types of services that should be offered. Before that happens it is important to work with Bury residents and stakeholders to identify the key principles that should underlie the library Service for the future.
- 8.3** This paper identifies a number of key principles which can help to start these discussions with Bury residents and outlines a consultation process which will help to ensure a fully representative response from such a process to inform future Council decision-making.

List of Background Papers:-

Appendix 1: Bury Library Service and Activities

Appendix 2: On-line Survey for the Library Review

Contact Details:-

Klare Rufo
Assistant Director, Learning and Culture
k.rufo@bury.gov.uk
0161 253 5720

Appendix 1 - Bury Library Service and Activities

Libraries are community spaces where people meet and feel safe, providing opportunities for people to be culturally and socially active and have access to the information they need in order to make the best choices for themselves and their family. Our objectives are to provide:

- A service which is customer focused and responsive to their needs and expectations;
- The highest possible standard of customer care;
- Quality resources and spaces for a variety of groups and individuals;
- Cost effective services that demonstrate value and quality;
- Services that meet the individual and diverse needs of the local community;
- Improved literacy skills for people of all ages and the promotion of reading;
- Opportunities for people to realise their potential through learning, volunteering and community involvement;
- Strong partnerships and links with community organizations and local services to develop new projects and to enhance existing activities;
- A well trained staff who are encouraged to participate in the development of the service and improve links with and in the community

**55,388 ADULT MEMBERS
15,496 JUNIOR MEMBERS
673 GROUP MEMBERS**

SERVICE POINTS

- 6 township libraries
 - 3 of which are Libraries and Adult Learning Centres
- 5 Community Centres and Libraries
 - Established in partnership with local communities with SRB5/BLF funding
- 3 small community libraries
- 1 extended hours library at Castle Leisure Centre with some staffing
- Archives and Family History (Centre for Cultural Collections)
- Sensory Unit providing specialist resources for visually and hearing impaired clients
- Online/virtual services: online reference books; e-books; e-audio; online catalogue and requests
- Home Library Service for people unable to access a library

**LIBRARIES OPEN 510 HOURS A WEEK
795,200 LIBRARY VISITS A YEAR**

BOOKS, READING AND READER DEVELOPMENT

Books and reading are still central to what we do, although books now include audio and ebooks as well as online content. Creating and managing a diverse book stock is increasingly important in times of budget reductions and an increase of other leisure and information sources. The term reader development encompasses the work libraries do to encourage reading for pleasure and to support lifelong learning by:

- Ensuring the reading experience is available to all
- Encouraging library users irrespective of age and background to widen their reading interests through displays, promotions and information
- Promoting equal opportunities and social inclusion by purchase of stock which reflects readers' tastes and the cultural diversity of the community
- Providing a wide variety of titles not just best sellers.
- Encouraging non-readers and emergent readers.
- Offering opportunities to people to share their reading experience through such things as reader groups and social media
- Raising the status of reading as a creative activity
- Ensuring that all staff are confident in the principles of reader development

190,159 BOOKS
15,000 NEW BOOKS PURCHASED EACH YEAR
487,199 BOOKS BORROWED ANNUALLY

ADVICE AND INFORMATION

Libraries provide access to the information people need in order to live full lives and make good choices. Staff are able to assist on a wide range of issues including: accommodation and housing; financial issues; income and benefits; volunteering; employment and training.

The service has an increasing role in supporting people looking for work and provides assistance and training in Universal Jobmatch and other employment skills including: IT training; CV techniques; interview techniques; applications forms and covering letters.

149,200 ENQUIRIES ANNUALLY
100+ PEOPLE EVERY DAY USE THE LIBRARY TO HELP LOOK FOR WORK
4 JOB CLUBS

COUNCIL INFORMATION POINTS

Libraries have a key role to play in enabling customer access to council services and are one of the few places where people can be assisted face to face. Services provided include:

- Freephone for Council tax etc
- Links to Six Town Housing including repairs and Home Options
- Homelessness including referrals, help with emergency funding, Porch boxes
- Help with planning enquiries
- Payments: Council tax; rents; Carelink; invoices; Adult Education; Carers; Business rates; truancy fees and litter fines
- Report a problem e.g Missed bin collection; bulky collections; reporting pot holes

In addition there are a range of other services and resources including: hearing aid batteries; food caddies and bags; condom distribution scheme

£529,994 IN COUNCIL PAYMENTS LAST YEAR
5,275 FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS
71,800 COUNCIL ENQUIRIES LOGGED LAST YEAR
DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD CADDIES BY LIBRARIES SAVING £16K+ EVERY YEAR

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND VOLUNTEERING

Bury Libraries have been actively working with local communities since the 1990s and was considered to be the pioneers of community engagement and development by libraries receiving national recognition. Partnerships with local communities led to the opening of 10 libraries/community centres. Community groups and individuals are actively involved in providing and developing services for local people both in the library and out in the community, working alongside staff and other organisations. Provision includes:

- Community lunches and over 50s groups
- Leisure and social groups
- Space for meetings
- Office space and admin support for community groups
- Youth groups
- Childminding groups
- Community and environmental projects
- Training and educational opportunities

Volunteering is encouraged and supported including providing assisted places for people with special needs. Opportunities and training are tailored to individuals both in and out of the library

130 VOLUNTEERS
OVER 7,500 VOLUNTEER HOURS EVERY YEAR
6,243 EVENTS HELD LAST YEAR
65,008 PEOPLE ATTENDED

DIGITAL INCLUSION

Libraries have a key role in creating a digitally enabled community by promoting the take up of digital services and assisting residents to become 'digitally enabled'. They provide the skills, access, motivation and trust to get people online. We are working with partners and volunteers to provide a range of training assisting people in building up their IT skills allowing them to get access to the increasing number of council and government digital by default services.

In addition the Library Service has a network public access computers providing free access to the internet and Microsoft Office applications for members. We also run coding sessions with partners so that people can learn to write computer programmes such as applications and games.

Public access Wi-Fi is currently provided at two libraries allowing people to use their own devices for free. A successful bid of £37,000 will enable the installation of public access Wi-Fi in all libraries by spring 2016.

**433 IT TRAINING SESSIONS LAST YEAR
1,496 ATTENDEES
185 PUBLIC ACCESS COMPUTERS PROVIDE 325,462 HOURS OF IT TIME**

LIBRARY WEBSITE & VIRTUAL LIBRARY

The library website has been redesigned making it simpler to use and more focused on customer tasks. This has made it easier to access our high quality online library service which is available 24/7 to customers. It provides access to information using online reference resources, downloading eBooks and eAudiobooks, searching, ordering and renewing items from the library catalogue, communication through social media, digitisation of local resources (www.bury.gov.uk/10880) and booking of library events.

Bury Libraries webpages are the second most visited on the council website following the council launch page.

The range of eBooks available for public lending is currently limited by publisher controls and licenses but pressure is being applied nationally by libraries to improve this situation and the feeling is that this is a developing market.

**853,956 VIRTUAL VISITS LAST YEAR
212,771 SEARCHES OF THE ONLINE CATALOGUE
195,388 SEARCHES OF ONLINE REFERENCE SOURCES
6000 LOANS OF EBOOKS**

Appendix 2 On-line Survey for the Library Review

Note this is a Word version of the draft online survey. Word cannot replicate all the online survey features. Where possible these have been indicated below in italics. The survey itself will also be available in paper format.

Libraries Initial Public Consultation

Why Bury Council is reviewing its Library Service and is asking you to complete this survey

In response to Government's Comprehensive Spending Review, the Council must find ways of delivering savings over the next four years.

The Council remains committed to retaining a high quality library service, but anticipates that there will be changes.

However the Council will continue to provide a service that meets its legal duties, including to its more vulnerable residents and to groups protected by Equalities legislation.

It will support the aspirations of residents of all ages for lifelong learning, access to books and information.

In reviewing the service, the Council will consider how technologies, including computers and digital services, can continue to improve the Library Service. The Council will look at the contribution the Library Service can make to helping everyone take advantage of these technologies.

The Council recognises the importance of libraries as community spaces. The review will explore options for strengthening their role in meeting community needs.

This survey asks for your views on these issues and about your current use of the Library Service. Whether you use the service or not, you are invited to participate. The Council values the views of all residents.

PRINCIPLES

The Council is proposing six key principles to guide the development of options for change. Please indicate whether you agree or not with each one.

1. PRINCIPLE 1 To provide a Library Service across the borough which provides all residents with access to libraries and to electronic services sufficient in number, range and quality to support reading for pleasure, lifelong learning, the development of new skills and the effective use of information.

Please indicate below whether you agree with Principle 1.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2. PRINCIPLE 2 To ensure the needs of more vulnerable residents and groups protected by Equalities legislation are taken fully into account in the provision of these services. *Please indicate below whether you agree with Principle 2.*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3. PRINCIPLE 3 To ensure the resources committed to the Library Service are used as efficiently as possible by exploring options to reduce running and maintenance costs and to share premises with Council and other services.

Please indicate below whether you agree with Principle 3.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

4. PRINCIPLE 4 To explore options for investing in technology to improve access to the Library Service, for example by extending opening hours, increasing our digital offer and enhancing provision for those with sensory impairments.

Please indicate below whether you agree with Principle 4.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

5. PRINCIPLE 5 To welcome the contribution that members of the community can make to the Library Service as volunteers, supporting both traditional and digital services. *Please indicate below whether you agree with Principle 5.*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

6. PRINCIPLE 6 To meet local aspirations for a network of community spaces across the borough in which the Council and local communities can work together as partners in meeting local needs.

Please indicate below whether you agree with Principle 6.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree

- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

7. Do you feel there are other key principles that should be taken into account during the review?

- Yes
- No

8. If yes, what are these principles? Please outline briefly in the box below.

YOUR USE OF THE LIBRARY SERVICE

9. Do you use Bury's Library Service?

- Yes
- No

Note that if a respondent selects No, they automatically skip to Q12. Respondents do not see question numbers. This prevents any confusion about number sequencing.

YOUR CURRENT USE OF THE LIBRARY SERVICE

10. Approximately how often do you visit a library? (Please tick one box only)

- More than once a week
- About once a week
- Two or three times per month
- At least once a month
- At least twice a year
- Once a year or less

11. How do you usually travel to the library?

- Car as driver
- Car as passenger
- Bus
- Tram
- Walk
- Taxi
- Cycle
- Other (please specify)

WHY YOU DO NOT USE BURY'S LIBRARY SERVICE

This question is only seen by those who answered 'No' to Question 9.

12. Please indicate below the reason/s why you do not use Bury's Library Service.
Check all that apply.

- I do not know what services it offers
- I am not interested in using a library
- I have no need to use a library
- I live too far away from a library
- Library opening hours are not convenient for me
- I do not know where my nearest library is
- It is too difficult for me to get to a library
- I can't afford to travel on public transport to a library
- Other (please specify)

A FUTURE LIBRARY SERVICE

Your answers to the questions in this section will help the Council as it considers options for developing Bury's Library Service.

13 The Council may consider options for extending opening hours. Please indicate which times, if any, would make it easier for you to use the Library Service. Note that the library may not be staffed at all these times.

- before 9am
- lunchtime
- evening (5pm to 10pm)
- Saturdays
- Sundays

14. The Council is considering improving digital services within its Library Service. These might include:

- downloadable e-newspapers and magazines
- music and video streaming
- increased online resources for researching local and family history
- remote access on all devices to the library catalogue
- and free Wi-Fi.

Would you be more likely to use the Library Service, or use it more than you do now, if these services were available?

- Much more likely
- More likely
- It would make no difference

15. The Council would like the Library Service to help everyone take advantage of new technologies. Do you agree that the Library Service should develop in this way?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

16. Would you consider volunteering to support the Library Service in Bury?

- Yes
- No

17. Are there any other comments you would like to make about Bury's Library Service review? Please use the space below to provide these.

ABOUT YOU

These questions are optional. Please feel free to skip any that you do not want to answer.

18. Please indicate whether you are

- Resident in Bury
- Working in Bury, but resident in another borough
- Studying in Bury, but resident in another borough

19. Are you...?

- Male
- Female
- Other – please specify

20. What is your age?

- under 18
- 18 to 29
- 30 to 44
- 45 to 64
- 65+

21. What is your postcode?

22. What is your ethnic group? *These categories are those recommended for use in paper or online surveys in England by the Office for National Statistics.*

- White - Welsh/English/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
- White - Irish
- White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- White - other
- Mixed - White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed - White and Black African
- Mixed - White and Asian
- Mixed - other
- Black or Black British - Caribbean
- Black or Black British - African
- Asian or Asian British - Indian
- Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
- Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi
- Asian or Asian British - Chinese
- Asian or Asian British - other Asian background
- Arab
- Other ethnic group

23. Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? Include problems related to getting older.

- Yes, limited a lot
- Yes, limited a little
- No

24. Do you look after, or give any help or support, to family members, friends, neighbours or others because they have (a) long term physical or mental health problems or disabilities (b) problems due to getting older?

- No
- Yes

25. Please indicate whether you are:

- Employed or self-employed
- In part-time employment
- Retired
- A full time carer
- In full time-education or training
- In part-time education or training

- Unemployed