

Appendix 2(c)

Library Local Improvement Programme

Lea Bridge Business Case

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VERSION HISTORY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
2	BACKGROUND.....	4
3	PROJECT SCOPE	6
4	OBJECTIVES	7
5	OPTION APPRAISAL	7
6	PREFERRED OPTION.....	14
7	IMPLICATIONS	14
8	APPROVAL.....	15

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Waltham Forest Council is committed to continually improving and enhancing the Library and Information Service. All of the proposals put forward in this business case therefore seek to maintain the current level of service provision and provide additional opportunities for (re)investment in the service wherever possible.
- It is important to note that no permanent closure has been included in these plans and the Council firmly intends that all four Library Locals will remain in operation, alongside the four Library Plus'.
- In 2011 the Council conducted an extensive Review of the Library and Information Service and on the basis of the Review's findings, a new vision, objectives and service model were approved by Cabinet in October 2011. To date, significant progress has been made towards ensuring that the Council's higher tier Library Plus service delivers against the new vision and standards that were agreed. However, progress on bringing the Council's lower tier Library Locals in line with this vision has stalled in recent years.
- The options presented are as follows:

1. The Council should remodel and/or refurbish Lea Bridge Library Local in conjunction with Hale End, Higham Hill and Wood Street libraries

Lea Bridge library should remain in the existing building as it is well located on Lea Bridge Road near the junction with Markhouse Road/Church Road, in an area of retail activity. Also it is situated within a Historic England Grade II listed Carnegie library building which has a restrictive covenant on it that limits the use of the site to a public library. As the site cannot be used for any other purpose, relocating this library would be an inefficient use of Council resources..

Keeping the library on this site offers a number of substantial benefits, as studies have proven that co-location with a strong retail offer acts as a catalyst for higher footfall and service take-up. The library was extensively renovated and remodelled in 2010 at a cost of £1.1M, which included the creation of a new access core providing level access, automatic doors, a lift and disable toilet and it will need limited work to bring it up to the required standard outlined in the vision statement for Library Locals. Remodelling this library to adopt the Library Local/Library Plus branding, new furniture and fittings, work on the choice of lending and information materials and further development work with community groups should increase its performance by making it a more attractive and welcoming environment.

Remodelling will enable the Council to transform the interior of this library into a modern and attractive location, including flexible meeting space, that can be used to better meet the learning, information and community needs of local residents, while at the same time preserving and sustaining the 19th century exterior.

The refurbishing and remodelling of Lea Bridge Library Local will be funded from the capital receipts raised by the wider Library Local Improvement Programme.

2. The Council should relocate the service

Lea Bridge Library is centrally located, Grade II Listed by Historic England, has a restrictive covenant only allowing the building to be used as a public library and had £1.1M spent on extensive refurbishment in 2010 to make it accessible. For all of these reasons, plus the opportunity to accommodate a community partner, it is proposed that a Library Local for Lea Bridge is provided in the existing library building.

3. The Council should do nothing

The Council will continue to deliver the Library Local service in the current building, with the same design, layout and level of provision as is available at present. No improvements should be made to Lea Bridge Library. This option does not require any initial capital funding, it is likely that service take-and resident satisfaction and engagement with the service will remain at the current level.

It is recommended that the Council pursues Option One, which puts forwards plans to remodel and refurbish Lea Bridge Library Local, alongside Hale End, Higham Hill, and Wood Street libraries. This option presents the greatest number of benefits, as it will improve the service offer for residents, boost the performance of the library, improve customer satisfaction levels and attract greater footfall than it currently does.

2 BACKGROUND

A fundamental review of the Library and Information Service was undertaken in 2011 to establish a new vision, strategic objectives and service model for the Library and Information Service, which took into account local needs and the level of resources available.

Based on the recommendations of this Review, which was approved by Cabinet, a new two-tier library service was introduced across the Borough. The higher tier, Library Plus, not only provides the core Library and Information Service seven days a week, but also provides access to additional Council services, as well as a wider range of library services. The lower tier, Library Locals, provides a core Library and Information Service for 30 hours per week over four days, to complement the Library Plus service and provide residents with locally-based and focused library access. There are four Library Plus services in our Town Centres – Chingford, Leyton, Leytonstone and Walthamstow and four Library Locals which are located in Hale End, Higham Hill, Lea Bridge and Wood Street.

Significant progress has been made towards the achievement of this overall vision, through the implementation of the new service model proposed in the Review. However, there is now an ambition to go much further: to transform all of Waltham Forest's library buildings into modern and attractive spaces, provide a 21st century library and information service equipped with modern technology, and to make libraries the primary face-to-face access point for council services.

Leyton and Leytonstone Library Plus' have been extensively remodelled and refurbished to deliver the new vision and branding for the service and Chingford and Walthamstow are both currently the subject of comprehensive regeneration projects in which the refurbishment of the libraries will play a pivotal role. However, progress on bringing the Library Locals in line with this vision has stalled in recent years and has now become a key priority.

Lea Bridge library is well located on Lea Bridge Road near the junction with Markhouse Road/Church Road, in an area of retail activity. It is situated within a Historic England Grade II listed Carnegie library building which has a restrictive covenant on it that limits the use of the site to a public library. As the site cannot be used for any other purpose, relocating this library would be an inefficient use of Council resources, as this asset would remain empty if the library was relocated.

Three business cases have been produced that put forward similar options for the improvement of Hale End, Higham Hill and Wood Street libraries, as building inspections and condition surveys have indicated that the buildings that house these libraries are either in need of extensive and costly repairs, or are located in inaccessible areas that inhibit higher service take-up. This business case fits into a much wider programme of improvement that has been specifically designed to enhance every Library Local in the Borough.

It is important to note that no permanent closures have been included in these plans and Waltham Forest Council intends that all four Library Locals will remain in operation alongside the four Library Plus.'

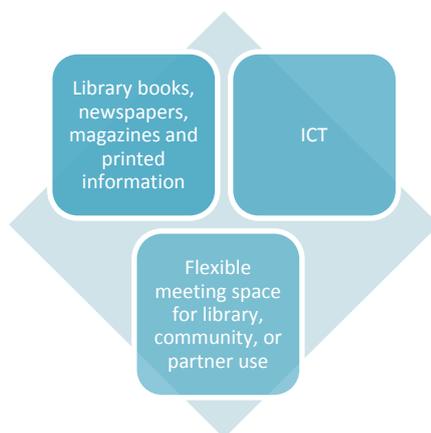
2.2. Requirements

Under the Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964, the Council has a statutory duty to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient public library services for all persons' who live, work

or study in the Borough that want to make use of it, taking into account local needs and available resources.¹

As a result of the 2011 Review, Cabinet agreed that all residents should live within 1.5 miles of their nearest library, and two miles of their nearest Library Plus.

Each Library Local must also be able to accommodate the following areas to meet the Council's vision for the Library and Information Service:



2.3. Library Locals Vision Statement

The Council's vision is that Library Locals:

- Be modern and attractive spaces which match up to the best public library buildings in London and have the built-in flexibility to adapt to future service needs.
- Offer a 21st century library service supporting literacy and numeracy, reading and information needs and access to digital services. Be public spaces which are welcoming and support community cohesion
- Be located in accessible places alongside other community facilities
- Recognise the varying needs of different age groups and supports younger people to get the most from the library experience especially in the area of ICT software and hardware
- Enable and empower members of the community supported by library staff to shape the local service to offer the best customer experience, now and in the future

3 PROJECT SCOPE

The scope of the programme will include:

- Relocating, redesigning and/or refurbishing all four of the Library Locals within the Borough. As a result, this project will also include the development of designs and specifications, commissioning and procurement activity and contract management of the delivery works. This business case will focus specifically on the proposed remodelling and refurbishment of Lea Bridge Library Local.

¹ Department for Culture Media & Sport (2015). *Guidance: Libraries as a Statutory Service*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-libraries-as-a-statutory-service/libraries-as-a-statutory-service>

- Development and implementation of an enhanced library offer that makes the most of the space and technology available.
- ICT provision within libraries, including the development of new specifications, procurement and installation, and agreement of arrangements for on-going development and maintenance.
- Development and implementation of arrangements for access to literacy, numeracy, information and learning services. This will be through library organised activities and with partner agencies.
- Possibilities for hot-desking, to provide remote working opportunities for wider Council staff.
- Assessing opportunities to increase the utilisation rate of library locals on the days that they are closed (e.g. through secure zoning and key holder agreements).
- Development of commercial and sponsorship opportunities where appropriate. This could include, but is not limited to: generating rental income by leasing out space to community groups, social enterprises, the voluntary sector and/or private businesses.
- Although the level of service provision will not change as a result of the proposed remodelling and refurbishment, the Council will carry out a four week consultation with residents, stakeholders and staff to test out views on the proposals and the Library Vision

The following items are out of scope:

- Although this project is linked to the branding and development of Library Plus', plans for the on-going capital programme to improve the Library Plus libraries are out of scope.
- The project will not seek to review the overall vision and service model for the Library Service, as agreed in the Libraries Review in 2011.
- statutory 12 week consultation with residents, stakeholders and/or staff is not necessary as the level of service provision will not change
- Detailed planning and implementation of staff relocation and office moves will not be included, as these will be undertaken as part of the Council's Way We Work Programme.

4 OBJECTIVES

This project will support or enhance a number of different Council objectives:

1. Regeneration is a key priority for the Council – to bring residents better shopping, streets and leisure and to create and retain more wealth and opportunities in the Borough. Improvement of the Council's library buildings and the services they provide is expected to contribute in a meaningful way towards the regeneration of the Borough, for the benefit of the local community, by providing attractive town centres for residents that meet their needs.
2. Building a strong local economy and thriving town centres is also one of our primary objectives. The achievement of this objective is partially predicated on our ability to ensure that residents have the skills they need to access high quality employment and boost our economy. Pursuing a Library Local Improvement Programme targeted at modernising the service, in order to better meet local needs, should help the Council meet this objective through the provision of literacy, numeracy and ICT support for residents in accessible and visible locations.

3. Assessing and pursuing opportunities for possible site relocations (where appropriate) will support our ambitious housing target to build of 12,000 new homes by 2020, by freeing up space for housing developments.
4. It is anticipated that improved facilities for residents will also help the Council meet its commitment to helping residents achieve a good quality of life. Studies have shown that libraries have a number of health and wellbeing benefits, as they are a trusted place to go for health support'.² They can also help reduce social isolation through the provision of non-stigmatised community space and skilled and sympathetic staff. This will build on the support already provided in Library Locals.

5 OPTION APPRAISAL

5.1 Options

The following options have been considered;

1. Remodel and refurbish Lea Bridge Library Local in conjunction with Hale End, Higham Hill and Wood Street libraries
2. Relocate
3. Do nothing

5.1.1 Option 1 - Remodel and refurbish Lea Bridge Library Local in conjunction with Hale End, Higham Hill and Wood Street libraries

The most recent Resident Insight Survey indicates that satisfaction with the Library and Information Service across the Borough is currently at 66%, which suggests that it is performing reasonably well.³ However, there is still room to improve this score; particularly as only 35% of residents stated that they had visited their local library in the past three months when they were last polled in 2014-15.

Lea Bridge Library is centrally located on Lea Bridge Road near the junction with Markhouse Road/Church Road, in an area of retail activity, has a Grade II listing by Historic England and a restrictive covenant in place on the building restricting its use to a public library. It is recommended that the Council refurbishes this site to bring it in line with the Council's vision for Library Locals, rather than achieving this through relocation. This business case will focus on the refurbishment and remodelling of Lea Bridge Library but it is important to note that these proposals are part of a much larger project that seeks to improve the entire Library Local service.

The option for remodelling and refurbishing Lea Bridge Library presented in this business case have been underpinned by the findings of a feasibility study, which was carried out by Asset Management at the end of 2015, and an Equalities Analysis (attached as an Appendix to the Cabinet Report). These proposals have been designed to sustain and enhance the current service offer whilst safeguarding and maintaining the Council's commitment to guaranteeing that every resident is within 1.5 miles of their nearest library and within two miles of a Library Plus. Waltham Forest will continue to have eight publicly funded libraries.

² Museums, Libraries and Archives (2012) *Practitioner Guide: What do the Public want from Libraries?* Available at:

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120215211132/research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/documents/what_public_want_from_libraries_practitioner_guide_0112b12_2010.pdf

³ Resident Insight Survey Results, Wave 12.

As the site cannot be used for any other purpose, relocating this library would be an inefficient use of Council resources, as this asset would remain empty if the library was relocated. It is therefore recommended that Lea Bridge Library is refurbished to bring it up to the required standard.

Visitor figures indicate that Lea Bridge Library performs well in comparison to the other three Library Locals, as it has consistently received the highest number of visits since 2014-15, and it has also achieved the highest PC usage amongst all of the Library Locals. This indicates that there is little need to relocate the library, as evidence indicates that it is performing adequately.

Site inspections suggest the building is operating efficiently. This is mainly due to the investment of £1.1 Million to refurbish the building in 2010, which has meant that the building needs limited work to bring it up to the required standard outlined in the Vision Statement for Library Locals. Remodelling this library to adopt the Library Local/Library Plus branding, work on the choice of lending and information materials and further work with community groups should increase its performance by making it a more attractive and welcoming environment.

Lea Bridge Library is also perceived as being accessible for residents because it is located on main transport routes and is within 1km (or an eight minute walk) from the new London Overground Station, which opened in May 2016. According to TfL estimates, the new station will service 352,000 passengers a year by 2031, which will generate a significant amount of additional passing traffic for the library.⁴ It is anticipated that Lea Bridge Library's 'moderate' PTAL score rating of 3 will improve as a result of this infrastructure improvement. The basic structural design of the interior is also accessible – it has an accessible toilet, an accessible lift and the main entrance is fully accessible with a ramp. However, whilst there are on street parking bays available near the library, there are currently no Blue Badge bays available for library users with disabilities.

At 540m² the library building is large enough to accommodate the library service, flexible meeting space, IT provision and space for a community partner. The amount of space available at this site for the library is considered surplus to the current library needs.

For the reasons listed above, it is proposed that the current building continues to be used, to deliver the Library Local service. Appropriate refurbishment and remodelling will be needed to align the library with the Council's vision and research will be carried out of the possibility of attracting a community partner to lease circa 90 m².

The timescale for improvement is likely to be a maximum of three months which would enable the current library to become a Library Local quickly. It is anticipated that the library would need to close during this time subject to more detailed design planning and investigation of alternative options.

5.1.2. Option 2 - Lea Bridge Library Relocation

Lea Bridge Library is centrally located, Grade II Listed by Historic England, has a restrictive covenant only allowing the building to be used as a public library and had £1.1M spent on extensive refurbishment in 2010. For all of these reasons, plus the opportunity to accommodate a community partner, it is proposed that a Library Local for Lea Bridge is provided in the existing library building.

⁴ Waltham Forest (2016) *Lea Bridge Station set to re-open Spring 2016*. Available at: <http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/pages/news/lb-station-re-open-spring-2016.aspx>

5.1.3 Option 3 – Do nothing

The Council will continue to deliver the Library Local service in the current building, with the same design, layout and level of provision as is available at present. No improvements should be made to Lea Bridge Library. This option does not require any initial capital funding, it is likely that service take-and resident satisfaction and engagement with the service will remain at the current level.

Benefits of preferred option

Category	Benefit	Benefit Measure	Timescale for Realisation
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modern design principles (including energy saving and environmentally friendly models) will minimize premises running costs of late 19th century building New revenue streams can be created by hiring out community space Anticipated capital surplus to be generated from the sale of Higham Hill, Wood Street and Hale Library, which will fund Library Local Improvement Programme The increased availability of modern ICT will promote a channel shift towards self-service, which would lower the cost of delivering Council services. 	Budget analysis	3 years
		Budget analysis	Within 12 months, but on-going
		Investment appraisal and on-going budget analysis	3 years
		Budget analysis	3 years
Operational/ Business process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced service quality Increased issues of library materials Increased use of ICT Increased number of visits to Library Locals Increased proportion of Council services completed online or by self-service The project will also contribute to the regeneration of localities by providing an attractive destination alongside the “retail offer” and working links with local traders Service improvements will boost the Council’s reputation 	Customer surveys/annual Service data	Within 12 months, but on-going
		Service data	As above
		Service data	As above
		Service data	As above
		Annual residents survey	As above
		Annual residents survey	As above
		Annual residents survey	As above

Customer/ Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved customer satisfaction and engagement 	Customer surveys/annual resident survey	Within 12 months, but on-going
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved customer engagement with the Council and other stakeholders 	Customer surveys and stakeholder feedback	As above
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater 'fit for purpose' space for community group to deliver services that meet local needs 	Stakeholder feedback	6 months +
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better provision of welcoming and flexible learning space across the Borough 	Customer surveys/annual resident survey	Within 12 months, but on-going
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in staff satisfaction, motivation and engagement. 	Staff surveys	1-3 years

5.2 Project Costs for the remodelling and refurbishing of Lea Bridge Library

As the potential location for Hale End Library is the subject of commercial negotiations which impacts on the affordability of the whole programme, the information is not available as it is exempt in accordance with Section 100(A-H) of the Local Government Act 1972 and Schedule 12A as amended, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1, paragraph 3, as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information) and disclosure would not be in the public interest.

Risks and Mitigations

Description	Counter measure(s)	*Likelihood	**Impact
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Description	Counter measure(s)	*Likelihood	**Impact
Service take up may not increase.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise library remodelling/ refurbishment in Waltham Forest News and other Council correspondence (e.g. Twitter and our website) to emphasise the benefits of the remodelled location and attract new customers. • Ensure that the design and library offer is welcoming, attractive and appeals to a large number of people when the library is remodelled. This can be achieved through early communication and engagement with residents about what facilities they would like to see in a remodelled library. • Ensure the library offer – stock, information, activities and events - is constantly improved 	2	2
Some customers may not like new environment or clientele.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early and open communication and engagement with residents that highlights the benefits of the remodelling should help to counteract this. • Targeted promotion for categories of user to encourage different users to use the service at different times 	2	1
Staff may campaign against the remodelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early and honest communication with staff and Trade Unions • Keep staff updated regularly throughout the process to minimise anxiety and confusion. 	1	2
Risk that the Capital Programme may not be considered at July Cabinet. This may delay the formal agreement of funding for the programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have Cabinet Report and Business Case for the project ready at an early date • Ensure that stakeholders are aware of the project's high-priority status to avoid slippage. 	2	3
Capital Receipts may not be available to fund remodelling and to contribute towards housing developments (e.g. if the assets do not get sold in time or the plans are not approved by the Strategic Capital Asset Management Team).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full and early communication with Finance and Asset Management. • Share the vision for Library Locals with the Leader and Deputy Leader, Junior Cabinet Member, Cabinet and Asset Management for early approval • Put a reserve price on lots that go up for sale at auction • Get advice from Asset Management at an early stage to ensure that plans take into account key issues and concerns. 	2	4

Description	Counter measure(s)	*Likelihood	**Impact
<p>In March 2016, reports suggest that the UK construction industry output for house building is at a 10 month low due to the difficulties associated with finding skilled labour and the prospect of leaving the EU.⁵ It is possible that the completion of works for all four of the libraries may slip as a result of this trend.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careful planning of timing and sequencing works, to include full impact assessment. • Find contractors to deliver works early on in the project. • Explore options to minimise disruption and secure alternative provision – e.g. extending of opening times and services available at other branches • Full and early communication with residents, staff and elected members if delay occurs. 	2	3
<p>The project assumes we can build a consensus around the remodelling and secure a formal decision in a fairly short timescale.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early consultation should take place between councillor officers and members to generate consensus. • The Leader of the Council and junior cabinet member for libraries should be kept up-to-date on the progress of the project at all times. • A robust business case will be put forward for the remodelling of Lea Bridge library that has been based on clear evidence and resident insight to garner senior buy-in. 	2	2

*Likelihood 1=remote 2=possible 3=probable 4=likely

**Impact: 1=minor 2=moderate 3=significant 4=severe

⁵ Phillip Inman (2016) 'UK Construction Industry Output at 10 Month Low'. *The Guardian*. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/business/2016/mar/02/construction-industry-output-february-markit-cips-pmi-report>

6 PREFERRED OPTION

It is recommended that the Council pursues Option One, which puts forwards plans to remodel and refurbish Lea Bridge Library as a Library Local. This option presents the greatest number of benefits, as it will improve the service offer for residents, boost the performance of the library, improve customer satisfaction levels and attract greater footfall than it currently does.

As the site cannot be used for any other purpose, relocating this library would be an inefficient use of Council resources, as this asset would remain empty if the library was relocated. It is therefore recommended that Lea Bridge Library is refurbished to bring it up to the required standard.

Visitor figures indicate that Lea Bridge Library performs well in comparison to the other three Library Locals, as it has consistently received the highest number of visits since 2014-15, and it has also achieved the highest PC usage amongst all of the Library Locals. This indicates that there is little need to relocate the library, as evidence indicates that it is performing adequately. However, remodelling as a Library Local and the promotion of the whole Programme is likely to increase interest and take-up of the service alongside closer links with the local community through provision of a community space that a partner service could use.

7 IMPLICATIONS

Legal

The Council's duty under Section 7 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964 is to deliver a comprehensive and efficient library service to those who wish to use it. This duty must be complied with alongside the Council's other statutory duties. In fulfilling its duty, a local authority must have regard to the desirability of:

- ensuring that facilities are available for the borrowing of and reference to books and other printed material and pictures and film to meet the general and special requirements adults and children;
- encouraging adults and children to make full use of the library service and of providing advice as to its use and information as may be required by users of the service

In deciding whether to approve in principal the proposals, Cllrs. must comply with the public sector equality duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, Appendix 4 (the Equality Analysis) attached to the Cabinet Report, sets out the nature of the duty. The analysis identifies a negative impact which cannot be fully mitigated since the proposal inevitably means change for some users who may be within a protected group, and who may experience change. Members must be satisfied that any negative impacts on protected groups identified that are not fully mitigated is justified, and is a proportionate means of achieving the outcome sought, and that there is no fairer way of achieving the outcome. Equality monitoring should continue and be informed by the consultation exercise and steps taken to address any apparent as yet unforeseen impact on any group

Equalities and Diversity

The Equality Analysis (Appendix 5 in the Cabinet Report) has concluded that overall, moving the libraries to a new location co-located with shopping facilities will improve access for a number of people.

However, potential negative impacts have been identified in the change of location in that some of the current users will need to walk further. However, at the same time the new

locations will be closer to other current and potential new users. During any implementation there will be an inevitable disruption in services provided which may also adversely impact upon users within protected groups

Sustainability (including climate change, health, crime and disorder)

Proposals will be developed in accordance with national, regional and local standards for sustainable development and opportunities to exceed these will be explored. All new libraries will be designed to meet the Council’s requirement to reduce carbon emissions by 35% below 2013 Building Regulations, Details of specific measures will be included within the final detailed plans.

Libraries have a number of health and wellbeing benefits, as they are a trusted place to go for health support. They can also help reduce social isolation through the provision of non-stigmatised community space and skilled and sympathetic staff. This will build on the support already provided in Library Locals.

Under s.1 of the Childcare Act 2006, the Council has a general duty to improve the well-being of young children in its area and to reduce inequalities between young children in their area in relation to well-being issues which include:

- (a) physical and mental health and emotional well-being;
- (b) protection from harm and neglect;
- (c) education, training and recreation;
- (d) the contribution made by them to society;
- (e) social and economic well-being.

Libraries provide safe community spaces and a supportive environment for both individuals and groups. Libraries are a legitimate space for young people to “hang out” in with a variety of learning and leisure opportunities.

Council Infrastructure

All work to achieve these relocations/refurbishments will be undertaken within existing resources and use of specialist external agencies as outlined in the project. Staff employed in the local libraries will move to the newly located libraries once complete. There are no indications of any reductions in library staffing as a result of these proposals.

8 APPROVAL

The Sponsor (or Management Board) should assure themselves that the project is viable and will deliver the proposed benefits before signing off the Business Case.

Sponsor	Michele Moloney, Director of Neighbourhoods and Commercial Services
Signature	Michele Moloney
Date	28th June 2016