

**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**EDUCATION, SKILLS AND CULTURE CABINET BOARD**

11th April 2019

**REPORT OF HEAD OF TRANSFORMATION  
ANDREW THOMAS**

**MATTER FOR DECISION**

**WARDS AFFECTED: All**

**Library Service Review: A Sustainable Library Service 2020-2025**

**Purpose of the Report**

To request approval from Members to produce a review of the library service in Neath Port Talbot and consult with all interested groups as outlined in the report below.

**Executive Summary**

Following the recent budget setting process and feedback from public consultation, it was proposed to produce a review of the public library service in Neath Port Talbot to ensure that the library service continues to deliver a relevant, cost effective and sustainable service over the next 5 years.

It is intended that this review will run over a six month period at the end of which, a full report will be presented to council for consideration by Members.

**Background**

Public libraries are a statutory service, provided under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964.

In light of decisions made following the recent budget setting process it is proposed that there will be a review of library services

in Neath Port Talbot. It is intended that this review will run over a six month period at the end of which a full report will be presented to Council for consideration by Members. The overarching purpose of the review will be to ensure that the library service continues to deliver a relevant, cost effective and sustainable service for the people of Neath Port Talbot over the next five years.

Initially it is suggested that the review follows the headings listed below.

**1. Current position – What Neath Port Talbot provides:**

- a. Tier 1 Main libraries at Neath / Port Talbot / Pontardawe
- b. Tier 2 Branch libraries at Skewen, Glynneath and Sandfields
- c. Tier 3 Branch libraries at Baglan and Cwmafan
- d. Mobile library service
- e. Home delivery service to housebound residents
- f. Support to Community libraries
- g. Services to schools and young children
- h. Services to nursing and residential homes

**2. A Statutory library service:**

- a. What must be legally provided – Welsh Public Library Standards
- b. Current Welsh Government legislation e.g. Wellbeing of Future Generations Act
- c. Welsh Government policies and guidelines
- d. Neath Port Talbot corporate priorities

**3. The changing role of public libraries:**

- a. Analysis of current usage patterns
- b. Investigate opportunities to enhance the library offer and develop new functions via partnership working in Neath Port Talbot
- c. Study examples of best practice across Wales
- d. Meeting the needs of users

**4. How other authorities in Wales are delivering a library service:**

- a. Management options
- b. Trust status
- c. Joint delivery / partnership working
- d. Community libraries

**5. Service development and opportunities:**

- a. Evaluate current building stock and opening hours:
  - i) Asset management updates
  - ii) Operational costs
- b. Co-location and community hubs
- c. Library relocation - advantages and costs
- d. Assess feasibility of new library buildings
- e. Options for delivery of mobile library service
- f. Home delivery service
- g. Review of book supply methods
- h. Staffing analysis
- i. Micro-libraries (book deposit collections)
- j. Training

**6. Challenges**

- a. Funding
- b. Efficiency savings
- c. Staff recruitment and succession management

**7. Consultation:**

- a. Library user and non-user surveys
- b. Focus groups of library members
- c. Local Elected Members focus groups for each library
- d. Community groups
- e. Staff survey

## **8. Conclusions and recommendations**

### **Financial Impact**

There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

There are no equality impacts associated with this report.

### **Workforce Impacts**

There are no workforce implications in relation to this report.

### **Legal Impacts**

There are no legal impacts in relation to this report.

### **Risk Management**

There is no identified risk to this report.

### **Consultation**

As part of the library service review, it is proposed to widely consult with all relevant groups in the community.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Members approve the proposal to produce a library service review and consult with all relevant groups as outlined in the report.

### **Reasons for Proposed Decision**

To enable officers to undertake a full library service review and report back to members on options for the future delivery of the service.

### **Implementation of Decision**

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

## **Appendices**

### Equality Impact Assessment Screening Form

#### **List of Background Papers**

Connected and Ambitious Libraries: The sixth quality framework of the Welsh Public Library Standards 2017 -20

#### **Officer Contact**

Wayne John, County Librarian  
📞 01639 899829  
✉️ [w.john@npt.gov.uk](mailto:w.john@npt.gov.uk)