

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

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