

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & CULTURE COMMITTEE

## Agenda Item 26

Brighton & Hove City  
Council

**Subject:** Future of the Mobile Library Service  
**Date of Meeting:** 20 September 2012  
**Report of:** Geoff Raw, Strategic Director for Place  
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**Key Decision:** No  
**Wards Affected:** All

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform and update the Committee on the progress of discussions and research on the future of Mobile Library Service.
- 1.2 Following the decision taken at Budget Council in February 2012, the Mobile Library Service is due to operate on its current schedule until the end of October while alternative funding options are being explored.
- 1.3 Capital funds to purchase a replacement vehicle were allocated at Budget Council, but not enough ongoing revenue funding was identified. It is only appropriate to purchase a new vehicle if sufficient money is found to run the Mobile Library Service for the seven to 10 years of its operational life.
- 1.4 While some useful discussions have taken place that may result in the Library Service working with others to deliver targeted projects, no alternative sources of sustainable long term revenue funding for the Mobile Library have been identified.
- 1.5 Instead, some creative ideas have emerged to develop and deliver a more effective targeted service to people currently served by the Mobile Library who have difficulty getting to one of the 14 static libraries in the city. These ideas would provide a more cost effective and tailored service to those who really need this type of supported access to library services.
- 1.6 The Mobile Library was proposed for closure for 2012-13 as the Library Service savings with the least negative impact, and as Mobile Library usage is only 1.4% of total library usage across the city. While it is acknowledged that the Mobile Library is popular and well-loved by its users, the service is not essential in an urban environment where 98% of residents are within one mile of a library, and is also not cost effective. 71% of registered Mobile Library users already use another library and the cost per visit to the Mobile Library is twice as expensive as the average cost of the static library services (£3.99 instead of £1.77).

- 1.7 Nationally, since April 2011, 157 libraries are reported as being closed or changed operational model. 53 of the libraries closed are mobile libraries and 57 are static libraries, with the remainder (47) being passed over to volunteers or social enterprise. The high percentage of mobile libraries included indicates that many other authorities have come to the view that mobile libraries are less effective or value for money. There are, as yet, unconfirmed reports that another 227 libraries are under threat of closure this year.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That the Committee approve the proposed new approach to delivering of library services to current mobile library users and others who have difficulty accessing library services at a community or central library, as outlined in section 5, using the £25,000 identified for Mobile Library Service provision at Budget Council in February 2012.
- 2.2 That the Committee endorse the development of the partnership working opportunities identified in the discussions and consultation outlined in section 4 below, which will further support the delivery of targeted services to those in most need.
- 2.3 That in order to effectively communicate with service users, and to implement and promote suitable alternative service provision, the Mobile Library Service should continue until the end of December 2012.

## **3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS**

- 3.1 Brighton & Hove Library Services are committed to improving and modernising public library services in the city. We were one of the first library authorities to introduce self-service facilities, and all our libraries have free public access computers with extensive online reference and information resources. Our latest innovation is to offer free e-book lending, and we are promoting and supporting online access to council services through our award winning Council Connect service.
- 3.2 The recommendations of this report support the priorities identified for modernising the Library Service, by focusing on developing the Community Libraries as local hubs, with outreach activities to take services to those in most need, and supporting digital inclusion to enable everyone to access the benefits of being online. The development of a Home Delivery Service, using laptop access to library catalogues and other services, and tailoring the library service to meet housebound people's individual needs is part of this modernising and targeted approach to Library Service delivery.
- 3.3 Following a review of the Mobile Library and Equal Access Services in 2009, a report to the Culture, Recreation and Tourism Cabinet Member meeting agreed changes to these services to try to reach more elderly and vulnerable people in residential accommodation, sheltered housing, and also to provide a service to some schools and early years' settings. New Mobile Library stops were created and all were extensively advertised:

- Posters sent to sheltered accommodation near the stops
- Notices were put on community boards
- Local housing offices and PSCOs were informed
- Local residents and tenants associations were informed
- Notices given to any local shops, doctors and dentists surgeries nearby
- Local schools, playgroups and nurseries were informed
- In one targeted area (Ingram Crescent West and East) 76 posters were displayed – one in each block
- Blocks of flats were given posters to display in communal areas
- Library staff visited residential home and local schools
- Mobile Library information is also available on the website

3.4 Despite these efforts, the Mobile Library Service is not used very much by elderly or housebound residents, or by the schools or nurseries or playgroups near the stops. Many elderly people in residential homes found it difficult to use the Mobile Library, and preferred to make use of the free book collections to the homes that are exchanged on a regular basis from the Libraries' Equal Access Service. The schools approached preferred to use their own libraries for class visits, or to visit a community library; the nurseries and playgroups receive pre-school loans collections which are exchanged on a regular basis, and Bookstart packs which are free books for the children to keep.

3.5 The Mobile Library is not able to offer the wide range of resources and facilities that are available in a community library. A comparison of the services shows that:

	<b>Community Libraries</b>	<b>Mobile Library Service</b>
	12 community libraries across the city, with 98% of population within one mile of a library. This includes new libraries at Coldean, Patcham and Whitehawk with a new Woodingdean Library scheduled to be completed in 2013	Vehicle has reached the end of its operational life
Hours open	Community Libraries offer 281 hours a week open to the public. Between 19 and 28 hours per week each library	Visits most of the 24 locations for between half an hour to two hours a fortnight
Cost per visit	£2.46 average cost per visit	£3.99 cost per visit
Number of books	Total stock of 137,000 volumes. Average of over 12,000 items per library	5,000 items on rotation, with only 2,500 on the vehicle at any one time
Reference materials	1,260 volumes across all community libraries. 105 average number per community library	22 volumes
Newspapers, Journals	Yes	No

Access	Disabled access to all buildings. All libraries served by regular bus routes.	Parking the vehicle can be difficult and requires a flat, safe location. Difficult access for disabled or infirm people
Public computers	At least two computers for free public use with Coldean, Patcham and Whitehawk having more plus additional separate ICT suites	No computers for public access
Space for events and activities	Extensive range of regular events, activities and community use, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homework clubs</li> <li>• Baby Boogie and other children's activities</li> <li>• IT and other community based training courses</li> <li>• Advice surgeries from community partners</li> <li>• Comfortable local community space to spend time in</li> </ul>	None on the vehicle.

3.6 The conclusion reached was that while we would like to offer a Mobile Library service, at a time when we are prioritising spending there are more effective ways to reach isolated or vulnerable people, and to deliver good community focussed library services.

3.7 As part of required library service savings options for 2012-13 it was proposed to phase out the Mobile Library Service over three years from April 2012 saving £73,000 (£32k 2011/12, £30k 2012/13 and £11k 2013/14).

3.8 The reasons for the proposal were that:

- There is an excellent network of 14 libraries (12 community libraries and two central libraries) across the city
- 98% of all residents are within one mile of a library
- 71% (611) of registered mobile library borrowers already use one of the static libraries
- Only 253 registered borrowers are using the Mobile Library only
- The Mobile Library is relatively more expensive to run compared to the static libraries. Mobile Library cost per visit is £3.99, static libraries cost per visit is £1.77 (updated to 2011-12 figures)
- The services and facilities in the community libraries are far better than those provided on the Mobile Library
- The Mobile Library has not been effective in reaching as many elderly, housebound or vulnerable people as we had hoped following the 2009 targeted promotion.

3.9 Public consultation outlining the proposal, reason for this, and listing alternative provision, was sent to all registered Mobile Library users, made available on the Mobile Library itself and on the library website and the city's consultation portal. The key responses are summarised below:

3.10 There were 89 responses and 207 individual comments made

- 160 comments were opposed to the removal of the Mobile Library
  - 13 comments accepted the proposals or were happy that other libraries were not being closed
  - When asked what would be the best alternative service for them, the responses were - community library use 18; housebound delivery service 3; residential home delivery 2.
- 3.11 In parallel with this, a letter from the Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Tourism was sent to the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum seeking potential community and voluntary sector partnership, involvement or funding opportunities to enable the continuation of the Mobile Library Service.
- 3.12 A range of public concerns were expressed through various forums about the potential loss of the Mobile Library. This includes the presentation of a petition to Council.
- 3.13 At Budget Council on 23 February 2012 the following amendment was passed regarding the mobile library:
- £0.025m to help fund the annual running costs of the Mobile Library Service as a contribution towards securing its future as a combined mobile library and community advice outreach service.
  - To work with the voluntary sector and seek contributions from partner agencies to fully fund the project.
  - It is also proposed to amend the 2012/13 capital investment programme by allocating £0.120m from the Local Transport Plan grant to purchase a new mobile library subject to the identification of the full running costs as set out above.
- 3.14 To deal with the challenge of the still remaining revenue shortfall required to run the Mobile Library Service it was decided that the service would continue to run the current schedule until the end of October. In the meantime, alternative funding options working with the voluntary and community sector, and other public sector organisations were explored and the situation would be reviewed in September 2012.
- 3.15 The results of the consultation with the community and voluntary sector and other public sector organisations can be seen in section 4. While there was interest in working more closely with the Library Service to deliver targeted services on a project basis, no organisation was able to offer continuing year-on-year revenue funding over the lifetime of the Mobile Library vehicle.

#### **4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 A letter from the Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Tourism was sent to the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum (CVSF) seeking potential community and voluntary sector partnership, involvement or funding opportunities to enable the continuation of the Mobile Library Service on 25 January 2012. There has been no response or interest from the CVSF to this with them recently clarifying this and clearly indicating this was a very challenging proposition in the current climate.

- 4.2 A range of other partnership and potential funding opportunities have been explored. Although there are organisations interested in working with the Libraries to deliver services and develop positive initiatives by collaborative working, there have been no specific revenue funds identified. These are summarised below.
- 4.2.1 The Police are interested in using the mobile to disseminate public safety information but are not able to contribute any funding to the running of the vehicle on a sustained basis.
- 4.2.2 NHS Sussex are interested in further developing distribution of health information and promoting healthy living initiative but are not able to contribute any funding to the running of the vehicle on a sustained basis.
- 4.2.3 Initial discussion with Adult Social Care has centred around changes in delivery of day care services and the potential to work with them around prevention and taking appropriate activities and information to isolated communities. Discussions have also considered helping with the access point process, whereby people are initially 'assessed/filtered' to target services appropriately and save time. There is potential for positive joint working, though not necessarily centred on the Mobile Library. Whilst some one-off project funding for the right future agreed joint initiative might be possible, there is not likely to be sustained revenue funding for running the Mobile Library Service from this source.
- 4.2.4 Some discussion has taken place around potential one off projects involving an individual school and possible use of Pupil Premium. This is at an early stage needs further discussion and exploration in the new academic year. Again, this discussion may lead to greater collaboration between the school and the Library Service, but not necessarily focus on the Mobile Library and certainly not enough dedicated revenue funding to run the vehicle.
- 4.3 Potential shared vehicle use has also been considered and initially discussed in relation to a joint Play Bus and Mobile Library. Discussions with the Children & Families team have indicated that they do not see this as an appropriate option for them at this time.
- 4.4 Research into the national picture has also been done looking at a number of partnership templates and if any of these had resulted in mobile libraries achieving sustained revenue funding. Whilst there are examples of good collaborative working similar to partnership initiatives above, there are no existing models of these contributing sustained revenue funding.

## **5. RECOMMENDED OPTION**

- 5.1 During the research, an alternative to the Mobile Library Service has been identified which would meet the needs of those unable or who find it difficult to get to a community or central library. The alternative would be to employ a Home Delivery Library Officer to deliver books and other resources to people in their own homes. This service would be tailored to meet people's individual needs, and would enable people to get access to the full catalogue of library resources in the city, not just those on the Mobile Library.

- 5.2 The Home Delivery Library Officer would show people how to make their library selections using the web catalogue either on their own computer at home, or taking with them a laptop with internet access. Books would be delivered by the Home Delivery Library Officer or volunteer. An added benefit of this approach is that it will also create the opportunity for housebound people to be given help using the internet to access other information or services, or simply just to provide coaching in the use of the internet, and so help to combat digital exclusion.
- 5.3 A successful model for the delivery of Home Library Services is through individual home delivery visits utilising a car or small van with the service delivered with a combination of paid staff and volunteers working in close partnership with the voluntary and community sector. These services offer a range of services including books and audio visual materials, reservation service, information and support. This standard model is used successfully in a number of library authorities including those in East and West Sussex and Kent.
- 5.4 A more recent innovation has been successfully piloted in Birmingham and Devon. Using grant funding, they tested the effectiveness of using Home Library Services to provide supported internet access and ICT coaching to housebound people. This pilot demonstrated that the majority of the participants found getting online in this way to be a transformational experience. More information on this pilot can be found in appendix 1.
- 5.5 Reducing isolation and improving inclusion would be a key aim of Brighton & Hove's Home Delivery Library Service, both in terms of digital inclusion by adapting and delivering a Council Connect service to people in their own homes and in the wider sense by sharing good practice, resources, information and access to library and a wide range of other services via a partnership with the Neighbourhood Care Scheme.
- 5.6 The Mobile Library stops near three schools, Elm Grove, Bevendean School and the Cedar Centre. The stop at Elm Grove does get used by children and adults after school, but is not used by the school itself. The stop at Bevendean does not get used by the school despite efforts to promote this.
- 5.7 A small number of pupils from only one school, the Cedar Centre, currently use the Mobile Library Service. The Cedar Centre can be invited to arrange for the pupils at the school to have class visits to a public library where they will be able to access a bigger variety of books, DVDs, music, and other resources. Library staff can also go into the school to promote library services and the Homework Clubs. If class visits are not possible, a free collection of books exchanged every eight weeks could be made to the school in the same way already provided for residential homes.
- 5.8 The Cedar Centre is a school for children with special needs, and the pupils would receive public library services completely free of any charges, including fines and audio-visual charges, as the Library Service is working with Amaze, the independent voluntary organisation and charity working with parents of special needs children, and recognises the Compass Card as evidence of being eligible for the fully free service. (See appendix 2 for more details.)

- 5.9 The school can be invited to join in with the 'Get Reading' project, which seeks to encourage all pupils to become lifelong readers and library members. The pupils are signed up to public library membership and get a special edition library card, and the teachers also get a teacher's membership card which enables them to borrow up to 40 books and eight audio-visual items at one time for their class. More details are available in appendix 2.
- 5.10 Only one nursery/playgroup (BECCA) uses the Mobile Library. BECCA already receive the Book Ahead pre-school loans service, through which they receive a free collection of books which are exchanged on a termly basis. They are also in receipt of Bookstart packs, which is a book gifting scheme for babies, and toddlers. (See information in appendix 2)
- 5.11 Comparison table, showing how the Home Delivery Service, and other forms of alternative library service delivery that can be provided to Mobile Library users, compares with the current Mobile Library:

	<b>Proposed Home Delivery Service</b>	<b>Other alternative provision for Mobile Library Users</b>	<b>Mobile Library Service</b>
Stock available	504,000 stock items (ie stock in all libraries)	Equal Access Service: 13,500 stock items exclusively for people in residential homes	2,500 stock items on vehicle at any one time. 5,000 items total in Mobile Library stock
Tailored service	Yes. Personal service delivered by staff or volunteer. Help with selecting items to borrow.	Equal Access Service provides free collections of books on long loan to people in residential homes	No. Stock not on Mobile Library only available through chargeable reservation service
Accessible	Yes as stock delivered to people in their own homes	Yes as stock delivered to people in their residential home	With difficulty for disabled or infirm
Digital inclusion	Yes, as staff or volunteer will help people access services online, using resident's own computer, or laptop brought by the staff member or volunteer	Only if residential home has internet access and residential home staff member willing to use library service online	No public access computers available
Services to children and young people	Home Delivery Service available to housebound people of any age	Very wide ranging services to children and young people in libraries and through outreach services (see appendix 2)	Limited access to resources on the Mobile Library. Offer to support schools and pre-schools not taken up in practice.
Services to children or adults with special needs	Able to deliver appropriate resources for housebound disabled people	Targeted resources and special events provided for children and adults with special needs in libraries and as	Limited ability to provide targeted services

		outreach services	
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## 6. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

### 6.1 Financial Implications:

The recommendation to close the Mobile Library Service on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 and replace it with a home delivery service with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013 would provide an alternative service to the mobile library at a reduced cost thus achieving the savings proposals and delivering improved value for money. It would also release £120k capital funding.

The 2012/13 budget for the Mobile Library is £67k which reflects the net reduction of £7k (as amended) approved by Budget Council in February 2012. There is a further reduction of £30k included in the indicative proposals for the 2013/14 budget as set out in the 2012/13 Budget Report which would reduce the available budget to £37k.

There were 4 options considered, as detailed section 7. Options 1, to continue with the existing vehicle, would require additional funding of £37k pa and the issue would still need to be addressed in the future. Option 2, to purchase a new vehicle and try to identify alternative sources of funding, would also require additional funding or equivalent resources of £37k pa. Over an estimated 7 to 10 years useful life of the vehicle, this would equate to a commitment in excess of £250k. It has not been possible to secure this funding to date, as detailed elsewhere in this report. Option 3, to close the mobile library service with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013, would deliver the savings in full. Option 4, the home delivery service, would provide an alternative service within a budget of £25k p.a. and deliver savings of £49k.

Capital funding of £120k would be released under options 1, 3 and 4.

Finance Officer Consulted: Michelle Herrington Date: 20<sup>th</sup> August 2012

### 5.2 Legal Implications:

The recommendations in this report clearly take into account key equalities issues and represent a reasonable and balanced approach to demanding budget pressures.

Lawyer Consulted: Bob Bruce Date: 15.08.12

### 5.3 Equalities Implications:

The development of a Home Delivery Service will target anyone who cannot use a library due to being housebound, disabled having mobility difficulties, health issues or caring responsibilities. Providing help to the

housebound and those currently reliant solely on the mobile library to get online and access services via the internet combating digital and social exclusion.

5.4 Sustainability Implications:

The provision of a Home Delivery Service as an alternative to the Mobile Library vehicle will save on energy costs and reduce the service's carbon footprint.

5.5 Crime & Disorder Implications:

None

5.6 Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

Risk of reputational damage to council as a result of public campaigning is mitigated by the fact that the service would be replaced with a more personalised, targeted service for those who find it difficult to use a community or central library. This approach offers an opportunity to develop more effectively the Library Home Delivery Service across the city.

5.7 Corporate / Citywide Implications:

The development of a Home Delivery Service will support the corporate plan priorities in three areas: tackling inequality (see 5.3 above), creating a more sustainable city (see 5.4 above), and engaging people who live and work within the city, by developing the use of volunteers in the delivery of the Home Delivery Service.

5.8 Public Health and Wellbeing Implications:

The development of a Home Delivery Service will target anyone who cannot use a library due to being housebound, disabled having mobility difficulties, health issues or caring responsibilities. This will continue in partnership with the Neighbourhood Care Scheme sharing resources, volunteers and good practice thus increasing access to a wide range of services to a range of potentially isolated and vulnerable people.

**7. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

7.1 Four options were considered:

- Do nothing
- Purchase a new vehicle and try to identify alternative sources of revenue funding
- Close the Mobile Library with no alternative provision
- Close the Mobile Library and replace it with a Home Delivery Service to meet the needs of the housebound and those currently reliant solely on the mobile library

7.2 The first and second options were not financially viable, and the first option would not deliver an effective service. The third option delivered

the most savings, but was not as effective in meeting the equalities implications of the closure. The fourth option was the most cost effective and delivered a service that would meet the equalities issues identified in the review.

## **8. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 No alternative sustainable revenue funding has been identified for the Mobile Library. The £30,000 savings target for 2013-14 (the second part of the two year savings proposals) would still be delivered. The £25,000 identified at Budget Council would give better value for money and a more effective and targeted service if it were used to support the development of a Home Delivery Service for those who cannot access a community or central library.

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Opening up a new world:  
Public libraries connecting housebound people to the networked nation**  
MLA 2011

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/pdf/OpeningUpANewWorldFullReport.pdf>

**Executive Summary**

The Digital Inclusion project was funded and developed by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and Arts Council England in partnership with Race Online 2012, the BBC, the Society of Chief Librarians and Microsoft to test the effectiveness of home library services to provide supported internet access and ICT coaching to housebound people not yet connected to the networked nation. Public libraries, as safe and trusted community spaces with frontline staff trained as digital champions, have a demonstrable record in helping people of all ages and backgrounds to get online. This project has examined how the access and support available at the local library could be extended through partnerships and collaborative working to include elderly, housebound people in their own homes.

This publication is a summary of the MLA's full report commissioned by Arts Council England which assumed some of the functions of the MLA on 1 October 2012 following its closure.

The full MLA report can also be downloaded at [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

*Really looking forward to a lot of emailing. You're a second class citizen without email.*  
*Participant*

This delivery of support and coaching **in the home** is what has made this project unique. The current model of government support is community based, but unfortunately not everyone is able to get to community venues in order to access it. Public libraries have an established model for providing their book loan services to people in their homes and as such seemed well placed to extend that model to the provision of their digital champion role to some of the same customers.

The need for such an intervention is clear. *The Race Online 2012 Manifesto for a Networked Nation* outlines the scale of the challenge:

- There are 10 million adults in the UK who have never used the internet, of whom 39 per cent are aged over 65
- Use of the web decreases with age; while only 10 per cent of 16 to 24 year olds are offline, that figure rises to 50 per cent of 65 to 74 year-olds.

Birmingham City Libraries and Devon Libraries were chosen to take part in the pilot and contributed match funding. Piloting the scheme in two such different authorities made it possible to test if differences might be experienced in

delivering the new service in urban and rural settings, and with both staff and volunteers alike acting as digital champions. Users were recruited via their respective home library services.

This evaluation report clearly demonstrates the impact of the intervention on the lives of housebound people, and the role that staff and volunteers can play as informal intermediaries in supporting them to take their first steps online. It provides evidence that despite some initial technical challenges initially, the expectations of stakeholders were not only met but in many cases exceeded, as the participants for the most part grasped the new opportunities that getting online offered them.

The report also aims to determine the critical factors needed for a successful rollout of this pilot project across the national home library service network and the potential to integrate it into other home visiting social care and health service networks.

*It has quite literally saved my bacon! It's given me so much more to do and I can stay in touch with my daughter on her iPod even when she's on holiday. It has saved my sanity! It has saved my mental health; it's saved me from depression since I've been housebound. ... It has changed my life, given me purpose. I switch it on as soon as I get up to see my emails; I have to tear myself away from it sometimes.*

Participant

The evaluation has shown that within a very short period of engagement with online activity, the participants for the most part grasped the new opportunity with enthusiasm, learned new skills and gained confidence in using them. Almost two-thirds of users now feel happy using a computer and six in 10 are confident using the internet. In only a short space of time, users felt almost as confident using computers as their mobile phones. Another positive effect of the coaching has been that users are much more likely to perceive themselves as “learners”.

*It's magic! She sits by my side and lets me do it; she doesn't reach across and do it for me if I go wrong, she just puts me right. The one-to-one training has made all the difference.*

Participant

The internet has helped to foster ties with friends and family, and has made participants significantly more likely to strongly agree that the internet can help them live independently.

*I don't have to rely on anybody for anything, I never have to ask for people to help me, I can do everything myself!*

Participant

The range of uses to which it was put by users was noticeably wider than either they or stakeholders had anticipated, and included email, Skype, pursuing hobbies and interests, shopping, family history, Google Earth and more.

The difficulties in delivering the project were mainly due to problems with technology, such as computers not initially being set up as expected and poor

connectivity, especially in rural areas of Devon. There were also some challenges involved in delivering learning to this client group. Some experienced physical barriers in using the computer and the internet (e.g. poor eyesight, lack of dexterity), and many found it difficult at times to remember what they had been taught.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the large majority of users reported that having the computer and the internet has made a difference to their lives, while almost six in 10 (58%) said it had made a great deal of difference.

There have also been significant benefits for the staff and volunteers providing the coaching. They experienced a great deal of job satisfaction and enjoyment in helping their users to learn about computers and the internet, and in doing so have strengthened the relationship between themselves and the users. They also enjoyed the one-to-one nature of the learning and felt a sense of achievement being able to pass on their skills and increased self-confidence.

The evaluation has shown the pilot to have been an unqualified success. While inevitably a few users concluded that the online experience was not for them, at least they had been offered the opportunity to discover what was involved and to make that decision, while for the majority getting online has been a transformational experience. The project has developed staff and volunteer skills, has helped to raise library service profiles within the local authority, and has opened doors to new partnerships.

Stakeholders have seen their expectations of the pilot not only met but in many cases exceeded. Home library service users have embraced the opportunity and many of them gone far beyond what was expected of them in terms of their capacity to pick up and apply the new skills within a relatively short time. This can be credited to their own enthusiasm and determination to learn, and to the patient dedication of those delivering the coaching.

The pilot has therefore fulfilled MLA's ambition of demonstrating „the role of home library service staff and volunteers as trusted intermediaries“, and shown that library services, especially when working in partnership with others, are a natural, if not the only, route to getting socially and digitally excluded individuals online.

Key recommendations from the project for national and local government:

- Work with partners to ensure that free computer support is made available to all offliners by integrating it into home visiting services as well as centres in communities
- Ensure that housebound people know where they can go to get assistance with online public services, supported by local digital champions in every community
- Consider extending UK Online funding to cover rollout of this project through home library services
- Work with industry to ensure that products and services are usable and accessible for older and housebound people
- Advocate the role of library services to contribute to Local Authority Older People Strategy outcomes

### Public Library Services to Schools, Children and Young People

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#### Homework Clubs

Free Homework Clubs are provided for children aged 9 -16 years in 11 Brighton & Hove Libraries across the city. Two sessions for young people aged 13 – 19 years are also held in Jubilee and Hove Libraries.

Homework clubs offer stimulating and free professional study support for all young people. Evaluation has shown that pupils who participate in study support do better than would have been expected from baseline measures in academic attainment, attitudes to school and attendance at school. Study support appears to be especially effective for students from minority ethnic communities. Participating pupils also acquired more positive attitudes to learning and better school attendance.

There were 396 Homework Club sessions in Brighton & Hove Libraries last year, with 3,609 pupil attendances.

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#### Get Reading Project

The 'Get Reading Project' aim is to encourage all pupils in schools to become life long readers and library members. We want them to be excited about reading, sharing books, talking about books, recommending books and most importantly to enjoy reading books. We hope that they will encourage their family members, friends and school staff to engage with books and to become library members too! We also want everyone to know that not only do we offer books in our libraries but we offer much more and we want everyone to feel welcome and comfortable visiting all our libraries in the city.

Early in the term the Library Service sends out joining postcards to each school for each child to take home with them along with information for parents/carers about the library service and the Get Reading Project. To coincide with this the school can request a visit from the Library Service for either a school assembly or year group visit. When the pupils return their postcards, they are sent a limited edition library ticket back via the school. (Those who are already library members can receive a limited edition ticket to replace their regular ticket)

The Library service then offers each class a visit to the library with refreshments and a story or activity. We hope that at this visit and all class visits the class card will be used to borrow books and the children will only use their individual cards when they visit the library independently of the school visit.

After the initial visit we realise that the school may want to come in for a shorter book swop visit which we positively encourage, however we are happy to

accommodate longer visits as described earlier on request but we do need prior notice especially if they want a visit to help with a topic they are studying, or to borrow books on a particular theme.

Also we would very much like to welcome pupils into Jubilee Library or Hove Library for a tour and give older pupils a chance to look at our Rare Books Collections.

We are hoping that after the school's initial visit they will continue visiting the library with their pupils and to continue helping us to sign up new pupils to the school at the start of each academic year.

Five new schools joined the 'Get Reading Project' last year, with 1,115 pupils signing up for library membership. In the first year of the project, six schools were signed up, with 2,183 pupils signing up for library membership.

### **'Get Reading' Teachers Card**

The 'Get Reading' Teacher's card entitles them to:

- Borrow a maximum of 40 children's items on loan at one time, 8 of which may be audio/visual if available (there is a hire fee for DVD's and music CD's)
- Children in their class can borrow one book each to be kept in school (this is part of the teacher's 40 loans) and teachers can borrow for the class on this ticket
- Books can be borrowed for a maximum of 12 weeks and will not incur overdue charges
- DVD's and music CD's can be borrowed for one week and will incur overdue charges
- All items borrowed will be the responsibility of the teacher and the school
- The card may be used in any of Brighton & Hove Libraries
- Teachers are requested to book their library visits in advance by ringing Norah Carr, Get Reading Project co-ordinator on 296981, e-mail [Norah.Carr@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:Norah.Carr@brighton-hove.gov.uk), or contact your local library

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### **Class Visits**

Many schools bring their pupils to their local public library initially for a library induction session and then for regular visits to exchange their books.

Last year there were 800 class visits to Brighton & Hove Libraries, with 23,010 pupil attendances.

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### **Services for Children and Young People with Special Needs**

#### **What is the Compass?**

The Compass is Brighton and Hove's database of children with special needs and it is run by Amaze. The Compass is for children and young people with special needs that significantly affect their every day life. If you register your child's details on the Compass, you will receive a Compass leisure card, which entitles children and their carers to a range of free or discounted leisure opportunities, including free swimming at the city's pools. Possession of the Compass card will ensure that children do not face any public library charges, including overdue fines, audio-visual hire charges, or reservation charges for children and young people up to and including the age of 19 years.

### **Class Visits from Special Schools**

There were 50 special school visits to Brighton & Hove libraries last year, with 678 pupils attending.

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### **Chatterbooks**

Chatterbooks is a reading group for young people run by Brighton & Hove Libraries. Last year the reading group met eight times with 48 young people taking part.

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### **Book Ahead Pre-school Library Loans**

94 Brighton & Hove Early Years Settings have joined the Book Ahead Pre-School Library Loans Scheme. The scheme entitles them to receive a collection of 25 picture books which are delivered to them and exchanged on a termly basis. These collections are issued to them by the Book Ahead Pre-School Library Loans Service. Settings also receive their own Book Ahead library card (Early Years Playgroup category) which entitles them to borrow children's items from the public library on a 6 week loan, so overdue charges will not apply. However the card carries a message explaining that normal charges will apply for children's DVDs.

### **Children's Centres Book Ahead Library Cards**

The following 'hub' Children's Centres have all been issued with 'Book Ahead' library cards which will entitle them to borrow books from the public library on a 6 week loan:-

Conway Court Children's Centre  
Hangleton Park Children's Centre  
Hollingdean Children's Centre  
Moulescoomb Children's Centre  
North Portslade Children's Centre  
Roundabout Children's Centre

## Tarner Children's Centre

The cards are issued to them via the Book Ahead pre-school library loans scheme. All Book Ahead library cards will carry a message explaining that the card may only be used to borrow children's items so that no overdue fees will be charged. However, normal charges will apply for children's DVDs which can only be hired for 1 week.

In addition to the many loans of books to nurseries and playgroups, there were 51 visits by Library staff to early years' settings last year, reaching 497 children.

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### **Bookstart**

Bookstart is a book gifting scheme established by the Booktrust that gives free books to all babies and toddlers. Two packs are given out: The Bookstart baby pack for babies 0-12 months old; and the Bookstart Treasure pack for toddlers 26-48 months old. The packs are distributed with the help of the Children's Centres Health Visitors and working with nurseries and playgroups.

Research shows that Bookstart is making a significant contribution to raising standards, not only in literacy, but across the curriculum. This is crucial, as further research indicates that children who are given a good start and are ahead when they start school maintain the gap between themselves and their fellow pupils as primary education continues. Bookstart children are consistently superior in all elements at pre-school, in reception baseline assessment and in Key Stage 1 SATs

We normally manage to reach 100% of all babies and toddlers each year with this book gifting scheme. Last year we also ran 50 Bookstart events with 582 children attending.

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### **Baby Boogie Sessions**

Free music and rhyme sessions for pre-school children and their parents and carers in Brighton & Hove Libraries. The sessions take place once a month term time only in 12 Brighton & Hove Libraries across the city. There is also a special 'Dads baby Boogie' session in Jubilee Library on a Saturday once a month term time only.

There were 168 Baby Boogie sessions in Brighton & Hove Libraries last year, with 6,926 children attending.

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## Future of the Mobile Library Service Equalities Impact Assessment

### Aim of Policy/Scope of Service/Background Information

- Following the amendment passed at Budget Council on 23 February 2012 the Mobile Library is currently due to continue running on its current schedule until the end of October 2012, whilst potential partnership options and additional revenue funding has been investigated. No additional revenue funding has been identified.
- A report will be going to the Economic and Development Culture Committee on September 2012 recommending a new approach to delivering library services to services to current mobile library users and others who have difficulty accessing library services.
- The model to be further development of a Housebound Library Service, using the available revenue funding to more effectively deliver a voluntary sector and library service partnership service.
- This would replace and supplement the Mobile Library Service in order to meet budget savings requirements whilst ensuring the needs of to all users who have significant difficulty using a library are addressed
- To effectively communicate with service users, and to implement and promote range of suitable alternative service provision, the Mobile Library Service to continue until the end of December 2012.

### Existing data/information including relevant legislation

The following data/information/legislation will be relevant to all potentially affected groups:

- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- **Equality Act 2010**
- Equalities & Inclusion Policy 2008-2011 Brighton & Hove City Council

The *Future of the Mobile Library Service* report going to the Economic and Development Culture Committee on September 20 gives full detail and background around the proposals around the future of the mobile library service.

Groups included	Potential impact-yes/no	Describe potential impact	Potential actions to minimise negative impact and maximise positive impacts
<b>Equalities groups</b>			
Age	Yes	<p>Ending the Mobile library service could impact on older people with mobility issues. Of those who only use the Mobile there are 51 people over 65.</p> <p>Ending the Mobile could impact on children under five (Numbers included in figures below)</p> <p>Ending the Mobile could impact on school aged children. Of those who only use the Mobile there are 60 users under 18, and 77 pupil tickets</p>	<p>The alternative Housebound Library service will be developed across the city to bring access to library services to older people with mobility or other access issues</p> <p>Only one nursery/playgroup uses the Mobile Library. They already receive the Book Ahead pre-school loans service, through which they receive a free collection of books which are exchanged on a termly basis. They are also in receipt of Bookstart packs, which is a book gifting scheme for babies, and toddlers</p> <p>The Mobile Library stops near two schools, where there is limited use despite promotion. The schools will be offered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library staff visit to the school to promote library services including homework club and class visits to the local library</li> <li>• Access to the Get Reading project for schools whereby pupils are signed up to public library membership and get a special edition library card, and the teachers also</li> </ul>

		Ending the mobile could impact on children with special needs. There are 65 pupil tickets	<p>get a teacher's membership card which enables them to borrow up to 40 books and eight audio-visual items at one time for their class.</p> <p>A small number of pupils from a school for pupils with special needs currently use the Mobile Library Service. The range of alternative provision offered would include the same services as offered to other schools plus the option of a delivery of exchange collections of books on an eight weekly basis</p> <p>Special needs pupils would receive public library services completely free of any charges, including fines and audio-visual charges, as the Library Service recognises the Compass Card as evidence of being eligible for the fully free service</p> <p>The Housebound service would be available for eligible people of all ages</p>
Disability	Yes	Ending the mobile library service could impact on people who are housebound or have difficulty getting to or using a library. There are currently only three registered mobile library users who are housebound.	<p>The alternative Housebound Library service will be developed across the city to bring access to library services to housebound and other disabled people</p> <p>Despite extensive efforts at promotions, the Mobile Library Service is not used very much by elderly or housebound residents with many of them finding it difficult to use the Mobile Library, preferring to use Equal Access service.</p>

		<p>Ending the mobile library service could impact on people in residential accommodation. Only 17 current users.</p> <p>Ending the mobile could impact on excluded and isolated people</p>	<p>The Equal Access Service would continue to be offered to residential accommodation with the Housebound service made available in addition/as an alternative as appropriate. All of the residential homes near Mobile Library stops already have regularly exchanged collections of books.</p> <p>There is a network of 14 libraries-12 community and two central, with 98% of all residents within one mile of a library</p> <p>71% (611) of registered mobile library borrowers already use one of the static libraries with only 253 registered borrowers using the Mobile Library only.</p> <p>Reducing isolation and improving inclusion would be a key broad aim of the Housebound Library Service. As well as delivering library materials and information services, digital inclusion would be improved by bringing the Council Connect internet help service through laptops to people in their own homes. Exclusion would be combated in the wider sense by sharing good practice, resources, information and access to library and a wide range of other services via a partnership with the Neighbourhood Care Scheme.</p>
Ethnicity	No		
Gender(including	No		

transgender)			
Religion or belief	No		
Sexual Orientation	No		
<b>Consultation and Community Engagement undertaken</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation around the original proposal to close the Mobile Library Service, prior to the Budget Council Decision of February 23 was undertaken with all registered mobile users outlining reasons for proposal and then alternative service options</li> <li>• Subsequent to the Budget Council amendment a range of discussion has taken place with the community and voluntary sector about future partnership working</li> <li>• Further consultation and community engagement to be planned dependent on Economic and Development Culture Committee decision on September 20</li> </ul>			
<b>Priorities and agreed Actions</b>		<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>
Take The <i>Future of the Mobile Library Service</i> report to the Economic and Development Culture Committee for consideration		September 20	Sally McMahon/Geoff Raw
Communicate/inform/involve full range of communities in next stage, dependent on Committee decision.		October onwards	Sally McMahon

