

Subject: Extract from the proceedings of the Economic, Development & Culture Committee meeting held on the 10 March 2016 – Library Plan

Date of Meeting: 24 March 2016

Report of: Head of Legal & Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE***Action Required of Council:***

To receive the report referred from the Economic Development & Culture Committee for decision.

Recommendations:

That the Libraries Plan 2016-2020, and the changes to Library Services proposed as part of this Plan, as contained in the appendix to the report, and outlined in brief in section 3 with amendments in section 6 of the report and detailed below be approved for adoption:

- (1) The only way that Library Services can continue to deliver statutory services with reduced budgets is to modernise and deliver service in new ways. The Library Service Review and Needs Analysis has identified what people need from the service and the priorities for modernisation. The proposals for change put out for public consultation have received a high level of approval from the public, stakeholders and partner organisations.
- (2) Following the results of the consultation process, it is proposed that a number of changes are made to the Libraries Plan proposals. Full details of the new proposals can be found in section 8: Conclusions of the Libraries Plan. The key changes are:
 - (i) More **effective communication** of the proposals so that the public understand how it will work and have their main concerns addressed.
 - (ii) Clarity about and implementation of the agreed **Volunteers Policy and Lone Working Policy**, to protect staff, volunteers and the public.

- (iii) As a result of detailed consultation with the Ward Councillors, creation of an additional **Community Library collection in the Old Boat Community Centre** in Hollingbury to meet the library needs of all age groups. This facility will benefit both the library and the community centre users, encouraging people to use both.
 - (iv) Provision of **staffing support to Hollingbury and Westdene libraries** for one day a week each, to carry out some staff duties, to provide support and guidance to volunteers, and to liaise with the staff at the Community Centre, the Children's Centre and Westdene Junior School.
 - (v) A full business case for the **Hove Library proposals** will be completed making the financial details for the relocation and new extension clear. The business plan will be taken to Policy and Resources Committee for approval. The timetable for the completion of the move will be revised to take account of the due processes that need to be followed. Further public engagement will be sought to inform the details of the development, and the planning process will include public consultation. The completion date for the development will be moved back to the first quarter of 2018.
 - (vi) Questions raised in regard to **transport to and parking** at the Hove Museum site will be considered as part of the planning process. The evidence from the Review and Needs Analysis shows that the greater concentration of Hove Library borrowers is more towards the west of the current building, making the Hove Museum site more central to those borrowers, and it is also clear that the majority of people walk to the library (61%), rather than driving (14%) or catching a bus (16%).
 - (vii) The Hove proposals will include investigating the feasibility of creating an **outdoor space in the garden** for use by library and museum visitors especially children, for library and museum related activities, such as reading and story-telling. Planning advice would be needed on what would be appropriate for the building and local neighbours.
- (3) The Carnegie building would need to be sold to fund the new extension at Hove Museum and other related costs to enable the move to the new location a success for both libraries and museums services. The **future use of the Carnegie building** in Hove would be the decision of the new owner, subject to relevant restrictions as a result of the building being grade 2 listed.
- (4) The details of phases three and four of the Libraries Plan are not fully developed at this stage as much depends on the success of the first two phases of modernisation changes. A report on the detail of phases three and four will be brought to the relevant committees nearer the time.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & CULTURE COMMITTEE

4.00pm 10 MARCH 2016

FRIENDS MEETIGN HOUSE

MINUTES

Present: Councillors: Morgan (Char), Robins (Deputy Chair), Peltzer Dunn (Opposition Spokesperson), Druitt (Group Spokesperson), Greenbaum, Hamilton, Morris, Nemeth, O'Quinn, C Theobald and Yates.

PART ONE

46 LIBRARY PLAN PART 1

- 46.1 The Committee considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive. Sally McMahon, Head of Library Service, introduced the report and explained that it included the results of the Public Consultation that was conducted between November 2015 and February 2016. It was detailed to the Committee that the public survey received a good response with 1,124 responses and all the findings and comments collected were published on the website.
- 46.2 The Head of Library Services noted that some concerns were raised in the comments and these were being collated into a paper. The main concern related to the public wanting more detail about the Library Plan.
- 46.3 It was explained to the Committee that any potential disposal of the current Hove Library building would be subject to further evaluation and a report would be brought to the Policy & Resources Committee for approval. It was added that the moving of Hove Library to Hove Museum would save Brighton & Hove City Council an estimated £350,000 per year, plus the on-going maintenance and repairs needed currently estimated at £750,000. The Head of Library Service explained that if Hove Library were to remain in its current location, the estimated saving would need to be found elsewhere within the library service.
- 46.4 In response to Councillor C Theobald, the Head of Library Service explained that when the library changes were reviewed, monitoring work would be undertaken to ensure the new library system was meeting the needs of the library users.
- 46.5 The Head of Library Services clarified to Councillor Peltzer Dunn that the missing 9% of transport user statistics were library users using taxis, or they did not answer the question. It was also noted that they wished to create an outside space at Hove Museum, which was linked to the museum and library complex, to have activities for children.

- 46.6 It was confirmed that the questions were drafted by Council Officers, the Head of Library Services included, and staff that had expertise in consultations. The questionnaire was comprised of multiply choice questions and four open ended questions for more detailed responses.
- 46.7 In response to Councillor Druitt, it was explained that Libraries & Information Services would have to reduce expenditure, like all departments within the Council. It was expressed that the timing was challenging as the budget had already been set for 2016/17; however, it was noted that they wished to give the public a full three months of consultation.
- 46.8 The Head of Library Services explained that she was of the view that the public would be willing to volunteer to support the libraries; therefore, ensuring longer opening hours. It was stated that 292 people, who took part in the consultation, expressed an interest to volunteer on the anonymous survey and the libraries already used 170 volunteers.
- 46.9 In response to the Chair, it was clarified that if the Hove Library didn't move to the Hove Museum site, the saving would be the equivalent to the closure of five to seven community libraries.
- 46.10 Councillor Yates noted that the decision in relation to the Hove Library move would be decided at a Policy & Resources Committee and the Planning Committee would have to agree the plans that proposed any significant changes to the Carnegie building. It was added that the recommendations were to note the outcome of the consultation and agree to refer the report to the next Full Council meeting.
- 46.11 It was also commented that libraries resources should not be focused to central Brighton and Hove as services were needed across the city. Councillor Yates explained that if he would choose to move one library, instead of closing five to seven community libraries as it was important that residents across the city could retain library access.
- 46.12 Councillor Druitt noted his view that there was a large amount in the report that he supported, including; the modernisation of the service; extended opening hours; the use of community hubs. He also questioned whether there was an alternative to keep Hove Library in the Carnegie building, for instance, using the money from the Kings House sale.
- 46.13 Councillor C Theobald stated that the Carnegie building was historic with listed fixtures, and it should be made a recommendation to ensure these were retained.
- 46.14 Councillor Nemeth referenced that the report stated the amount of space for library service delivery will reduce by about 15%, but this included flexible space. He added that if this was not included in the statistics, more space from either the new library or the museum could be lost and this could lead to an even more greatly reduced service, therefore he could not support the Officer recommendations.
- 46.15 Councillor Robins noted that Members should consider the plan as a whole rather than support parts and not others. He expressed that budget savings needed to be made from within the.

- 46.16 The Chair concluded the debate and stated that he had respect for all those that had campaigned to keep the building. He noted that the Library Plan included extended hours and no library closures; therefore, would be supporting the recommendations.
- 46.17 The Chair then put the recommendations to the vote.
- 46.18 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee notes the results of the public consultation as outlined in section 5.5 of the report and;
- 46.19 **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:** That the Libraries Plan 2016-2020, and the changes to Library Services proposed as part of this Plan, as contained in the appendix to the report, and outlined in brief in section 3 with amendments in section 6 of the report, are referred to Full Council for adoption.

