

I am a Cambridge resident and a regular user of the Central Library. My question refers to Agenda item no. 3(e).

The library, Regus and Kora are three distinct entities. I would have liked more clarity about the proposed mix.

The document Response to the three elements of the Decision Review Report (Agenda item no. 3(e)), Paragraph 2.6:

One personal concern is being able to read a library book in a library and write notes preferably while seated at a table. This is a historical and core function of a public library. At peak times, which are getting longer, there are no empty chairs anywhere in the building. The floor space required for the enterprise centre will reduce the library's seated provision. Paragraph 2.6 totally ignores this.

Also, the Café's customers are predominantly families and older people; these groups are of particular concern in the Council's social responsibilities. The Library Services' 'community hubs' programme is looking for opportunities to increase use of library buildings by introducing better refreshment facilities.* Paragraph 2.6 totally ignores this. In fulfilment of Council and Library policies, the Café's busiest lunch times include those on pension days. Why does Kora not intend to do its Café Kora events, which involve food?

The Local Studies Centre is — in any case — scheduled to move to Ely in around a year. In my judgement, the current seated capacity of the Central Library can only be maintained if some or all of this space is allocated to the library. This should have been at the basis of the proposals and their presentation.

This could also have avoided the cost of the proposed modification to the bookshelves, especially as it involves adding shelves higher or lower than the optimum heights.

The document Cambridge Library Enterprise Centre (17 March 2015):

- 2.1 The Central Library is intended to provide a
“‘proof of concept’ for the model that could be extended to other library sites
in the county in the future”.

It is essential to know whether this implementation of the concept relies for its success on the availability of the Local Studies space. Also, the Central Library is probably not typical.

- 2.3 The confidentiality restriction on the proposed lay-out plan of the third floor has been lifted. Even so, many copies of the document issued since then still omit the plan.

- 2.9 Amazingly, one of the three main areas of risk has been omitted.

My question is:

With reference to Agenda item 3(e), do the Committee agree with me

that full information about the project as a whole is needed;

that the proposals must include the options for the Local Studies space;

that the criteria for the proof of concept must start from the barely adequate peak seating capacity of the Central Library; and

that the wider public should have the opportunity of a public consultation?

Thank you.

John Rainbird 14.4.2015

*Library Services in Cambridgeshire: Developing our Approach for the Future, 4.1, page 8.