

**LIBRARIES AND COMMUNITIES**

*To:* **Communities and Partnership Committee**

*Meeting Date:* **17 December 2019**

*From:* **Christine May, Assistant Director Cultural & Community Services**

*Electoral division(s):* **All**

*Forward Plan ref:* **Key decision:** **No**

*Purpose:* **The Committee is asked to consider the emerging vision and new model for libraries in Cambridgeshire, and to note the progress being made on the Future Libraries Initiative.**

*Recommendation:* **The Committee is recommended to:**

- a) Agree to the renaming of the Cambridgeshire Libraries service, to become 'Cambridgeshire Libraries and Communities', to recognise their integral role at the heart of our communities; and**
- b) Agree the new vision and model for the future service.**

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## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The Committee has agreed to receive a quarterly update on progress with the Future Libraries Initiative project, our partnership work with Civic, to develop the libraries of the future, co-designed with communities, stakeholders and experts. This is a 3 year project and the previous update was reported to Committee in October (deferred from September); this report provides the latest update.
- 1.2** However, as noted in the report to October Committee, there is a shorter-term desire to articulate a new vision and model for libraries within the context of Think Communities and aligned to other Council strategies and priorities, including Cambs 2020 (using libraries as community hubs), to clarify and reinforce the role of libraries going forward. This report sets out a proposed new vision and model for the service and for the role of libraries and libraries staff and volunteers, and also incorporates the latest thinking emerging from the Future Libraries Initiative. The Vision and Funding Model are attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.3** A new vision will enable the libraries service to transform its approach to supporting our place-based, person-centred model of service design and delivery. Integral to the model is the principle of Libraries First – first choice for council and partner-led service delivery, first choice for commissioned services, first choice for engaging with citizens, and first choice for leading local change, regeneration and participation.
- 1.4** As part of this, there is a need to ensure the sustainability of libraries as anchors and hubs in each community, by developing a new financial model that will sustain the service going forwards.

## 2. MAIN ISSUES

### 2.1 A vision and model for a new Libraries and Communities Service

#### 2.1.1 VISION

Libraries are a key element of Cambridgeshire's Think Communities approach. They are the trusted space in the heart of our communities that enable people to connect with each other. As such, we are proposing to formally rename the service as the Cambridgeshire Libraries and Communities Service. The Committee is asked to consider and approve this recommendation.

We set out here our vision for Cambridgeshire's Libraries and Communities that will make sure that we can make the most out of this precious asset.

People	
Think Communities	Libraries and Communities
Resilient communities	<b>Libraries are for people.</b> There is no stigma

across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough where people can feel safe, healthy, connected and able to help themselves and each other.	<p>attached to visiting a library. They are one of the few places in our communities where face-to-face contact is still the norm.</p> <p>Libraries help people to <b>unlock knowledge</b>. They have always been places for self-improvement through access to information, advice and knowledge.</p> <p>Libraries provide people with <b>opportunities</b>. Whether that be through volunteering, attending an activity or event, or mastering a new skill, libraries are places of inspiration for people.</p>
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Places	
Think Communities	Libraries and Communities
New and established communities that are integrated, possess a sense of place, and which support the resilience of their residents.	<p>Libraries have always been <b>places for connecting</b>. We see libraries playing a key role in connecting people and communities whether that be through curating events, supporting activities, or just providing a space for people to get together. Libraries will be the integrators within their community, making and enabling connections between all of the moving parts.</p> <p>Libraries are <b>flexible spaces</b>. Our library buildings are adaptable and can be used for a wide range of different purposes. Our aim is for them to be used as much as possible.</p> <p>Libraries are <b>anchor institutions</b> in communities. They act as a key part of the civic infrastructure of places. We want to continue to develop a sense of civic pride in our libraries.</p> <p>Our staff and volunteers are our <b>most important asset</b>, and are ideally placed to directly deliver, organise or commission local services that respond to evidenced need.</p>

Systems	
Think Communities	Libraries and Communities
A system-wide approach in which partners listen, engage and align with communities and with	Libraries are one of the few remaining <b>trusted spaces</b> where communities meet the public sector system.

each other, to deliver public service and support community-led activity	<p>Our approach will see our libraries operate as the <b>junction boxes</b> of the system, bringing together different people in different contexts to develop common solutions.</p> <p>In particular, libraries will be the <b>commissioners</b> of preventative services and interventions – their trusted status, strong brand and high street presence positions them perfectly to ensure a co-ordinated approach to ensuring the wellbeing of our citizens and communities.</p>
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### 2.1.2 THE LIBRARIES FIRST MODEL

The current model for libraries is relatively traditional, with service budgets focussed on funding staffing, books and resources, and budgets for the running and maintenance of library buildings. There has been a sharp focus on achieving savings and income, but this has been based on the existing library service itself generating these opportunities, rather than on how the spare capacity of our library buildings or the significant expertise in the library workforce could be used to support the ambitious principles of, for example, Think Communities.

The introduction of Open Access technology to all of our library buildings over the next two financial years will mean that we will be able to open them for longer. Currently the library service uses the library buildings for one-third of the time that they could be available (assuming that the buildings could be open for twelve hours a day). We therefore have an opportunity to explore how we can make use of the remaining two-thirds of the time that the library buildings will be available once the Open Access technology is in place. Even outside of core Open Access hours, there are many opportunities for pre-organised activities to be delivered from within libraries, so supporting many of our key priorities and outcomes.

Our proposed model would see more services being delivered

- from library buildings, and/or
- by library staff, and/or
- commissioned directly by the service

Early discussions with our Commissioning service directorate colleagues has led to an agreement to pilot a delegated commissioning approach targeting preventative commissioned services, with libraries being the commissioner and working closely with the local Think Communities governance arrangements. This model will be developed over the coming weeks.

Previous attempts to work differently with and from libraries have resulted in services being delivered from the same location, but still along library service lines (i.e. normally within library opening hours). A Libraries First approach, coupled with the Think Communities approach, gives us the opportunity to design new ways of working in a way that makes sense to people and communities. This approach would also see a more community-focused approach to service design and delivery. Rather than working in isolation, providers would see themselves as part of a

network based around each of our library buildings, and commissioned services could be delivered by hyper local organisations where appropriate.

Taking a Libraries First approach and maximising the use of our library buildings opens up opportunities for investment in our library buildings as a corporate asset. For example, a Libraries First approach to commissioning could see a requirement for all community-facing commissioned services to use our network of library buildings. With the ongoing development of Cambs 2020, a number of services will also be utilising library buildings as part of their delivery model.

This approach also presents our library buildings as a more attractive proposition for national, regional and local partners. The Future Libraries Initiative is currently working with a number of organisations to form a 'club of unlikely allies' who have shown an interest in using our library buildings and who could potentially make a financial contribution to their running.

This proposed model also acknowledges some of the more intangible activities that are currently undertaken by the library service. Positioning the library service as the 'community integrator' helps to define their role as a host for both communities and organisations using the library buildings, but also as the broker and commissioner of new services that better meet local needs. The hosting activities of welcoming, scheduling, network-building, and responsibility for the local building are all activities that build on and complement the role of the library service. This hosting role would provide the glue and connectivity to embed the more community-focussed approach to service delivery proposed by Think Communities. This role needs to be fully recognised and costed into the future financial model for libraries.

### **2.1.3 MEASURING SUCCESS**

Success for Libraries and Communities is about much more than the number of books borrowed and footfall in our libraries. In line with Think Communities, the central focus of our work is to ensure that communities are connected and work together towards shared goals and feel that they are supported to help themselves. However, the opportunity for libraries to hold commissioning budgets and to directly commission local services presents significant opportunities to address inequalities, improve outcomes, and achieve demand savings across the whole public sector system. Success will be measured by the impacts made in local communities on key outcomes such as those relating to health and wellbeing, loneliness, skills and employment. Critically too, we see the Libraries and Communities Service strengthening our opportunities to manage, reduce, prevent and/or delay demand for statutory services, where appropriate, through the development of locally-led initiatives that find alternative ways of supporting people.

The Future Libraries Initiative will see us working with a range of partners including Tortoise Media and Nesta to develop our methodology for understanding and measuring the role that our libraries play in supporting resilient communities across Cambridgeshire where people can feel safe, healthy, connected and able to help themselves and each other.

The following table sets out some early indicators of what success could look like

through the Think Communities principles of people, places and systems.

<b>Examples of success</b>	
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Easy access to resources for self-development; the ability to access assets, skills and training for individuals and businesses</li><li>• Support to improve life chances through in-library service provision e.g. mental health workshops</li><li>• Thriving local businesses, supported by training and professional development including through our British Library Business &amp; IP offer</li></ul>
Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The library is a crucial location for community convening</li><li>• Communities and local institutions/authorities work closely together</li><li>• Communities have the resources for independent civic organising e.g. pop-up cinema</li></ul>
Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The library functions as a touchpoint for all people in a community</li><li>• New models of public service delivery through the library</li><li>• Positive perception of public services in the community</li></ul>

Further updates on this work will be brought to the Communities and Partnership Committee and we will ensure that members of the Committee have an opportunity to contribute to this work.

## **2.2 Future Libraries Initiative – Update**

### **2.2.1 FUNDING**

Following the roundtable of Foundations hosted by Esmée Fairbairn in July 2019, the Future Libraries Initiative team have progressed conversations with several foundations. Garfield Weston have committed £250,000 across our seven prototypes. The Tudor Trust have committed £71,000, with a focus on work in Peterborough Central Library.

We have been invited to ask for a further £830,000 from other foundations, including the Rothschild Foundation, The National Lottery Community Fund, the Foyle Foundation and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

### **2.2.2 PLANS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

We are nearing the end of the initial ‘convening’ stage of the project, with a growing network of partners across our seven prototype communities and beyond, seeking to work together on bringing exciting design, programming and services to our libraries.

Community engagement involving this network of ‘unlikely allies’ will begin in our seven communities from January 2020 and will continue for 15 to 18 months

through the *Co-Design* and *Do* stages of our process.

The outputs of the *Co-Design* stage will include:

- a 'Living Blueprint' for our prototype libraries, setting out a map of pilot services and designs ready to be delivered in the *Do* stage, which is collectively owned across our stakeholders
- early initiatives trialled in specific pilot libraries, ready to share with other prototypes; and
- an established 'Club of Unlikely Allies' ready to deliver the *Do* stage in our prototype libraries

The outputs of the *Do* stage will include:

- proof of concept models for the library as a platform for supporting communities across the UK; and interim impact report highlighting key learnings and best practice from our prototypes

### 2.2.3 PARTNERSHIPS

We continue to develop the partnerships supporting the Future Libraries Initiative:

- **Internal partners** – We are working with teams within both authorities to ensure our work aligns with other programmes of work. In particular, we are working with colleagues in Adult Social Care and the Adults Positive Challenge Programme, Best Start in Life, Cambridgeshire Music and Cambridgeshire Skills.
- **New Library Content:** We have engaged content providers, including the BBC, the British Film Institute, the British Library, and Apple, to bring exciting new programming, software and hardware to our prototype libraries.
- **Space design:** We are working with sector-leading design and architecture partners, who will help us develop initial design concepts and co-create a common design manifesto for the libraries. This work will inform any formal design tenders that are pursued in the prototype libraries.
- **Workforce development:** We have engaged CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals) and the University of Birmingham's Institute of Local Government to discuss workforce development for library staff. We are also meeting regularly with Libraries Connected to ensure our work ties to their national strategic recommendations for libraries. Internally, 'strengths based conversations' training is being delivered for frontline library staff and volunteers by Adult Social Care colleagues.
- **Financial and operating models:** We have engaged a range of partners to evolve our thinking around possible financial and operating models for the library, including the New Economics Foundation, Nesta, and Snook.

### 2.2.4 COMMUNICATIONS

A Future Libraries Initiative web page is now live on the CCC website and has been announced on the CCC and Vivacity social media pages. Next steps for communications will be looking at proactive communications, sharing updates on the project through existing channels such as newsletters, and continuing to share project progress updates on Cambridgeshire Libraries and Vivacity social media.

### **3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

#### **3.1 A good quality of life for everyone**

The new vision and model for Libraries and Communities is integral to ensuring a good quality of life for people in Cambridgeshire by providing them with opportunities to develop their individual agency, resilience and prospects, and connecting them to information, resources, activities and other people.

#### **3.2 Thriving places for people to live**

The new vision and model for Libraries and Communities is integral to ensuring the communities in which people live are thriving, by providing opportunities for communities to connect in a safe, accessible shared place, and increasing community agency.

#### **3.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's Children**

The new vision and model for Libraries and Communities is integral to providing the best start for Cambridgeshire's children by providing universal free access to early literacy development and encouraging reading for pleasure, proven to be fundamental to improving children's life chances. Library staff and the Future Libraries project team are working closely with the Best Start in Life project to maximise the role that libraries can play.

### **4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

#### **4.1 Resource Implications**

There are no negative resource implications currently for the Council arising from the Future Libraries Initiative. Alongside the ongoing investment the council is already making in libraries, external funding is being secured for the project as set out in section 2.2.1. There is expected to be a positive impact on resources through new income streams coming into libraries, as set out in section 2.1.2.

#### **4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications**

There are no significant implications in this category.

#### **4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications**

There are no significant implications in this category.

#### **4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications**

Libraries act as a 'social equaliser' and the new model and vision for Libraries and Communities continues this theme in a modern, relevant context. Libraries are free, open and accessible to all. Efforts will be made during the Co-design phase of the Future Libraries Initiative to ensure less-heard voices are engaged and included.



#### **4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications**

Plans for community engagement are set out in section 2.2.2

#### **4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement**

Local members will continue to be involved during the Co-Design and Do stages of the Future Libraries Initiative project, and members of this Committee kept regularly updated. The chairs of relevant committees in both Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council are members of the project Steering Group.

#### **4.7 Public Health Implications**

The new model and vision for Libraries and Communities is expected to bring health and wellbeing benefits for Cambridgeshire people and communities, for example by working with partners to promote healthy living, by reducing social isolation and supporting mental health, and by providing community space for activities including cultural and physical activities.

<b>Implications</b>	<b>Officer Clearance</b>
<b>Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?</b>	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Martin Wade
<b>Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?</b>	Yes Name of Officer: Gus de Silva
<b>Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?</b>	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan
<b>Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?</b>	Yes Name of Officer: Adrian Chapman
<b>Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?</b>	Yes Name of Officer: Sarah Silk / Eleanor Bell
<b>Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?</b>	Yes Name of Officer: Adrian Chapman
<b>Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health</b>	Yes Name of Officer: Val Thomas

<b>Source Documents</b>	<b>Location</b>
None	N/A