

Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

**EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
CABINET**

14 NOVEMBER 2000

15 JANUARY 2001

ANNUAL LIBRARY PLAN 2000

Report of the Director of Arts and Leisure

1. Purpose of Report

This report seeks Members' approval of the draft Annual Library Plan for Leicester, as required by Government, to be submitted to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport by September 29th 2000.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act requires both local authorities "to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service" and the appropriate Secretary of State, currently the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, to "superintend, and promote the improvement of, the public library service provided by local authorities".

Since 1998 Library Plans have been the vehicle through which local authorities have made publicly accessible their plans for the development of the Library Service and also by which Government ensures national objectives for Libraries are met.

- 2.2 Since the submission of the first Plan in 1998, Government has continued to indicate the importance they attach to the public library service in delivering a number of their key aims in particular raising educational standards, increasing participation in lifelong learning, reducing social exclusion and improving participation in the democratic process. The Government's most recent indication of their belief in the importance of public libraries has been the release of funding through New Opportunities Fund for the establishment of the People's Network. The Annual Library Plan makes reference to the implementation of the People's Network in Leicester City.

- 2.3 In addition a set of draft standards for public libraries was published by the DCMS in Spring 2000. The consultation period ended in July 2000 and library authorities are awaiting the final version due Autumn 2000. The Public Library standards will define for the first time, the Government's interpretation of "comprehensive and efficient" library service and will give library users a clear idea of the range and

quality of service they can expect from the local authority. This year's Annual Library Plan makes reference to the draft standards and the work required to ensure the library service meets at least the minimum standard.

- 2.4 The Annual Library Plan is submitted in two parts. Part A, which is updated at least every three years and provides the national, regional and corporate context for the library service and includes a position statement for its strengths and weaknesses and a three year medium term strategy. Part B indicates the outcomes of the previous year's plans and provides an action plan for the coming three years. Both Part A and Part B have been updated this year to reflect structural and management changes within the City Council and the Arts and Leisure department. Both Parts A and B will be read by DCMS assessors, but only Part B will be assessed.
- 2.5 The Annual Library Plan will be publicly accessible in both print and electronic formats.
- 2.6 The deadline for submission to the DCMS was 29th September 2000. Due to the changes in local governance and subsequent changes to reporting structures, a draft version prior to Members authorisation has been sent to DCMS. Members are asked to agree the Plan after which a final submission will be made DCMS.

3. Recommendations

Cabinet:

- a. approve the draft Annual Library Plan for 2000. A summary is attached to this report with a full copy available in the Member's area.
- b. delegate to the Director of Arts and Leisure, to approve any final amendments to the Plan.

Education & Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee:

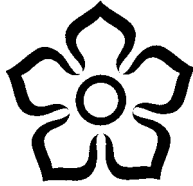
The Lead Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning seeks the views of the Scrutiny Committee on the draft Annual Library Plan for 2000.

4. Financial & Legal Implications

Libraries Action Plan covering years 2000/01 and 2001/02 is submitted as part of the Annual Library Plan and has been developed within the existing budget framework. Some aspects of the Plan depend on external sources of funding. Some of these, such as the implementation of the People's Network, are guaranteed on an allocation rather than competitive bidding process. Others, such as the replacement of the Talis issue system, are dependent on corporate funding and a bid will be made to the Councils Capital Programme. The Plan will require revision if these sources of funding are not available.

5. Report Author

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. Report

Guidelines for the preparation of Library Plans for 2000 indicate that although Parts A and B are to be submitted and will be read, assessment will be made on Part B alone therefore this supporting information report covers Part B of Leicester City Libraries' plan. A full copy of the Plan for 2000 is available in the Member's area.

Part B of the Plan is divided into four chapters and a review of each chapter is included below:

1.1 Chapter 8 Rolling three year medium strategy

The main priority areas for Leicester City Libraries over the next three years to 2002 are indicated and include:

- Libraries Review
- New Central Library
- Implementation of the People's Network
- Services to elderly and vulnerable people

1.2 Chapter 9 Review of last year

This has been a challenging year for Leicester City Libraries with considerable budget pressures causing disruption to the achievement of last year's action plan. A member decision in January 2000 to reduce the budget for Libraries by £599,000 over 3 years –15% of the total budget – resulted in the Library Service plan for the closure of six libraries, withdrawal of one children's Bookbus withdrawal of the Library Minibus service for the elderly, for the relocation of

Goldsmith Drama and Music library and to reduce staffing. Following sustained public protest, this decision was rescinded pending a full review of Libraries taking place in Autumn 2000 with implementation in April 2001.

As a result of the departure of both the Head of Service and Quality & Development Manager, maternity leave and long-term sickness, staffing in Libraries Management team was severely disrupted for much of the year, leaving only one constant member of the team, with vacancies covered where possible, by secondments from Libraries staff.

However there have been some notable achievements:

- Partnership working with Education resulting in a successful Out of School Hours Learning bid of £98,000 over three years for Libraries and innovative Family Literacy and Numeracy projects
- A sustained programme of public access ICT training delivered in partnership with FE and HE
- Income generation has been maximised by a revamp of Library shops and their stock. In 1998/9 Library shops generated £814, this was increased to £8202 in 1999/2000.
- Successful bids for external funding including projects involving widening participation in Lifelong Learning (£2,500 for basic skills with ex-offenders at Arnold Lodge), work within the Education Action Zones (£2,500 for Leicester's best Children's' book), Reader Development (joint bid with the East Midlands libraries for fiction promotion with 15-25yr olds), New Deal for Communities (£70,000 over one year to introduce a Bookstart related scheme for all primary school children in Braunstone), £17,000 from Regional Arts Lottery for the 2000 Literature Festival and from New Opportunities Fund £646,000 over three years to implement the People's Network including providing public access computers at all library sites and ICT training for all library staff.
- Reader Development work in deprived communities to work towards social inclusion.

1.3 Performance Targets 1999-2000 update

1.3.1 Target 1- Maintain overall issues at current levels for 1999/2000 and increase them by 1% per year in 2000-01.

Issue figures for 1999-2000 show a drop of 92,738 or 4.9% of the total. Although this is disappointing it is not unexpected due to the volatile year Leicester City Libraries has undergone. Due to the considerable pressure Libraries faced, some of the intended Action Plan for 1999 was put on hold and is now rolled forward for action 2000/01.

1.3.2 Target 2 - Improve specific needs fill rate to 67% by March 2002.

Currently Leicester City Libraries needs fill rate is 63.7% compared to a class median with similar authorities of 63%. We are working towards the DCMS Library standard of 65% and expect to improve on this to at least 67% by 2002.

1.3.3 Target 3 - Improve speed of supply of requests to 50% in 7 days and 70% in 15 days.

The speed of supply of requests has improved over the past year from 29% to 46% satisfied within 7 days and from 50.8% to 71% satisfied within 15 days. Improvements must continue if the service is to meet with the proposed Library Standards of 50% within 7 days and 70% within 15 days.

- 1.3.4 Target 4 - Increase income generated by 25% by March 2002.
Income generated during the year was £1.09 per resident compared to £1.27 for similar authorities. Income targets for Libraries remain very high and in some cases achievement of the targets is outside of the control of managers e.g. overdue charges. The aspiration of Libraries to ensure equality of access to library provision for all citizens regardless of where in the city they live also has implications for the achievement of income targets. A Retail Strategy this year has resulted in better performance in this area. Libraries' Income Strategy will be in place during 2000-01.
- 1.3.5 Target 5 - Stabilise level of enquires at 1998/9 levels and increase by 1% per year 2001-2002.
The number of enquiries has risen by 7% to 281,904 in 1999-2000. During the year, a priority has been to strengthen front line staffing levels and this will be further reflected in the Libraries Review.
- 1.3.6 Target 6 -To increase use of ICT library network to 30,000 accesses in 1999-2000.
The rise in ICT accesses from 9,500 in 1998/9 to 44,953 in 1999/2000 has been substantial and underlines the need for public access to ICT at every library. Libraries have worked in partnership with the Adult Education College and the WEA to provide public ICT training sessions and Libraries staff have run in-house sessions wherever resources have allowed. In addition, all staff have been trained in basic ICT skills. Additional PCs have been added to our existing network as a result of successful bids for external funding. It is expected that the level of ICT access will continue to rise with the establishment of Homework Clubs at ten libraries across the city and with the rollout of the People's Network to all library sites.
- 1.3.7 Targets 7 and 8 - To increase take-up of services in community libraries by 16-25yr olds and to increase take-up of library services by males.
These targets have not been measured during the past year, as Libraries had no robust monitoring system in place. The targets have been replaced in this years plan to reflect more accurately Libraries work to meet the aims of the Community Plan.
- 1.3.8 Target 9 - To maintain the current demographic profile of use in community.
This will be measured by a PLUS survey 2001

1.4 Chapter 10 External and local influences

1.4.1 External

There have been a variety of national initiatives to which Libraries have responded in 1999/2000. A full list is available in the Plan but the key initiatives include:

- New Opportunities Fund Community Access to Lifelong Learning
- The People's Network including NOF ICT training for librarians and NOF digitisation initiatives
- Lifelong Learning Development Plan for Leicester City Council
- NOF Out of School Hours Learning
- Learndirect and University for Industry
- Draft Public Library Standards

- Best Value
- Cultural Diversity
- Libraries For All : Social Inclusion in Public Libraries

1.4.2 Internal

The main local influences for Libraries over the past year have been:

- Change in Local Governance
- Restructuring of the Arts and Leisure department
- Youth and Community Review
- External funding initiatives notably, New Deal for Communities, SRB in Belgrave, Beaumont Leys and Braunstone
- Budgetary considerations

1.5 Chapter 11 The way ahead

This chapter outlines Libraries 'Action Plan for yrs 2000-01 and 2001-02 in detail, and an outline strategy for 2002-03. The Action Plan for 2000-01 identifies the Libraries Review, taking place in Autumn 2000, as preparing the way for the 2001-2004 strategy to focus on the steps necessary to improve library services for all communities and achieve an increase in the use of libraries. It is vitally important to close the gap between people who currently use and have access to library services and those who, for a range of reasons, do not have such access.

The Review is well placed to reconsider library services and their delivery in the light of major influences for Libraries specifically the Library Standards, The People's Network and the very significant service issues arising from the need to address social inclusion and barriers to access.

2 Recommendations

Cabinet:

- approve the draft Annual Library Plan for 2000. A summary is attached to this report with a full copy available in the Member's area.
- delegate to the Director of Arts and Leisure, to approve any final amendments to the Plan.

Education & Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee:

The Lead Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning seeks the views of the Scrutiny Committee on the draft Annual Library Plan for 2000.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

1 Financial Implications

Libraries Action Plan covering years 2000/01 and 2001/02 is submitted as part of the Annual Library Plan and has been developed within the existing budget framework. Some aspects of the Plan depend on external sources of funding. Some of these, such as the implementation of the People's Network, are guaranteed on an allocation rather than competitive bidding process. Others, such as the replacement of the Talis issue system, are dependent on corporate funding and a bid will be made to the Councils Capital Programme. The Plan will require revision if these sources of funding are not available.

2 Legal Implications

None for the purposes of this report.

3 Other Implications

Other implications	YES/NO	Paragraph references within Report
Equal Opportunities	YES	1.2, 1.3.6, 1.3.7, 1.3.8, 1.4.1,.1.4.2
Policy	NO	
Sustainable and Environmental	YES	1.3.7, 1.3.8
Crime and Disorder	YES	1.2
Human Rights Act	NO	

4 Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

Local Government Act 1972

Guidelines for the Preparation of Annual Library Plans 2000

5 Consultations

The Annual Library Plan has been consulted with officers in the Education Department. Many of the tasks within the Action plan have been informed by the user and non-user surveys, which took place in 1999.