

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Committee

Library Bookbus Consultation

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28th January 2021

Background

- Neighbourhood Services offer a wide range of programmes to engage Leicester children and families in reading activities
- The service is formally committed to the Universal Offers develop by Libraries Connected including:
- **The Reading Offer:** Libraries encourage individuals of all ages to read for pleasure and purpose to increase their understanding of the world, stretch their imaginations and think differently.
- **The Children's Promise:** Every child and young person in libraries is inspired to read for pleasure, has access to a diverse range of materials, can engage in a variety of digital activities and can take part in activities that improve their well-being.

The local context

Manifesto commitments 2019-23

Lifelong Learning:

- “Work to ensure that all children grow up in homes with books for them to read and enjoy, including multi lingual texts”
- “Expand our reading projects – Our Best Book, Reading Rampage and the summer reading challenge”

Sustainable Leicester:

- “Continue to convert council fleet vehicles to clean energy/low emissions”



Children's Reading Programmes

Leicester Libraries work with a range of partners to offer a wide range of reading programmes including:

- Summer Reading Challenge
- Our Best Book (Primary schools book awards)
- Bookstart programme (with BookTrust)
- Small Wonders project (with Spark Arts)
- Amongst Ideal Friends (Libraries East Midlands)
- Children's Centres book collections
- Children's Bookbuses



Bookbus Service

Neighbourhood Services currently operate 2 diesel mobile library vehicles:

Early Years Bookbus (0-5yrs)

- visits early years' settings such as children, young people and family centres, nurseries and playgroups by appointment

Children's Bookbus (0-11yrs)

- regular weekly routes and stops
- Afternoons/evenings: book loan service to areas around the city to give easy access to books and develop a passion for reading in children.
- Mornings: visits primary schools on ad hoc basis

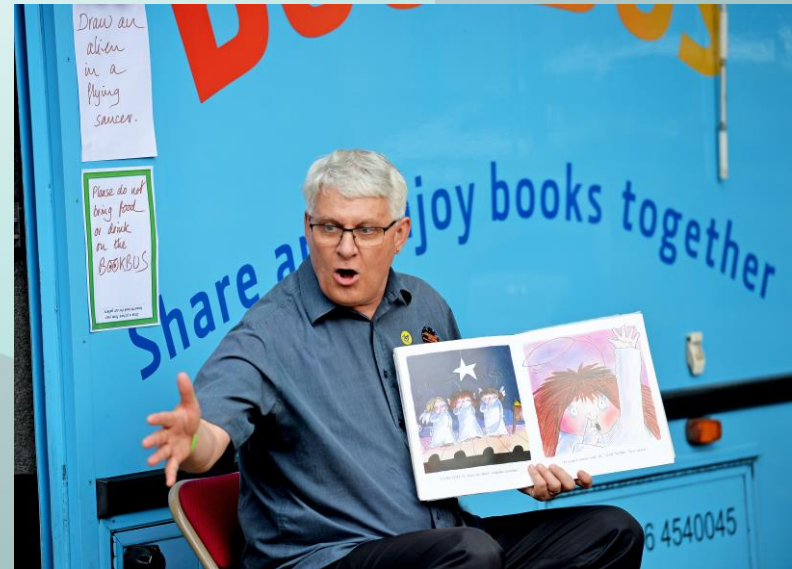
Both Bookbuses attend festivals during spring/summer

Why we are consulting

- Access to books and library services is vitally important for Leicester children to enjoy reading for pleasure and for learning
- BookBus vehicles are over 12 years old and we need to replace them and refresh the service we provide
- In view of the council's Climate Emergency Strategy and the Air Quality Action Plan, we plan to replace the two diesel vehicles with one ultra-low emissions vehicle (ULEV)
- We are asking for views on the proposed changes to the BookBus service, including accessibility, convenience and ease of use.
- We want to hear ideas for improvements to the layout, stock and services to be offered by the new vehicle

Children's Bookbus Service

- Investment to deliver improved service
- Bookbus service to neighbourhoods would continue to take place in the afternoon between 3pm to 7pm as now
- Opportunity to review the specific route stops to ensure best use of the bus
- Opportunity to improve vehicle design & access



Early Years Bookbus Service

- Visits to early years settings enhanced to deliver training in storytelling and early years' book use so the early years' staff can deliver their own sessions more regularly throughout the year.
- Visits would be longer, but would take place once a year instead of 3-4 times a year.
- Early years' groups will be supported to obtain extended loans and larger book collections from their local library or children, young people and family centres instead of through the BookBus.
- BookBus will continue to visit primary schools, festivals and community events to share stories and promote reading to children

Climate Change

- One environmentally friendly electric vehicle instead of two diesel ones significantly lowers carbon emissions
- Reduced replacement cost
- Lower maintenance and fuel costs in the future
- Contributes to the council's action plan to improve air quality in the city as part of the drive to reduce transport emissions
- The electric Bookbus will have zero emissions and therefore will emit no Nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter
- A practical and visible commitment to combatting climate change in the heart of local neighbourhood delivery

Strategic context

The proposal contributes to:

- Leicester Climate Emergency Strategy: April 2020 – March 2023
- Leicester's Air Quality Action Plan 2015-2026

The early implementation of an electric mobile library vehicle would be a in the region and one of the first in the country

Consultation

- 18th November 2020 – 31 January 2021
- Open to all on consultation hub:
<https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/>
- Direct text messages to families using weekly stops
- Letters sent to all early years group leaders
- Schools and Children, Family & Young People Centres
- Young People's Council

Any Questions?

