

# Report to Scrutiny Commission

Neighbourhood Services and Community  
Involvement

Date of Commission meeting: 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015

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## **Transfer of Libraries' Printed Music and Drama Service**

Report of the Director of Culture and Neighbourhood  
Services

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Leicester  
City Council

**Useful Information:**

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Adrian Wills: Head of Neighbourhood Services
- Author contact details 39 3541 adrian.wills@leicester.gov.uk

**1. Summary**

This report updates the report to Scrutiny Commission of 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015 and details the decision to transfer the printed music and drama service to a regional service developed and run by Nottingham City.

A market research exercise was undertaken with Leicester and Nottingham service users in February and March 2015. The exercise was commissioned by Nottingham City working with Leicester City and undertaken by Making Music, the umbrella organisation for amateur music groups. A similar exercise was undertaken by Nottingham City working with Leicester City with groups using the play sets services in both cities.

The Nottingham regional model was updated to take the market research findings into account. A further consultation of service users was undertaken between 27<sup>th</sup> July and 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2015. Service users were asked to comment on the proposal to transfer the Leicester printed music and drama sets service to Nottingham City, and to comment on the detailed model which has been developed.

The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide an overview of the development of the model for a sustainable printed music and drama sets service run by Nottingham City
- Present a summary of the results of engagement work and consultation carried out with service users
- Invite comment on an executive decision to transfer the printed music and drama sets service to a regional hub developed and run by Nottingham City Council.

**2. Recommendation(s) to scrutiny**

- a) The Scrutiny Commission is recommended to note the actions taken since January 2015, to develop options for a sustainable music and drama service in the region
- b) The Scrutiny Commission is recommended to note the findings of the consultation exercise which took place between July and August 2015.
- c) The Scrutiny Commission is invited to comment on the decision to transfer the Leicester Libraries' printed music and drama service to a regional service developed and run by Nottingham City.

### **3. Supporting Information**

This report updates the report to Scrutiny Commission that was presented on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015 concerning the future of the Libraries printed music and drama service. It summarises the results of the Market Research which was undertaken in February 2015 and the findings of the consultation that was carried out in July/August 2015 into a proposal for the future delivery of the printed music and drama service. It details the model for the transfer of the Leicester Libraries' printed music and drama service to a regional service developed and run by Nottingham City for comment.

#### **3.1 Background**

A significant collection of sheet music, orchestral and vocal scores and drama texts is located at Fosse Centre library.

Choirs, orchestras and societies subscribe to a service where they may borrow multiple copies of music and drama sets for amateur performances.

Significant resourcing is required to run the service, for example to manage requests for extra copies of works from other authorities to make up sufficiently large sets for orchestras and choirs, Inter Library Loan charges and transport charges as well as stock replenishment. The total cost of the service is estimated at £23k per annum which places additional pressure on the capacity to deliver the core service.

Currently subscription charges paid by the groups only cover the cost of replacing stock. The cost of delivering the service is therefore wholly subsidised.

Approximately 25% of the 111 music groups who have used the service in the last 3 years have a key contact with a city postcode.

A total of 21,838 printed music items were borrowed through the service in the year 2013-14.

The printed music service is one of a reducing number that still remain active in the country. It should be noted that there are commercial services that offer a rental loan service but the cost of these is far higher than the model developed by Nottingham regional service.

Libraries need to focus staffing and resources on key service priorities. These are to support reading and learning, access to public IT and engaging with local communities around key issues such as health and employment. It is necessary to examine all library services to ensure that there is sufficient staffing resource for the highest priority work. This means limiting the scope of other services that are of a lower priority or finding alternative solutions to make them sustainable.

#### **3.2 Consultation and engagement work**

### **3.2.1 Initial consultation April 2014**

An initial consultation exercise was undertaken between 10<sup>th</sup> April and 18<sup>th</sup> May 2014, with all registered service users invited to take part. A simplified self-service model with no specialist staff involvement was proposed. It was clear from the feedback that this model was unsatisfactory for the majority of subscribers as the ability to deliver advanced bookings (reservations) and to obtain part or full sets from other library authorities is key to the groups' planning and performance requirements and cannot be delivered on a self-service model.

However, many subscribing groups did understand the need to change and a range of alternative suggestions were made to achieve a more sustainable service. These included:

- working together with other organisations
- investing in an IT solution for a more efficient system
- raising subscription or hire charges
- raising Inter Library Loan charges
- charging for delivery costs

As a result of the feedback a decision was made to explore alternative options (consultation findings June 2014).

### **3.2.2 Development of regional model**

Following research within the East Midlands region an option to work with Nottingham City Council was identified. Nottingham City obtained funding from Arts Council England and Locality to undertake initial feasibility work to develop a sustainable Printed Music and Drama service to serve Nottinghamshire and potentially Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The service would also be available to other groups in the East Midlands region and throughout the country.

The redeveloped Nottingham Music and Drama service has been researched and developed in consultation with the Making Music organisation. It will offer:

- A new charging structure to cover the full cost of the service and ensuring a sustainable service for the future
- A new customer facing website enabling customers to:
  - Register online
  - Search detailed records of the full music and drama sets

catalogue

- Check availability and return dates for individual sets
  - Book music sets online for user defined time periods
  - Request additional copies through the Inter Library Loan system
  - Select collection site.
  - Pay charges for sets hire, Inter Library Loan and delivery online.
- The system will be unique in the field and will enable customers from any location to access the service
  - Options for collection will include branches in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County or a collection site (currently Fosse Library) at Leicester.
  - Specialist Nottingham City staff will support the collection and can be contacted direct by 'phone at advertised times.

Market research work was undertaken by Nottingham in January and February 2015 through Making Music, the national umbrella organisation for amateur music societies. The market research surveyed all existing subscribers to both the Leicester and the Nottingham printed music services using an online questionnaire. In addition focus groups run by Making Music were held in both locations. Drama subscribers were surveyed separately in February 2015.

### **3.2.3 Consultation July 2015 on transfer to Nottingham**

A further consultation of service users was undertaken between 27<sup>th</sup> July – 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2015. Service users were asked to comment on the proposal to transfer the Leicester printed music and drama sets service to Nottingham City, and to comment on the model which has been developed. Service users were invited to respond to an online questionnaire, and also to attend one of two briefing sessions held in August.

The results of the research are encouraging. The Leicester briefing groups were broadly positive about the option to transfer the stock to a sustainable regional service. Key concerns are the Pay As You Go pricing structure which will mean a significant increase in charges for larger organisations who borrow for long periods of time. There was also concern over the charges for delivery and return to Fosse Centre for Leicester based groups.

The briefing sessions were well attended. The development of an IT system by Nottingham to provide online access to all transactions was welcomed. Despite concerns about increased charges for larger groups there was an understanding that the service needs to cover costs in order to be sustainable

over the longer term, and that this is best achieved across a wider area.

### 3.3 Decision to transfer the Printed Music and Drama Service

Details of the decision to transfer the Leicester printed music and drama sets service to Nottingham City as part of the development of a regional service run by Nottingham are as follows:

- The Leicester City collection of around 24,000 printed music and drama sets items will be transferred to the Nottingham City service to expand the core stock and to support the creation of a regional service.
- Current Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland music and drama service subscribers will be supported to register with and use the new regional service. Training sessions will be held for all service users who wish to attend prior to commencement of the new service.
- Fosse Neighbourhood Centre will remain a collection and return point for sets supplied by the Nottingham service. Nottingham City will be responsible for delivery of the sets and will apply a charge to cover the costs of the courier. Leicester City will be responsible for the return of sets from Fosse Centre to Nottingham City and will apply a charge to cover the cost of the courier.
- Leicester City will operate a 100% subsidy on the return charge from Fosse Centre for the first 12 months of operation.
- It is understood that Nottingham City will implement a new scale of charges for sets loans, Inter Library Loans and delivery which will cover the cost of the service.
- It is understood that a new IT system will be developed by Nottingham to enable all subscribing groups to search, request, book and pay online.

### 3.4 Overview plan

The proposed implementation plan for transfer of the Leicester printed music and drama sets service to the Nottingham regional service is as follows:

Actions	Timescale
Completion of Nottingham IT system	November 2015
Memorandum of Understanding signed between Nottingham & Leicester	November 2015
Transfer of stock and shelving from Leicester to Nottingham	November – December 2015
Training on new service for Leicester & Nottingham users and staff and promotion of service	December 2015 - January 2016
Official launch of new service (dependent on Nottingham and Leicester)	January 2016

### **3.5 Issues and Risks**

- A process for dealing with current annual subscriptions and those due for renewal will need to be put in place. If the service transfers in January 2016 part refunds will need to be made to those groups who have already paid in full.
- The delivery mechanism and costs are a key consideration for Leicester City users. There will be an option to collect sets directly from any Nottinghamshire library at no extra charge. However this will not be convenient for all groups, especially those based in the south of the county. It is proposed that an option will be made available to collect sets from the current pickup branch, Fosse Library. A charge would be made to cover delivery and return costs. It is proposed that the Leicester return charge be subsidised for the first 12 months of operation.
- It is understood that some of the groups would still prefer a Leicester based service even if this means significantly increased costs. However such a service is no longer sustainable as the specialist knowledge and staffing resource required to run this are no longer available within the Leicester service.
- A Memorandum of Understanding would be signed between Leicester City Council and Nottingham City Council with regard to the transfer of the printed music and drama sets stock. The stock would be returned to Leicester City Council should the regional hub service cease operations within the first two years.

## **4. Financial, legal and other implications**

### 4.1 Financial implications

‘There are no significant financial implications arising from this report, which provides an update and signals consultation about a possible regional service.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, ext. 37 4081’

### 4.2 Legal implications

“Legal Services’ Commercial, Contracts & Capital Team can provide advice to Culture and Neighbourhood Services on setting up a shared service to music groups, as this project develops.

Greg Surtees, Legal Services – 37 1421”

#### 4.3. Climate Change implications

“If the development of a regional service across Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland were to lead to an increase in the number of inter-library loans then this would result in an increase in carbon emissions due to transportation of goods between libraries. This area should be clarified when presenting the results of further research.

Louise Buckley, Graduate Project Officer (Climate Change), 372 293.”

#### 4.4 Equality Impact Assessment

“As indicated above, local consultation findings have emphasised the importance of such a service in enabling local choirs and groups to continue to produce music and drama events that enable local residents to participate in community events of interest to them. The establishment of a regional resource is an option that if financially viable and appropriately accessible, would continue to ensure existing

need for such material is met. The outcome of the feasibility study and proposal for decision regarding the future of the service will determine more detailed equality implications for consideration. Given the range of subscribers to the service, those using and likely to use the service cover all protected characteristics.

Irene Kszyk, Corporate Equalities Lead, ext. 374147.”

#### 4.5 Other Implications

None.

### **5. Background information and other papers:**

None.

### **6. Summary of appendices:**

A. Consultation Findings September 2015

### **7. Is this a private report?**

No.