

# Printed Music & Drama Service – proposed transfer

Findings of the closed consultation  
as at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015

*Prepared by:*

- *Neighbourhood Services*
- *Research and Intelligence*



*This report provides a summary of the findings of the closed consultation.*

*It includes information about:*

- *The issues and options under consideration;*
- *The consultation method;*
- *The public response and views expressed;*
- *Proposed next steps in light of what was learnt.*

## **1. BACKGROUND**

### **1.1 Development of the proposal**

The city council is required to make difficult decisions about its services as a result of significant cuts in government funding. The council's response to this challenge is to work with service users and local communities to develop proposals to make the required savings in ways that will provide a revised but sustainable service offer.

The Music and Drama service to groups in both the city and the county requires a lot of resource to maintain and the subscriptions that are currently charged only cover a very small part of the cost of the service.

Last year subscribers were consulted on a proposal to run the Music and Drama service on a basic self-service model. The majority of respondents indicated that this model would not work because Inter Library Loans and advanced bookings are essential to their operations.

A number of alternative options were proposed by service users. These included:

- working together with other organisations
- investing in an IT solution for a more efficient system
- raising subscription or hire charges to cover the true cost

As a result Leicester City Council has developed an alternative option to transfer the printed music and drama collection to Nottingham City Council in order to develop a sustainable regional service which would be run by Nottingham. An in depth market research exercise was undertaken with Leicester City subscribers earlier this year to help shape the model.

This consultation seeks to gain feedback from Leicester City service users on the proposal to transfer the Leicester printed music and drama sets service to a regional hub run by Nottingham City.

### **1.2 Overview of the proposal**

Under the proposed scheme the music and drama service will be run by Nottingham City Council and based at a Nottingham City Library. Leicester City music and drama items will be transferred to Nottingham doubling the size of the current collection and reducing the need for Inter Library Loans.

The regional service will deliver a fully costed sustainable music and drama service for the East Midlands.

Benefits of the redeveloped Nottingham City music and drama service:

- Groups will be able to reserve music and drama sets up to 1 year in advance.
- Specialist staff knowledge and expertise will be available by phone or email
- A greater range and volume of stock will be accessible reducing the need to order copies from other authorities
- Online access to the full music and drama catalogue will show full copy and bookings availability
- Groups will be able to access their account online and to view current loans and the progress of any orders and requests

- Payments will be made online
- Queries or stock suggestions can be made using the online system

### **Access**

Access to the service will be online

A new IT system will be developed to provide 24/7 access for music and drama groups from any location. The system will be unique in the UK. Groups will be able to:

- Register
- Search & view the full catalogue
- Order & reserve sets for specific dates
- Request Inter-Library Loans
- View charges and make payment using debit/credit card
- Select delivery point
- Record loans as “returned”

### **Customer support**

Specialist staff advice will be available by ‘phone at advertised times, and by email

Training sessions would be arranged in Leicester City locations for all music and drama groups to support the move to the new online system.

### **Charges**

Music sets will be charged on a Pay As You Go basis. Charges will be per item per month:

<b>Type of material</b>	<b>Charge per item per month</b>
Large Vocal score	£0.35
Small Vocal score	£0.25
Part Song	£0.10
Orchestral Set	£6.00

Drama sets will be charged on an annual subscription basis of £50 per year.

Inter Library Loans charge: non-refundable admin charge of £6 per set or part set, regardless of size. Standard PAYG charges apply to Inter Library Loaned music items.

Charge for sets or part sets overdue by 2 weeks or more: £0.50 set/part set per day

Courier delivery charge to Fosse Library Leicester: £4.80 per 10kg box

Courier return charge from Fosse Library Leicester: £4.80 per 10kg box.

Charges and payment methods will be set by the service provider, Nottingham City Council.

### **Collection options**

Collect direct from Nottingham Central Library (no charge) – avoids delivery wait time

Collect from any Nottingham City or Nottinghamshire Library (no charge) – delivery time incurred and included in loan period

Collect from Fosse Centre Library, Leicester (courier cost £4.80 per 10kg box)

### **Return options**

Return to any Nottingham or Nottinghamshire Library by due back date (no courier charge)

Return to Fosse Centre Library, Leicester by due back date. There is a courier charge of £4.80 per 10kg box.

Arrange self-return direct to Nottingham Central Library via your own courier

There is a buffer period of 2 weeks for all returns to allow for delivery

## **2. CONSULTATION METHOD**

### **Objectives and techniques**

Subscribers to the Printed Music and Drama service were consulted over a four week period between 27<sup>th</sup> July and 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2015.

All 90 subscribing groups were contacted by email or letter. A reminder email was sent mid-way through the consultation period.

Library staff highlighted the consultation to all groups who visited Fosse Library during the consultation period, or who contacted the service by 'phone or email.

The consultation outlined the details of the proposed transfer of the Leicester printed music and drama sets service to Nottingham City to facilitate the development of a regional service run by Nottingham City. The objectives of the consultation exercise were:

- to brief all service users on the detailed service model developed by Nottingham City and supported by Leicester City Council
- to consult upon the proposed transfer of the Leicester City printed music and drama collection to Nottingham City
- to consult on the suitability of the model of redeveloped Nottingham service for Leicester City service users
- to consult on the transfer of the service with regard to access requirements for Leicester City groups and individuals

Groups were invited to respond to an online consultation in the form of a questionnaire. The questionnaire included areas for respondents to write their own comments with regard to the proposed transfer of the Leicester city service.

Two briefing sessions were held at which managers from both Leicester City Council and Nottingham City Council were present. The sessions were held on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> August in the evening and Saturday 22<sup>d</sup> August in the morning to ensure a wide range of representatives were able to attend. Full details of the proposed service and transfer arrangements were given. Questions, comments and general feedback were invited throughout the sessions.

Some groups submitted additional comments by email. These responses have also been included in the consultation results.

### **3. PUBLIC RESPONSE AND VIEWS EXPRESSED**

#### **Respondents**

23 individuals responded to the questionnaire representing 21 identified organisations in total. In one case two members of the same group completed the questionnaire.

In addition to the completed questionnaires 2 individuals contacted the council by email or letter to register their comments outside of the questionnaire format.

Several groups contacted the “Making Music” association of amateur and semi-professional musicians including choirs and orchestra. Making Music have also submitted their own response and have sent a representative to attend the briefing sessions. The comments made by Making Music are also included in the consultation.

In addition to the online questionnaire, 29 representatives from 19 music and drama groups attended 2 briefing sessions at Fosse Neighbourhood Centre. Although the initial number of bookable places was increased from 24 to 30, subsequent requests could not be accommodated due to the capacity of the meeting room. It is recognised that music and drama groups appear to have placed greater importance on the face to face briefings, possibly because a fuller dialogue has been required to clarify detail around the proposed service.

**In total 32 music and drama groups engaged with the consultation, representing over one third (36%) of the user groups who had been contacted.**

The figure below shows the number and percentage of groups responding to the online questionnaire, where stated:

<b>Members</b>	<b>Groups</b>	
	19 organisations	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Up to 20	1	5%
21 – 40	5	26%
41 – 60	5	26%
61 – 80	6	32%
81 – 100	1	5%
Over 100	1	5%

Responses were received from groups using all types of printed music and drama materials. The materials were categorised by the Nottingham charging category type. The figure below shows how many of the groups who responded use each type of material:

<b>Material type</b>	<b>Groups</b>	
	23 organisations	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Large vocal scores	13	56.5%
Small vocal scores	13	56.5%
Orchestral sets (box)	10	43.5%
Part songs (sheets)	10	43.5%
Play sets	3	13.0%



## 4. VIEWS AND COMMENTS

### 4.1 Accessing the service

#### 4.1.1 Online service

Access to the Nottingham Performing Arts Sets Service would be primarily online. A website is being developed by Nottingham City underpinned by a new bespoke IT system. Customers would be able to register their group, search the expanded catalogue, check sets and copy availability, place bookings and make payment online.

Development of an IT system to achieve efficiencies was suggested by some Leicester City groups during the initial consultation in April 2014. The model was developed as part of the market research commissioned by Nottingham City and supported by Leicester City in February 2015.

**Of the 20 groups who responded, 19 said they would be able to access the Nottingham service online and 1 group said they were not sure.**

#### 4.1.2 Staff support

Feedback from the two briefing sessions highlighted the value placed on continued staff support and in particular the specialist knowledge required to obtain the required sets in the correct formats and quantities. Some groups stated that they rely on the feedback from staff to help plan performances for the year ahead, as an indication is required as to likelihood of obtaining suggested sets in the correct quantities for future performances well in advance.

The briefing session groups welcomed the availability and support of staff members with specialist knowledge within the Nottingham service. A key point was the confirmation that staff intervention and knowledge would be available at Nottingham to source Inter Library Loans and the recognition that this part of the service cannot be automated. Although it was made clear that, as with Leicester, Nottingham staff would need to limit Inter Library Loan (ILL) searches to around six external authorities due to time constraints, staff specialist knowledge would be used to approach those authorities most likely to hold the required set(s) to give the best chance of success.

Most groups attending the briefing sessions preferred to contact staff by email with their enquiries. The groups also welcomed the ability to contact music and drama service staff by 'phone on occasion to discuss in depth requirements. One group would like to visit the Nottingham music and drama library to talk to staff face to face. All groups welcomed the availability of specialist staff to talk to by phone or in person at advertised times.

Leicester City groups were asked which days and times they would prefer staff support to be available. The responses are summarised in the figure below:

Day	No. of Groups		
	23 organisations		
	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Monday	6	6	4

Tuesday			5	4	6
Wednesday			4	4	5
Thursday			5	4	4
Friday			7	5	2
Saturday			6	3	N/A

**The preferred times for phone support were Monday morning and afternoon, Tuesday evening, Friday morning and Saturday morning.**

#### 4.1.3 Online payment

Payments for the music and drama service would be made online to Nottingham City by debit or credit card.

Leicester City service users were asked if their group would be able to make payment online. The figure below shows the responses to the online questionnaire:

Able to pay online by credit/debit card?	Groups	
	21 organisations	
	N	%
Yes	16	76.1%
No	3	14.3%
Don't currently pay	2	9.5%

Of the 3 groups who responded “no” one stated that did not currently have a card but would investigate. Two stated they were charities and understood they this precluded the group from having a card.

The online payment requirement was also discussed at the briefing sessions. Several groups reported that debit cards had since been issued to their organisation, but this may depend on individual group arrangements and financial controls.

#### 4.1.4 Training requirements

Groups were asked if they would like members to attend training sessions to familiarise users with the website which is being developed for the Nottingham service.

This was identified as a strong requirement, with 84% of the groups who responded to the questionnaire requesting training for one or more members.

Groups attending the briefing sessions also welcomed the training sessions. The majority were confident that those who needed to access the system had an adequate level of familiarity with online IT systems. However two groups were concerned that their members has limited IT skills and may require additional training.

The groups attending both briefing sessions were interested in early access to the new IT system and have volunteered to attend user testing sessions.

#### 4.1.5 Other access issues

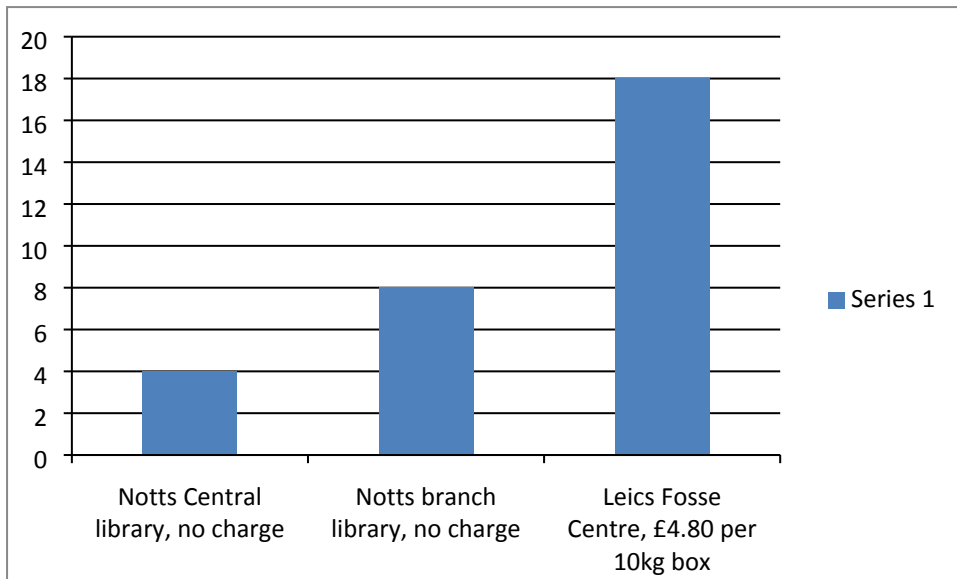
User groups were asked if there were any other access requirements for their groups. Responses were categorised as follows:

Other access issues	Groups
	23 organisations
	N
None	13
Access to online service for 2 members	1
Detailed catalogue records	1
Level access for collections	1
Prefer Leics County Library collection	2
Delivery charge to Fosse is high	3
Car parking required	1
Trolley required for collection of bulky sets	2

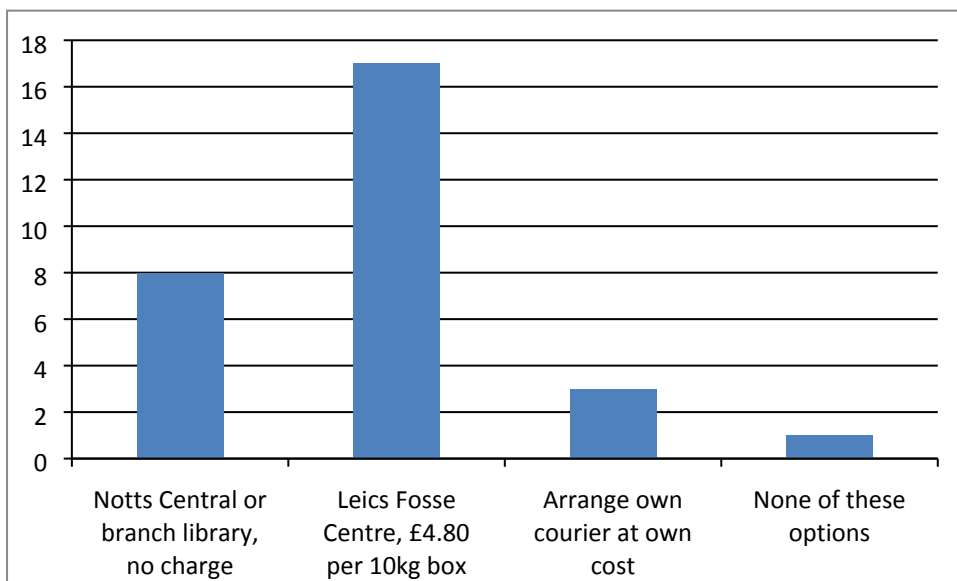
#### 4.2 Collection and return options

Collection and return of music and drama sets was particularly important to Leicester users as the physical sets would be based in Nottingham. Following extended discussion at the market research session in March 2015 an option to collect sets from and return to Fosse Neighbourhood Centre has been developed. This option was welcomed by many Leicester customers responding to the questionnaire and also at the briefing sessions.

Leicester groups responding to the questionnaire intended use the following options for collection of their music and drama sets (note some groups may use more than one option). 20 groups responded in total:



Leicester groups responding to the questionnaire intended to use the following options for return of their music and drama sets (note some groups may use more than one option). 21 groups responded in total:



Five of the groups responding to the questionnaire objected to the delivery and return charges to and from the Leicester collection point at Fosse Neighbourhood Centre. One group commented:

“...we are a large group and boxes of more than 10kg are not uncommon and Leicester being our easiest point of collection or drop off this will cost us a lot”

At the briefing sessions two separate views were expressed. Groups based in north Leicestershire, or with links in Nottingham were happy to collect and return to Nottingham at no charge:

“Our group would be happy to return to Nottinghamshire libraries as we are based in North Leicestershire”.

Other groups were based further away from Nottingham and were concerned by the additional collection and return charges:

“Is there any possibility of reviewing the delivery costs for Leicester users to find a way of reducing the delivery costs?”

Two groups were interested in a costed courier service which would deliver direct to their door, but Nottingham City Council explained this option had been investigated and costs were unrealistic due to the low volume. This was why the standard inter-libraries courier agreement had been proposed to deliver sets to and from Fosse Library as the cheapest rate available.

### **4.3 Pricing structure**

A range of opinions were expressed with regard to the pricing structure which would be introduced by Nottingham when the redeveloped regional service is launched.

#### **4.3.1 Music sets charges**

Music sets loans would be loaned on a Pay As You Go basis with no annual subscription charge.

Some large choirs were concerned that based on their current annual usage the full cost of their sets loans would be significantly higher than at presently. One group with 65 members, collecting from Fosse library and borrowing a range of sets for 7 month periods twice a year each had calculated their annual sets hire charges at over £1,300.

Another choir had calculated the cost of their current music order under the new pricing structure. The loan of 50 copies each of 8 varied pieces weighing 80kg in total would cost in the region of £320. However the group had compared this to the cost of another provider and found that the same loans would have cost £170 more.

Groups also discussed making changes to their current music sets hire arrangements, for instance borrowing for shorter periods of time and reviewing their programmes for the year. There was a consensus that groups may want to organise themselves differently to minimise costs in moving from the annual subscription arrangement to a Pay As You Go pricing structure.

Feedback from orchestras was that the charges for boxed orchestral sets were fair and that loans periods for this type of material were often shorter limiting overall costs under the proposed scheme.

#### **4.3.2 Drama sets charges**

Drama sets would be borrowed on an annual subscription basis due to different patterns of use identified by these groups during the market research exercise.

No feedback was received from performing drama groups with regard to the proposal. It was noted at the briefing sessions that there would be no change to the annual subscription charges for these groups, although there would be an additional delivery charge to pay for collection at Fosse Neighbourhood Centre.

However one reading group who currently uses the Leicester service at no charge did respond to the questionnaire and another reading group attended the briefing sessions. Leicester City service reading group users do not currently pay to borrow drama sets on the basis that they do not

perform. Under the redeveloped Nottingham City service all drama sets users would pay an annual subscription charge as part of a consistent policy.

The group responding to the questionnaire was unhappy that a charge would be implemented for all users of the drama sets service, and commented that many of their members were retired. Although a similar point was made at the briefing session representatives from the group discussed the possibility of funding the annual subscription charge of £50 by splitting the cost between the 12 members. The consensus amongst the groups attending the briefing session was that a consistent charging policy should be in place for all service users.

#### **4.3.3 General approach to pricing structure**

Music groups attending the briefing sessions made a number of points regarding the charges. It was recognised that the Nottingham pricing structure would mean an increase in charges for most groups based on current usage with the heaviest users experiencing the greatest increases. During the initial discussion some groups expressed dissatisfaction with the pricing structure and concern as to how the raised costs would be met.

However there was a consensus that the service did have to pay for itself to be sustainable and an understanding that the service was not intended to be profit making. Groups were also welcomed the upfront investment being made by Nottingham City in the IT system and in tidying up the catalogue.

Music groups were eager for a decision to be made, and if the transfer were to go ahead to find out when this would be. Several groups are looking to review their annual subscription charge to members in order to cover costs and therefore need to know the plans for the coming year as soon as possible.

#### **4.4 Service model**

The Nottingham City proposed service model was discussed in detail during the two briefing sessions with regard to its suitability for Leicester City service users. Several key areas were identified.

##### **4.4.1 Stock and catalogue**

Under the proposal Leicester City stock would be transferred to Nottingham City to double the size of the core collection. This would reduce the need to source full or part sets from external library authorities, reducing administrative and delivery costs and avoiding some Inter Library Loan charges for customers.

The expanded core music and drama stock pool was welcomed by groups at both briefing sessions and also by respondents to the online questionnaire:

Leicester groups will be much more reliant on the information held on the online catalogue, as it is less likely they will visit Nottingham Central Library to view the sets. The following practical feedback was offered and will be considered by Nottingham City part of the system and catalogue development work:

“The catalogue needs to show how many copies of each part are available in a full orchestral box set, especially for string parts”

“One of our difficulties is having to transpose clarinet and trumpet parts from A for players who only have Bb instruments. Will the staff be able to inform us whether parts are in A or Bb as it takes a week or so to make the transpositions”

“Will need a catalogue of plays held including the numbers in the cast.”

Groups highlighted the continued need for staff support and advice at advertised times to help clarify some of the above detail. Groups were also pleased to have an email address to send further detail relating of their specific requirements, for example numbers of parts required in orchestral box sets.

#### **4.4.2 Reservations (advanced bookings)**

Leicester City service users were pleased with the ability to reserve sets up to 1 year in advance using the Nottingham website. The reservation function has previously been identified as a key concern by groups responding to an initial consultation in April 2014.

The ability to view the availability of sets and copies into the future using the online catalogue was also welcomed at the briefing sessions, as this would help groups to decide on future pieces to perform.

Clarification was sought and received on a number of practical points regarding the Nottingham system:

- Reservations may be cancelled by the customer if they have not yet been supplied or if additional ILL copies cannot be sourced to complete the set.
- There is no limit on the length of bookings, but under Pay As You Go charges would reflect longer loan periods.
- Payment for reservations would not be required until the set was ready to release for collection.
- The website will provide a link to an Inter Library Loan request facility if additional copies are required to complete the set.

#### **4.4.3 Inter Library Loan (ILL)**

Leicester service users were particularly concerned to ensure that the Inter Library Loan service would be available as part of the overall offer. This requirement was the second key finding of the initial consultation which took place in April 2014. One online questionnaire respondent commented:

“The use of inter library loans is still going to be essential. For any one piece of music we get copies from a range of libraries of which Nottingham is only one. Ipswich, Bournemouth, Derbyshire, Hertfordshire, Lincolnshire, Carlisle and Staffs are some of the many that have supplied us. Your ability to find copies from this variety is very important to us.”

The ability to request Inter Library Loans for full or part music or drama sets through the newly developed website was welcomed by groups attending the briefing sessions. However reassurance was sought that the sourcing of Inter Library Loans would be undertaken by staff with specialist knowledge to ensure the best chance of sourcing the correct materials at the right time.

#### **4.5 Intention to use the service**

All groups were asked if they would use the redeveloped music and drama sets service run by Nottingham City Council if the Leicester service was transferred.

**17 out of 20 groups (85%) responding the online questionnaire said they would use the service.**

One play reading group and two choirs said they would not use the service as things stand. All cited the increased charges as the main reason. However two of the three groups intended to review internal arrangements and subscriptions to see if increased costs could be accommodated.

All representatives attending the two briefing sessions indicated that their groups would use the redeveloped Nottingham service. It was noted that groups felt more confidence in the proposal following attendance at the detailed briefing sessions. Some groups said would look to change the way they organise their operations to make the most of the new service model.

The delivery and return charges for collection from Leicester Fosse Library were cited by a number of groups as a potential obstacle, raising already increased costs for Leicester groups. This factor was referenced by 6 of the 21 groups who responded.

The closing comments made by groups responding to the questionnaire reflected disappointment at the transfer of the Leicester sets service, and enthusiasm for the redeveloped Nottingham regional service in equal measure. Several respondents praised the high standard of service they had received from Leicester City over the years.

Making Music, the umbrella organisation for amateur music groups, attended the briefing sessions and clarified a range of detailed queries regarding the proposed transfer from local groups. They commented "This potential solution is much better than the one originally proposed by Leicester City Council and one that we wholeheartedly endorse and therefore will recommend to members as a way of going forward which has a greater chance than any other to guarantee a long term future for a music library service in the region."

A sample of the closing comments which were submitted by groups responding to the questionnaire is included below:

"I have attended meetings with the Nottingham City Council regarding this proposed transfer and see no problem and more than likely an improvement"

"Unless I'm overlooking something, this looks good. The one sacrifice is having to pay for delivery to and collection from Fosse Library in Leicester..."

"This is obviously not going to be as convenient as the current arrangement but is better than having no service at all."

"(we)... very much regret that the proposed transfer needs to go ahead ... We are disappointed that the excellent service provided by Leicester libraries will no longer exist."

"The charge per item per month is a great problem... The cost to our Society which has 62/65 members will be very expensive and, therefore, prohibitive."

"I applaud the statement that there will be a bigger pool of music to choose from in the new service, and also I like the idea that there will be a good online service. But I have very serious reservations about the proposed charges ... and the effect these will have on small and poorly financed choirs such as ours."



“The proposed regional model sounds a good solution. Thanks for taking the time to put this in place!”

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

The regional music and drama sets service which has been developed by Nottingham City Council in consultation with Nottingham and Leicester service users addresses key issues which were raised during an initial consultation in April 2014.

Key developments such as the investment in a new IT system and the amalgamated core stock pool were welcomed by many groups.

85% of music and drama subscribers who responded to the consultation questionnaire stated that they would use the redeveloped service. All of the groups who attend the briefing sessions indicated they would use the service, but there are some reservations.

The need to cover the true cost of the service whilst achieving efficiencies through the creation of a regional hub service was generally accepted by groups attending the briefing sessions. However there was concern from some groups with regard to the increased charges they would need to accommodate if the proposal went ahead. Some groups intended to review their sets loan periods and internal subscriptions in order to accommodate the new pricing structure.

Leicester City service users were also concerned by the potential additional cost of delivering sets to and from the Leicester City drop off branch (Fosse Neighbourhood Centre). Several groups asked whether anything could be done to reduce these costs.

With regard to the proposal, groups attending the briefing sessions requested that a decision be made sooner rather than later so that they could plan for the future.

### **Next steps**

Practical service development suggestions will be summarised for consideration by Leicester City and Nottingham City Library services.

Groups attending the briefing sessions will be included in any future systems user testing.

A report summarising the results of the consultation will be made to the Leicester City Council executive.