
LIBRARY STOCK MANAGEMENT – PRE DECISION SCRUTINY

Purpose of Report

1. To brief Members in preparation for an item considering the Library Stock Management Strategy for the Council. A report is due to be taken to Cabinet in December and the Committee will have the opportunity to provide their views and comments to inform this Cabinet report.

Background

2. A report is due to be considered by Cabinet on 3 December 2015 to seek approval for the introduction of a Cardiff Libraries Stock Management Strategy and associated actions to drive this forward.
3. The Council's current libraries storage, stock support and delivery services are currently located in a building on Dominions Way, Cardiff - this facility is leased by the Council. The Local Studies Department is also currently found at this location on a temporary basis, having moved from Cardiff Central Library. The facility at Dominions Way costs the Council £100,000 per year in rental fees, plus additional costs for National Non-Domestic Rates and utility bills.
4. In line with the Council's Libraries Strategy, the Council is seeking to minimise back office associated costs in order to prioritise and maintain the frontline service delivery provided at branch libraries.

5. The Communities, Housing and Customer Services Directorate Business Plan 2015/16¹ set out plans for the development of this strategy. The section 'Planning for the Future' states the following actions will be taken during 2015-16 to mitigate the potential impacts of or the 2015-16 and 2016-17 budget rounds:

(Ref: CHCSPF8)

Potential Impacts

Full review of back office functions to deliver smarter and more streamlined processes including:-

- The implementation of EDI [Electronic Data Interchange] , the development of a Stock Management strategy
- Identify permanent location for the delivery of local studies services within the Authority
- Procurement of upgraded RFID (self-service) equipment.

Mitigating Actions

- Q1 - Implementation of EDI – delivering streamlined processes
- Q2 - Development of a Stock Management Strategy and plan for implementation
- Q3 - Full scoping with partners to establish location of provision of Local study services.

Performance Measures

The implementation of the Libraries Strategy to maintain and improve provision.

6. Alongside securing a permanent location for the Local Studies service, the Council is also seeking to work with partners to find appropriate locations for historical works, so that they are more accessible and kept an environment that preserves them for future generations. Proposals relating to both aspects will be outlined in the Director's presentation to the Committee.

¹ Communities, Housing and Customer Services Directorate Business Plan 2015/16
<http://cardiff.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s4010/Appendix%20A%20-%20Draft%20Communities%20Housing%20Customer%20Services%20v10.pdf>

Issues

7. Library provision in Wales is monitored through the Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS). The WPLS fifth framework is structured around core entitlements that library services in Wales should offer and associated quality indicators to measure the impact of library services. The Council is measured against the following two quality indicators in relation to library stock:

WPLSQI 8 – Up-to-date reading material

- a) Library authorities should achieve:
either a minimum of 243 items acquired per 1,000 resident population
or a minimum spend of £2,180 per 1,000 resident population annually.
Books and e-books, periodicals, audio-visual material and electronic resources are all included.
- b) Acquisitions during the year of materials for loan (including electronic materials for loan) should be equivalent to at least 11% of the lending stock at the start of the year.

WPLSQI 9 – Appropriate reading material

This indicator is designed to ensure an appropriate balance of resources across various sections of the community.

- a) The percentage of the material budget spent on resources for children should reflect the percentage of children in the resident population, within ± 2 percentage points.
 - b) **Either** a minimum of 4% of the material budget,
or a minimum of £750 per 1,000 Welsh speaking resident population,
should be spent on the purchase of Welsh Language materials.
8. Members of the Committee are due to consider the results of CyMAL's² evaluation of Cardiff's performance 2014/15 at a separate item of this meeting. The report shows that WPLSQI 8 (Up-to-date reading material) is the only one

² CyMAL is the former name of the Welsh Government's Museums and Libraries Division

of seven quality indicators with targets that Cardiff has failed to achieve (see table below).

QI 8 Up-to-date reading material:		Not met
a) Acquisitions per capita	X	
or Materials spend per capita	X	
b) Replenishment rate	X	
QI 9 Appropriate reading material:		Fully met
a) % of material budget on children	✓	
b) % of material budget spent on Welsh	✓	
or Spend on Welsh per capita	X	

9. The narrative included within the annual assessment report (found at **Appendix C of Item 4**) states that:

“The overall level of acquisitions is disappointing, being amongst the lowest in Wales, and this is the only area where Cardiff entirely fails to meet the targets set in the framework. Materials for children and resources in the Welsh Language are being provided at appropriate levels.”

“Efficiency savings during the year have impacted on the rate of acquisitions, which are low in both absolute and replenishment terms. This is the only area where Cardiff entirely fails to meet the target set in the framework. Only one authority reported a lower rate of acquisitions per capita, and only two had lower replenishment rates. The service notes that it has prioritised spending strategies to focus on the achievement of the Authority Corporate priorities.”

10. Members will note that the implementation of the Library Stock Management Strategy is not directly linked to any change in spend on new books. The information above is included to illustrate the financial prioritisation challenges faced by the libraries service in Cardiff. The Strategy will look to ensure that resources are being directed in the most effective way to maintain the integrity and increase the accessibility of the materials held currently in Dominions Way.

Way Forward

11. Councillor Peter Bradbury (Cabinet Member for Community Development, Co-Operatives and Social Enterprise) will be in attendance, and may wish to make a statement. Sarah McGill (Director of Communities, Housing & Customer Services), Isabelle Bignall (Head of Service - Customer Services) and Nicola Richards (Central Library Manager) will be in attendance and will provide a presentation outlining the proposals going forward for the Cardiff Library Stock Management Strategy and relocation of Local Studies.

Legal Implications

12. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

13. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are

implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

Recommendation

14. The Committee is recommended:
 - a. to consider whether it wishes to pass on any comments, observations or recommendations to the Cabinet;
 - b. to discuss whether it wish to schedule any further scrutiny of this issue.

MARIE ROSENTHAL

Director of Governance and Legal Services

30 October 2015