

HUB AND LIBRARY STRATEGY 2019-2023: PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

Purpose of the Report

1. To give Members background information to aid the scrutiny of the draft report to Cabinet regarding the Hub and Library Strategy and Library Collections Policy, which is due to be considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 20 February 2020.

Scope of Scrutiny

2. At their meeting on 20 February 2020, the Cabinet will consider a report that seeks cabinet approval for the Hub & Library Strategy 2019-2023 and Library Collections Policy.
3. During this scrutiny, Members have the opportunity to explore:
 - i) The draft Hub & Library Strategy;
 - ii) The proposed approach re Library Collections Policy;
 - iii) The implications of these proposals;
 - iv) Whether there are any risks to the Council;
 - v) The timeline and next steps for delivering the proposals;
 - vi) The recommendations to Cabinet.

Structure of the meeting

4. Members will hear from Councillor Lynda Thorne (Cabinet Member – Communities and Housing), Jane Thomas (Assistant Director – Housing and Communities) and Nicola Pitman (Lead Library & Strategy Manager). There will be a presentation taking Members through the proposals and recommendations to Cabinet, followed by Members questions.

5. Members will then be able to decide what comments, observations or recommendations they wish to pass on to the Cabinet for their consideration prior to making their decisions.

Background

6. The draft report to Cabinet entitled 'Hub & Strategy 2019-2023' is attached at **Appendix A** and has **three** appendices:
 - **Appendix 1** - Cardiff Hub and Library Strategy 2019-2023
 - **Appendix 2** - Cardiff Library Collections Policy
 - **Appendix 3** - Equality Impact Assessment.
7. Since 2011, 12 hubs have been delivered including Central Library. In 2018, Cabinet agreed to extend the Hub programme across Cardiff, using existing libraries to provide additional services with a focus on wellbeing and supporting independent living as well as a specialist Youth Hub at Butetown Pavilion.
8. The latest Welsh Public Library Standards, for 2018/19, show that:
 - i) Cardiff met 11 out of 12 of the core entitlements, with '*Libraries in Wales will provide access to the library service's strategy, policies, objectives and vision*' being the core entitlement not met. The approval of the proposed Library Strategy would enable this core entitlement to be met.
 - ii) Cardiff is best in Wales in 4 quality indicators and ranks second or third in a further 8 quality indicators.
 - iii) There are 2 quality indicators where Cardiff ranks poorly;
 - i. Target for qualified staff
 - ii. Target for spend on books.

Hubs and Library Strategy

9. The proposed Hub & Library Strategy 2019-2023 is attached at **Appendix 1 of Appendix A**. Points **12 – 32** of the report to Cabinet set out a summary of the Strategy, including the vision and key aims, with specific sections on the

continuing development of hubs, volunteering, supporting children and young people, digital services and training, advice services, tackling poverty, health and wellbeing and bringing communities together. These mirror sections in the proposed Strategy, which also has sections on encouraging reading, and celebrating heritage and culture.

10. The proposed Hub & Library Strategy 2019-2023 contains a series of 'We Will' commitments; these are summarised in the Key Actions section, **pages 6-9 Appendix 1 of Appendix A**. The final page of the Strategy states that these will form the basis of a four-year action plan, which will *'provide details of the key activities to be carried out and identify clear outcomes, along with lead responsible officers and / or organisations. Implementation will be closely monitored and the action plan reviewed and updated as necessary. The Council cannot deliver the strategy in isolation and partnership working will be essential to ensure that the best outcomes and solutions can be reached.'*

Library Collections Policy

11. Points **33 – 41, Appendix A**, summarise the proposed Library Collections Policy, which is attached at **Appendix 2 of Appendix A**. The draft policy sets out to assess the usage of books and other resources, such as E resources, magazines and newspapers.
12. At **points 37 – 38, Appendix A**, the Cabinet report highlights that much of Cardiff's legacy collection of historical manuscripts and books is stored in less than ideal conditions in the library stacks building at Dominion Way and will deteriorate without improved storage and specialist preservation work. The report states that *'the cost of correctly storing, preserving and digitising the historical collection is prohibitive, and there are more appropriate organisations than the Council with the skill and knowledge to undertake this work such as the National Library of Wales and Cardiff University.'*
13. At **points 39 – 40, Appendix A**, the Cabinet report emphasises that parts of the collection of particular significance to Cardiff will be retained within the city and

that, where documents are shared, legal ownership will remain with Cardiff Council and access for Cardiff citizens will be ensured.

14. **Point 41, Appendix A**, states that consultation on the draft Library Collections Policy will be undertaken with key stakeholders.

Proposed Recommendations to Cabinet

15. The report to Cabinet contains the following recommendations:

- i) *'Agree the Hub and Library Strategy 2019-2023 (attached at Appendix 1)*
- ii) *'Agree in principle the draft Library Collections Policy (attached at appendix 2) and authorise consultation with key stakeholders*
- iii) *'Delegate authority to the Assistant Director (Housing and Communities) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities to approve the final Library Collections Policy. Should any significant change to the draft policy be proposed as a result of the stakeholder consultation, the policy will be returned to Cabinet for further consideration and approval.'*

Consultation Undertaken

16. Points **42-44, Appendix A**, detail the consultation undertaken, which included public consultation during August – September 2019:

- i) Adult Survey – 2,058 responses
- ii) Children & Young Persons' Survey – 306 responses.

17. Further details on the consultation are provided on **Page 5**, Hub & Library Strategy, attached as **Appendix 1 of Appendix A**.

Previous Scrutiny

18. This Committee has undertaken regular policy development scrutiny of proposals re Hubs, including proposals to extend the Hub programme in 2018 at their committee meeting in May 2018. Following their scrutiny, the Chair, Councillor

Nigel Howells, wrote to Councillor Lynda Thorne, Cabinet Member- Housing and Communities; this letter is attached at **Appendix B**.

19. This Committee undertakes annual monitoring scrutiny of the Council's performance re Welsh Public Library Standards and Chief Librarian Universal Offers, having last considered these in January 2019.

Way Forward

20. Councillor Lynda Thorne (Cabinet Member – Housing & Communities) will be invited to make a statement. Jane Thomas (Assistant Director – Housing & Communities) and Nicola Pitman (Lead Library & Strategy Manager) will attend to give a presentation and answer Members' questions on the proposals.

21. Members will then be able to decide what comments, observations or recommendations they wish to pass on to the Cabinet for their consideration prior to making their decisions.

Legal Implications

22. 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

23. 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

The Committee is recommended to:

- i) Consider the information in this report, its appendices and the information presented at the meeting;
- ii) Determine whether they would like to make any comments, observations or recommendations to the Cabinet on this matter in time for its meeting on 20 February 2020; and
- iii) Decide the way forward for any future scrutiny of the issues discussed.

DAVINA FIORE

Director of Governance & Legal Services

12 February 2020