

### Progress made on the Library Strategy 2020 since it was published in April 2016.

#### 1. Progress against the Key Strategy Proposals

1.1 The Strategy committed the Library Service to a number of key changes (summarised on page 4 of the Strategy):

1.2 *Place libraries into four different tiers to provide a standardised approach to service*

This has been completed. Libraries have been placed in four Tiers, with Tier 1 being the largest busiest libraries, Tier 3 the smallest libraries and Tier 4 libraries managed by the community with support from the County Council.

1.3 *Invest £500,000 every year for four years from the £2 million Book Fund to make our libraries modern and vibrant, making the best use of new technology and digital systems*

A comprehensive programme of library refurbishments has been completed in the first two years in Fleet, Fareham, Totton, Andover and Gosport (Gosport being funded through alternative sources). The third year of investment (2018/19) has delivered a broader package of smaller refurbishment/improvement schemes in a further 14 libraries.

In addition, an ambitious scheme to refresh all existing self-service technology and extend this to all libraries will be complete by October 2019. This technology enables customers to issue or return books and pay using cashless payment facilities, freeing up staff for other duties.

1.4 *Review the future viability of static libraries, using an agreed set of criteria*

A comprehensive Asset Strategy is currently being developed with colleagues in Property Services which will inform future decisions about library buildings.

1.5 *Increase the use of trained volunteers to support the work of paid Library staff*

A Volunteer Strategy has been developed and a full suite of guidance and support is now available for the recruitment and deployment of volunteers across the service, including an induction and training package. This has all led to an increase in volunteer hours from 40,670 in 2016/17 to 55,000 in 2018/19.

1.6 *Develop our library staff in line with our transformation priorities*

A significant programme of investment in leadership and change management skills has been successfully delivered for all Library Managers.

In the autumn of 2017 a wide scale staff consultation was launched which led to frontline staff being transitioned onto a new Role Profile in 2018, with amended Terms and Conditions, to create a modern, flexible workforce reflecting the skills needed from Library staff in the future.

1.7 *Share library buildings with partner organisations for several services to be accessed in one visit*

The Library Service has always worked well with partner organisations and is enjoying increasing success in developing strategic partnerships which deliver mutual benefits. Key successes include:

- Working with Public Health – libraries have developed closer working relationships with health providers which has led to Child Health Clinics being

delivered in 18 libraries. This attracts a new audience into libraries (including those who may not have been confident to walk through the doors otherwise) and new parents can make the most of resources available (such as use of public computers to write CVs, or attendance at Rhymetime to encourage child literacy skills). New groups have sprung up following the introduction of Child Health Clinics (such as breastfeeding groups or healthy eating support).

- Citizens Advice is a natural fit with Libraries, with both organisations regarded as trusted sources of information and support. Currently 10 Hampshire Libraries host Citizens Advice services through different operating models and more are planned.
- Adults Services have also been a long term partner of Libraries, with Parkside (Aldershot & District Learning Disability) hosted in Farnborough and Learning Disability services in Winchester.

The Library Service has also enjoyed new partnerships with the Police, Ministry of Justice and a range of other local groups. As well as the obvious benefits to customers, partnerships are run on a business-like footing – bringing in income through the leasing agreements and making more efficient use of under utilised space. This has led to an increase in income from letting of £65,000 in the past 12 months from £270,452 in 2017/18 to £334,000 in 2018/19.

### 1.8 *Phased withdrawal of poorly used library collections*

The Library Service constantly reviews its offer to ensure it is investing in the resources that customers need. Audio Books in cassette formats, Language Packs, computer games, CD and DVD collections, which have declined in popularity, are gradually being phased out. The titles of physical magazines have been reviewed to retain the most popular titles. New technology is enabling more informed decisions to be made about stock purchases, ensuring stock is working as hard as possible and reflecting the interests and demands of library customers.

- 1.9 Annually the Library Service reviews eResources to assess customer usage and value for money and under used eResources are cancelled when their annual subscription ends.

## 2. **Strategic Aims**

- 2.1 The Library Strategy 2020 also identified five Strategic Aims which were derived from the 'National Universal Offer'. This is the framework recommended by Libraries Connected for all public library services to ensure they remain relevant and accessible<sup>1</sup>. In essence, the five offers represent the core services which customers and stakeholders see as being integral to a 21<sup>st</sup> century Library Service. Hampshire County Council's strategic aims incorporate the key principles of each offer, but has particularly focused on three; Reading, Digital and Health and Wellbeing.

### 2.2 *Reading*

Reading and literacy is at the very core of the Library Service's offer. All of Hampshire's libraries run a programme of events and activities ranging from Baby Rhymetime to author talks and reading groups. In addition, there are a number of targeted offers:

- Parents are now able to enrol their children as library members at birth through partnership with Hampshire Registration Service. Since the introduction of this in 2017 over 2000 babies have been signed up as members of the Library Service.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.librariesconnected.org.uk/page/universal-offers>

- Bookstart is run by the reading charity BookTrust. It provides free resources to pre-school children at key points in their development and the Library Service co-ordinates the distribution of these packs. Since the Strategy was published the cost of delivering this service has been significantly reduced.
- The Summer Reading Challenge is a national scheme run by the Reading Agency aimed at encouraging reading in children between the ages of 4 and 11. In 2018, over 25,000 children participated in the challenge, the highest number across the South East region. Early indications show that there are even more children engaged with the challenge in 2019. This is largely thanks to the commitment of all Library staff and volunteers who have engaged so well with this challenge.

### 2.3 *Digital*

As new technologies emerge, needs change and library customers are increasingly encouraged to engage with all sorts of different services through digital channels. The role of Hampshire's Libraries in supporting and enabling this digital engagement becomes ever more vital. Key projects have taken place to modernise the offer including:

- In 2016 the Library Service ran a digital campaign designed to increase the number of emagazine downloads and ebook issues. This resulted in an increase in emagazine downloads of 162% a week over the seven weeks of the campaign and winning 'Digital Campaign of the year' at the 2017 UK Public Sector Communication Awards. A new ebook supplier was appointed following a procurement exercise and the Service was relaunched with additional investment in the adult and in children's collections with an increase of 30,000 issues in 2018/19 compared to the previous year.
- Arts Council England awarded a grant of £238,000 to establish DOTS, an innovative iPad lending scheme to members of the community at risk of social and digital isolation. This scheme included both the lending of iPads and training in their use. Of the 500+ people who took part in the pilot scheme, 94% felt that the project had helped to improve their digital confidence.
- Volunteers are now offering digital support to customers. Partnerships have been established and training for those offering digital support to customers has been developed. An example of this is the work which has taken place with Vivid Homes in the north of Hampshire where volunteers provide 1:1 drop in sessions to support customers with digital skills.
- Code Clubs are now operating successfully in 15 libraries, providing coding skills delivered by volunteer tutors to children between 9 and 13. Over 2000 children a year take part in these clubs which is improving digital literacy skills and supporting the national curriculum targets.
- As part of the refurbishment of Fleet and Fareham Libraries, spaces have been equipped with a range of new digital technologies such as 3D printing and robotics.
- Hampshire Library Service has become a national leader in engaging with customers through social media, with a growing audience on its main Facebook and Twitter accounts. These showcase what Libraries offer, publicise awareness days and advertise Library events and activities.

### 2.4 *Health and Wellbeing*

An ambitious Health and Wellbeing Strategy has been developed, in close consultation with colleagues from both Adults and Children's Services and Public

Health. This strategy recognises the key role that libraries play in supporting the health and wellbeing of communities and focuses on working with current partners to support early intervention and signposting to the public. Key successes include:

- The development of new health clinics in 18 libraries which has resulted in over 20,000 additional visitors per year coming into libraries.
- 172 Library staff completed the 'Making Every Contact Count' training and accreditation, providing them with the skills and techniques to conduct health and wellbeing conversations with potentially vulnerable customers.