CULTURE RECREATION & TOURISM CABINET MEMBER MEETING	Agenda Item 43
	Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:		**Libraries Plan 2009-2012**
Date of Meeting:		**28 October 2008**
Report of:		**Director of Cultural Services**
Contact Officer:	Name:	**Sally McMahon** Tel: **29-6963**
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Key Decision:	Yes	Forward Plan No. (CRT 2918)
Wards Affected:	All	

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.   **SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

1.1   Purpose of the report is to agree the Libraries Plan 2009-2012 which sets out the Council's vision for the service, building on the recent successes, and outlining the priorities and objectives for the next three years, in the context of the overall plans and ambitions for the city as a whole. The Plan demonstrates how Libraries support the Corporate Priorities and contribute to the key strategies for the city, including the Local Area Agreement and Corporate Plan.

1.2   Under the new Governance arrangements, the Libraries Plan is one of the key strategic documents that require full council approval.

2.   **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

2.1   (1) To agree the Libraries Plan 2009 -2012, and forward it on to full council for adoption.

3.   **RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:**

3.1   In June the 2008 Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Tourism approved a progress report on the previous Libraries Plan, and agreed the process and timetable for the development of the new Libraries Plan 2009-2012. This included:
* Review of consultation and research July 2008
* Workshop with Overview and Scrutiny Committee 8 September 2008
* Member and stakeholder consultation September 2008
* Conservative Group meeting 13 October 2008
* Report to Culture Recreation and Tourism CMM 28 October 2008
* Report to Culture, Tourism and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny 13 November 2008
* Libraries Plan 2009-2012 to Council on 4 December 2008

3.2   **Main features of the Libraries Plan 2009-2012**

The Libraries Plan sets out the Council's vision and ambitions for the service: *'Libraries at the Heart of our Communities: Broadening Horizons, Improving Lives'.* Libraries make a difference on an individual level, inspiring people, widening their view of the world and what is achievable, supporting learning, and enabling access to knowledge and information. Libraries also bring people together, providing a focus for community activity and interaction, reducing isolation and supporting social cohesion. Public libraries are at the heart of sustainable communities.

There are seven priorities identified for Libraries over the next three years:

(1) Community libraries development: We will develop libraries as local hubs in their communities, increasing community use, working in partnership with other agencies to provide improved access to a wide range of services at the local level. We will begin a phased programme to regenerate three community libraries, enhancing their role as community hubs, and seeking opportunities for mixed use development. We will review opening hours and make adjustments to meet local needs, and aim to increase library membership and use.

(2) Improve value for money and performance: We will develop our services, implement a marketing campaign and monitor use and satisfaction in order to improve our performance. A priority is to achieve our challenging income targets and attract new external resources to support some of our projects.

(3) Support individual and community development through reading and learning: We will work in partnership with others to support reading and learning across the city. In particular, we will help develop and implement a City-Wide Reading Strategy to improve reading and literacy levels of children and adults. We will build on the success of our existing services to children such as Bookstart and Homework clubs to support children's learning and development. We will implement our Learning Strategy to support lifelong learning, and skills development.

(4) Increase access to information and knowledge: We will improve our online resources and services, and develop new partnerships to extend our ability to refer people onto other agencies for more in-depth knowledge. In response to the high percentage of library users who seek health information, we will work as part of the local Health Information Partnership to improve our provision. We will work with the local universities to improve access to collections for local residents and students. We will seek external sponsorship to support the care and promotion of our Rare Books collections.

(5) Accessible and inclusive services: We will implement improvement plans as a result of the recent Equal Access Services and Mobile Library Service reviews. We will implement our Equalities Action Plan to improve access to services in all six of the identified equalities areas (race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age and faith/belief).

(6) Modernise libraries services: We will develop our website, introduce new online services and extend the use of self service in libraries. We will introduce new technology and new ways of working, to improve customer service and efficiency in the use of resources. We will be using technology to find new ways of reaching our customers, especially young people.

(7) Strengthen the libraries workforce: We will implement effective workforce development plans to improve the skills and knowledge of our staff, and are seeking to achieve the Investors in People award in 2009.

4.   CONSULTATION

4.1   The Libraries Plan is based firmly on evidence and research, taking on board the views of library users and the wider community as expressed in recent consultation, including:

- National CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) satisfaction surveys – the most recent being the adult users' and E-plus surveys 2006, and children's survey 2007
- Cityviews Survey 2007
- Home delivery survey 2008
- Equal access services review 2008
- Mobile Library Service Review 2008
- Analysis of community surveys that include the views of non-users
- Focus group research with some priority communities – including young people, visually impaired people, and black and minority ethnic groups (2004-07)
- Customer comments and complaints (reviewed quarterly)

A summary of the results of these consultations, together with other service reviews and audits, can be found in section 6 of the Libraries Plan.

4.2   The plan has also benefited from the active involvement of members of the Culture, Tourism and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee, through a workshop held in September. The Plan has been improved by the inclusion of many of the suggestions made by Members who welcomed the opportunity to discuss the future plans and aspirations for the Libraries Service. The main issues covered include:
- Importance of developing community libraries as hubs
- Need to attract new members, and to increase use by priority groups
- More emphasis on improving library stocks
- Review opening hours and change them to meet community needs
- Review and development of Mobile Library
- Need to work with partners to attract teenagers to libraries
- Develop use of libraries for adult education with support of LSC (Learning and Skills Council
- Care and promotion of the rare books collections

4.3   The Plan has been made available for public comment through the Libraries Website, and has also been sent out to key stakeholders for comment.

5.   FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

5.1   The key actions within the plan will be funded through the revenue budget or will be subject to attracting external income or investment or development of spend to save schemes. The 2008/09 budget for the library service is £3.9 million. Improving value for money is integral to the plan. Action has been taken in 2008/09 to improve income generation and debt recovery.

Finance Officer Consulted: Anne Silley   *Date: 29/09/08*

Legal Implications:

5.2   The Libraries Plan is a key strategic document that requires full council approval. There are no adverse legal implications arising from the Plan or the report.

Lawyer Consulted: Bob Bruce   *Date: 29/09/08*

Equalities Implications:

5.3   An initial equalities impact assessment has been carried out on the Libraries Plan, which identified three main actions needed:
    − monitor and evaluate the impact of income generation targets on disadvantaged groups and individuals
    − make the Plan available in other formats and other languages
    − promote the Plan and Libraries services to priority groups
A full Equalities impact assessment for Libraries is being carried out in line with agreed timetable for the Directorate.

Sustainability Implications:

5.4   *Sustainable Consumption and Production* : Through the modernisation programme, the use new technology and new ways of working will include a reduction in use of paper and other consumable resources.
Climate Change and Energy: The regeneration of community libraries is likely to improve the environmental performance of the library buildings.
Natural Resource Protection and Environmental Enhancement: No implications.
Sustainable Communities: The development of community libraries as hubs and the expansion of our community engagement activities will contribute to the development of more sustainable communities.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

5.5   There are no crime and disorder implications.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

5.6   A full risk management matrix has been completed for the Libraries Plan. Risks relating to the Plan include the possibility of damage to the council's performance and reputation if it fails to deliver the statutory requirement for an 'efficient and effective' library service. Elements of the Plan will impact on the achievement of

specific objectives in the Corporate Plan, and levels of performance will affect the achievement of local targets in the LAA (Local Area Agreement).

Highest risks of the Libraries Plan are related to :

- Community library development: - risk that we are unable to put together business plans to make development possible
- Income generation: - failure to achieve income targets would have an impact on our ability to deliver services
- Website: - failure to implement new online developments would impact on our ability to deliver services
- Modernisation of services: - failure to change ways of working or use technology effectively would reduce our ability to deliver effective services or make the best use resources

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

5.7   The Libraries Service helps deliver the council's priorities as outlined in section 2.2 of the plan: **'Reducing inequality by increasing opportunity'** -   Libraries help increase opportunity through free access to information and computer facilities, supporting learning and skills development, broadening cultural understanding and helping children and young people get the best start in life. Libraries help improve health through health information and support programmes, target the most vulnerable through home delivery services, and are a route through to other services.

Libraries support '**open and effective leadership**', helping people keep informed and engaged through their community libraries as local hubs, providing safe and trusted places for engagement and interaction, and fostering community cohesion.

New library development supports local regeneration, and so help '**protect the environment while growing the economy'.**

There are a number of objectives in the Corporate Plan that Libraries will specifically deliver or support:

- Regenerate at least three community libraries enabling them to act as hubs for community services
- Work through museums and local libraries to support early years learning
- Increase and diversify participation in cultural and sporting activities
- Develop an inspiring programme of activities leading up to the 2012 London Olympics
- Deliver a range of positive activities for young people
- Improve young people's reading levels by implementing a city-wide reading strategy
- Increase public access to excellent online information and learning in public libraries
- Provide better health information in our libraries and expand the Books on Prescription scheme

6.   EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

6.1   None considered

7.   REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1   Under the new Governance arrangements, the Libraries Plan is one of the key strategic documents that require full council approval.

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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

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Appendices:

1.   Libraries Plan 2009 - 2012

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.   Libraries Plan 2009 - 2012

Background Documents

1.   None