

<b>STRONG AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 5</b>
<b>18 November 2014</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## Report of the Strategic Partnerships Manager – Resources Directorate

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## REVIEW OF THE CONSULTATION RESULTS FROM LIBRARIES AND COMMUNITY CENTRES

<b>1.</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>
1.1	<p>1) For the committee to review the responses from the public consultation on libraries and community centres.</p> <p>2) For the committee to review the proposed approach to supporting community centres in the future, to secure a sustainable network of effective and efficient centres.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>
2.1	That Members note this report and comment on it.
<b>3.</b>	<b>LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY</b>
3.1	<p>Culture and leisure contribute to the following priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating opportunities – tackling inequalities;</li> <li>• Creating strong and supportive communities; and</li> <li>• Delivering substantial and truly sustainable growth.</li> </ul>
<b>4.</b>	<b>BACKGROUND</b>
4.1	<p>An eight-week consultation took place between 4 August and 26 September 2014 to understand which libraries and communities centres people use around Peterborough, when and how often they use them and what they use them for. In total, 5,110 responses were received during the consultation period.</p> <p>A weekly email update was sent by Councillor Lucia Serluca, Cabinet Member for City Centre Management, Culture and Tourism, to all 57 councillors asking them to encourage residents in their ward to complete the consultation questionnaire. In addition, Councillor Serluca and council officers attended a number of meetings to talk about the consultation including Peterborough Youth Council (16 Sept), Parish Council Liaison Group (24 Sept) and Community Action Peterborough (26 Sept).</p> <p>The council also consulted with all parish councils and clerks, registered community and resident groups, faith and community groups, voluntary sector partners such as the disability forum, Age UK and Peterborough Citizens' Advice Bureau and MPs.</p> <p>In addition, the council met with the management committees of the community centres to gather information about what the centres are used for, how they are managed, which sections of the community use them and when they have activities available. In total, 91% of the community</p>

	centres participated in the fact finding exercise.
<b>5.</b>	<b>LIBRARIES</b>
5.1	<p>Libraries are a statutory service under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 which requires the council as the library authority to provide a <b>comprehensive and efficient library service</b>. We are required to consult on any changes recommended for service delivery and it is essential that the public are consulted before any service changes are adopted.</p> <p>The way customers use the library service is changing. Technology means that customers are doing a lot more things for themselves. According to management information held by Vivacity, 90% of book loans in Peterborough’s libraries are now done through self-service kiosks. 51% of library members currently borrow books on a regular basis and 49% of members are using the libraries for a range of other activities. Staff now spend more time supporting customers to use computers, or supporting groups meeting in libraries, than they do dealing with ‘traditional’ library enquiries. The challenge the library service faces is how to provide an excellent, accessible, modern library service, with declining resources.</p> <p>The Peterborough library service currently operates through 10 fixed buildings, a mobile library and an at-home service run by a team of volunteers who take books to those with mobility problems. In the city centre, Central Library is open 40 hours per week. Bretton, Werrington, Orton and Dogsthorpe are open 29 hours a week. Eye, Stanground, Thorney and Woodston are open 21 hours per week. The new Hampton library is open for 75 hours a week (21 hours with Library staff and 54 hours through self-service).</p> <p>The mobile library makes 103 stops across Peterborough, covering villages out as far as Burghley House. It also supports nine ‘micro-libraries’ in a variety of places, from the Stagecoach bus garage to the Perkins’ canteen. Libraries offer a range of services including books, newspapers and magazines; DVDs; free access to the internet via public computers and events and activities for children, families and adults. A request service is also offered for any book that is either still in print or likely to be held in a library in England.</p> <p>In addition to the buildings-based and home delivery services, there is also 24/7 access to online digital services such as e-books, e-audio and information databases.</p>
5.2	<b>LIBRARIES – FINDINGS FROM THE CONSULTATION</b>
	<p>The consultation ran for 8 weeks was available online via both the city council and Vivacity websites. Paper copies were also available from the Town Hall and Bayard Place receptions and every library and community centre. A large amount of work was undertaken to reach a wide audience so that we could consider the views of as many residents as possible.</p> <p>All 20,000 library card users who Vivacity hold email addresses for were sent an email about the consultation on two separate occasions. In addition, all 1,500 members of the Citizens’ Panel were asked to complete the questionnaire and an email was sent to the head teachers of all schools in the city to cascade throughout their schools.</p> <p>In total, 5,110 responses were received to the consultation (the highest response rate to a consultation exercise received in recent years).</p> <p>The full results of the consultation are attached at annex A &amp; B.</p> <p>The question ‘what is most important to you about a library service?’ received three strikingly significant responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The books on the shelves (87.2% said extremely important)</li> <li>• The location (70.4% said extremely important) and</li> <li>• Access to information (55.6% said extremely important)</li> </ul>

The consultation has shown that libraries are an overwhelmingly a local service, with 75% of library users travelling less than 2 miles to use a library, and 43% of library users walking to the library (rising to 90% for the users of Eye and Thorney library).

The public were also asked what factors would encourage more use of the library service, with accessing the library building outside normal hours receiving the highest response: 35.4% of respondents said this would be extremely important and 39.1% said it was quite important.

### 5.3 THE COST OF THE LIBRARY SERVICE

The council is reviewing how it delivers every aspect of its business – both statutory and discretionary services – in the lead-up to agreeing a budget for 2015/16. This is against the backdrop of significant reductions in funding from Central Government, meaning the Council needs to secure savings totalling £22 million.

The library service as managed by Vivacity cost **£1,518,549** to deliver<sup>1</sup>. This is made up of:

	Cost
People	-£1,013,526
Materials / book fund	-£271,218
Buildings	-£233,805
Total	-£1,518,549

### 5.3 LIBRARIES – NEXT STEPS

Given what we now know about how people use libraries, both nationally and locally, and the costs that are associated with libraries (as detailed above) we will explore how we can design different delivery models for libraries that would secure a financially sustainable offer, meet the needs of the public and fulfil the council's obligation under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964.

We will take into account the responses to the consultation as we explore:

- How technology can support extended access to libraries outside normal hours;
- Whether other services can be delivered from libraries to further improve access to information;
- Whether the current libraries are in the right locations to provide a comprehensive service.

Advice on the way forward will be presented to Cabinet in the New Year.

Cabinet will be asked to approve the proposed models for the future service delivery of the Peterborough library service and to approve a second public consultation on the way forward.

## 6. COMMUNITY CENTRES

Peterborough currently has 52 community centres, the largest number of community buildings for a City this size in the UK. 33 operate in council-owned or leased premises, and are run by volunteer

<sup>1</sup> Full-year costs for 2013/14

groups.

The following buildings are council owned or leased and have been subject to this review:

	Bedford Hall	Hampton Community Room	Orton Goldhay Community Centre	Stanground Community Centre
	Belsize Community Centre	Hampton Vale Community Centre	Orton Wistow Community Centre	St John's Hall
	Bluebell Community Centre	Herlington Community Centre	Parnwell Community Centre	The Fleet
	Copeland Community Centre	Hodgson Community Centre	Paston & Gunthorpe Community Centre	The Riverside Pavilion
	Dogsthorpe Community Centre	Loxley Community Centre	Pyramid Centre	Walton Community Centre
	East Community Centre	Matley Community Centre	Saxon Community Centre	Werrington Village Centre
	Eye Community Centre	Millennium Centre	South Grove Community Centre	
	Gladstone Park Community Centre	New England Complex	Southfields Community Centre	
	Glington Village Hall	Newborough Village Hall	Stafford Hall	

## 6.1 COMMUNITY CENTRES – FINDINGS FROM THE CONSULTATION

The consultation findings has given the council an evidence base regarding how people use (or would use) these community centres and what they value about them.

The full results of the consultation are attached at annex A & B.

However, unlike the very strong messages that residents have sent in response to the question, 'what is most important to you about a library service?' the same question 'what is most important to you in a community centre?' has elicited a much broader range of views.

Nevertheless the consultation has shown the social value many community centres have as places where a very wide range of activities are accessed and appreciated. Notable findings are listed below:

- Most responders visit their community centre once a week (34.5%).
- The highest type of usage is related to social events (43.8%) followed by community centres as polling stations (36.8%). The lowest specified usage is in respect of commercial hire (3.0%).
- The age group which has used a community centre the most within the last 12 months is the over 65's, with the lowest usage among younger people aged 16 to 24 year olds.

- The majority of those respondents who have used community centres in the last 12 months said that they travel less than one mile to get to their centre.

In parallel with the consultation, analysis of local and national changes in the management and use of community centres has been undertaken, alongside a detailed review of activity in each centre in Peterborough. Visits were conducted with each organisation who run a community centre to collate and gather information on the usage of each centre. This information has been vital to understanding how each centre is used and the opportunities for different delivery models.

It is noted that although the council does collect information regarding community centres, this is the first time the council will have a complete over view of activity and service delivery area.

## 6.2 COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION AUDIT

A comprehensive audit was carried out with 30 of the associations who run a council owned or leased community centre building. The audit reviewed the association's governance arrangements, utility costs and expenditure, policy audit and an over view of the association's activities, clubs and usage.

The associations greatly differ in usage and governance, there is no consistency in operations or level of dependency upon the council. However, it is noted that all associations visited do provide activities and/or services that have positive social impact.

For the purpose of this report a summary of activities has been produced and categorised as below:

Activity Theme	No. of groups/clubs
Health and Wellbeing	49
Sports	48
Under 5's & youth groups	39
Special Interest groups	33
Education	26
Over 55 clubs	21
Leisure actives (games)	20
Governance	14
Church groups	12
Disability groups	3

Health & Wellbeing and Sports activities (including dance) have the largest number of different groups and clubs.

## 6.3 COST OF COMMUNITY CENTRES

The community centres listed in the table above in section 6 are all either owned or leased by the council and managed by community volunteers who are members of a Community Association. The Council does not provide a staffing resource to any of the community centres. It does, however, support the running of some of the community centres through a combination of contributions towards:

- Rent or lease costs

- Utilities and insurance
- Buildings maintenance and repairs

The table below summarises Council expenditure to support community centres in 2013/14.

Theme	Total cost of service
Rent or lease	-£16,029
Utilities	-£3,035
Insurance	-£15,843
Maintenance	-£95,264
Total	-£130,171

#### 6.4 COMMUNITY CENTRES NEXT STEPS

Having reviewed what people have said about how they use community centres, and having looked in some detail at the buildings themselves, we would like Cabinet to approve the development by officers of a new delivery model for community centres:

The starting point, which we will test for each centre, is that:

- Some centres could run effectively now as community-owned/managed resources without the need for continuing PCC involvement;
- Some centres are used by groups that lack either/both the capacity/capability to take on the responsibility for the buildings – but a third party could broker the arrangements on their behalf, through a Trust;
- Some centres may not have a viable long-term future.

The proposed approach (see the flowchart at annex C) will ensure that over the next 18 months the Council secures a sustainable set of arrangements that meet our commitment to localism and are financially viable.

#### 6.5 COMMUNITY CENTRES - RISK AND ISSUES

All of the centres currently supported by the council are valued by the people who use them, even if there is limited use. Any closures that might make economic sense would need to be handled sensitively and tested also against any impact in terms of social value.

There is no immediate parallel pressure to resolve the future of community centres as with libraries and we are suggesting taking a slightly slower approach to this, with a view to having phases one and two of the Community Centre delivery model completed for March 2016.

#### 7. QUESTIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE

**Would the Committee like to make any comments and/or recommendations in respect of:**

- The outcomes of the consultation on the use of libraries and community centres;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new model for community centres; and</li> <li>• Any comments or observations to be presented to Cabinet?</li> </ul>
<b>8.</b>	<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
8.1	As budgets become more constrained, the Council will need to ensure the very best possible return on any continuing investment in services. Through working in partnership with other organisations and taking into account the results from the public consultation on libraries and community centres, the Council will be able to deliver the outlined priorities without increasing resources.
<b>9.</b>	<b>CONSULTATION</b>
9.1	This report has been developed with the Cabinet Member for City Centre Management, Culture and Tourism and the Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment Capita. The report has been discussed with a wide range of stakeholders, including Vivacity Trustees and officers, community associations, voluntary groups and individuals from across the City.
<b>10.</b>	<b>NEXT STEPS</b>
10.1	To incorporate the comments made by the Committee into the final document and share with partners and Cabinet on the 24 <sup>th</sup> November 2014.
<b>11.</b>	<b>BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS.</b>
11.1	Existing Council strategies, the Funding and Management Agreement dated 1 May 2010 between the Council and Vivacity, and published documents by the Arts Council and Cities outlook 2014.
<b>12.</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
12.1	<p>There are three appendices to this report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annex A – Responses to the questionnaire</li> <li>• Appendix B – Detailed analysis of the responses to the questionnaire</li> <li>• Appendix C - Community Centre review flowchart.</li> </ul>

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