

# Securing a sustainable future for Swindon's Library Services

Cabinet

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016

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Author:	Cabinet Member for Communities Head of Localities, Community Involvement and Volunteering
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

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## 1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 This report proposes a strategy for securing a sustainable future for Swindon's Library Services. It follows previous reports in which Cabinet requested the development of a strategy for the Library Service that would continue to deliver a comprehensive library service. These reports initiated public engagement and in July 2016, formal public consultation on a proposed Libraries strategy and delivery model.
- 1.2 Approval of the recommendations would initiate implementation of the Libraries strategy and delivery model described in this report. This would include working with ward councillors, parishes, partners, community groups and other stakeholders who might provide access to library services.
- 1.3 The proposals contribute towards the Council's Vision for Swindon, and particularly: Priority Two: offer education opportunities that lead to the right skills and right jobs in the right places; Priority Three: ensure clean and safe streets and improve public spaces and local culture; and Priority Four: Help people to help themselves while always protecting the most vulnerable children and adults.

## 2. Recommendations

### Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the findings of the consultation and the Council's response set out in the body of the report and at Appendices 1 and 2.
- 2.2 To note that it is the intent of this strategy for Library services to:
  - 2.2.1 sustain access to library services through the core provision of five public libraries,
  - 2.2.2 maintain professional skills to develop library and information services through use of technology, outreach and learning and
  - 2.2.3 support ward councillors, parishes, partners, and local communities to develop community-led Library services.

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- 2.3 In response to the consultation, to approve the addition of Parks Library to the Council's core Library provision, in order to increase the reach of the service to an area of high service need;
- 2.4 In response to the consultation, to approve the allocation of transitional funding to help secure community-led library services in Wroughton, Covingham and Upper Stratton;
- 2.5 To approve the strategy and delivery model described in the report and attached at Appendix 3 "Libraries Strategy and Delivery Model" and authorise the Head of Localities, Community Involvement and Volunteering to implement the strategy in accordance with the approach and timetable set out in paragraph 3.34 to 3.35.
- 2.6 To authorise the Head of Localities, Community Involvement and Volunteering, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities, to continue to engage ward councillors, parishes, partners, and stakeholders to develop further community-led Library services, and approve the basis on which the transitional funding of £500k is allocated to support the development of these local arrangements as set out in Appendix 4;
- 2.7 To authorise the Head of Localities, Community Involvement and Volunteering in consultation with the Interim Corporate Director, Resources and the Cabinet Member for Communities to investigate the feasibility of establishing alternative models for the delivery of Library services – including trust and mutual models - and make appropriate recommendations to Cabinet in February 2017; and
- 2.8 To authorise the Head of Localities, Community Involvement, and Volunteering, in consultation with the Head of Libraries, to commence restructuring of the Libraries workforce, subject to consultation.

## **3. Detail**

### Background

- 3.1 At its meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016, Cabinet considered a report that set out the demographic and financial context for the future of Swindon's Cultural Assets, Libraries and Community Services (Cabinet Minute 58, 2015/16 refers). That report described the context affecting the future of Swindon's Libraries, including a detailed needs assessment, the financial context that the service is operating in, and an emerging model for the service that was approved as the basis of public engagement.
- 3.2 Following consideration of the results of the public engagement, at its meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> July 2017 Cabinet approved a revised strategy and delivery model for public consultation (Cabinet Minute 25, 2016/17 refers).
- 3.3 This report builds on that work, and sets out the findings arising from the public consultation that took place between 1<sup>st</sup> August and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016. This

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report also describes a strategy that secures a sustainable delivery model for Library services in the context of the Council's Vision, Priorities and Pledges and its medium term financial position.

## Findings from Public Consultation

- 3.4 To inform the development of the Council's Libraries Strategy, public consultation took place between 1<sup>st</sup> August and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016. The process followed is set out at Appendix 1 with a data analysis report at Appendix 2.
- 3.5 A total of 1,632 responses have been submitted, including a number of separate written submissions. Almost all responses were from library users (of a total number of active borrowers of 36,306), and most were local residents. In addition there are also a number of responses from other groups and organisations.
- 3.6 As with the previous public engagement, it is clear from the consultation feedback that respondents have taken time and trouble to provide considered and thoughtful responses. Where possible, these have been reflected in the development of the strategy and delivery model described in this report.

## Key findings and the Council's response:

Key Findings	The Council's response
Consultation responses show a concentration from the Wroughton area, the south of the urban area, as well as from Highworth. There is also a significant interest from users of Park and Covingham libraries.	This report recommends the inclusion of Parks Library in the core provision of public libraries. In addition, the Libraries strategy includes the continuation and development of outreach services that will provide targeted promotion of literacy and learning in communities where Library services are needed, but library usage is low. This report also seeks approval for the allocation of transitional funding to help secure community-led library services in Wroughton, Covingham and Upper Stratton, and the Council is keen to work with other communities who wish to sustain library services in their local areas.
There was widespread disappointment at the loss of local services and the anticipation of	The Council's impact assessment has included detailed consideration of the accessibility of library services, based

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reduced accessibility to the service that remains as four out of five respondents choose a library close to home as their first choice. There are concerns about the distance and travel implications of the reduced number of library outlets. This is thought likely to reduce take-up of the service	on service data and insight gained from the public consultation. As well as the addition of Parks Library to the core provision, and support to community-led provision, as measures to ensure opportunities for continued access, the report sets out the range of measures the Council will take to ensure services remain as accessible as possible.
A quarter of people say the proposed changes will make no difference to their use of the library service, one in seven says they will change libraries (with Central the most likely choice), one in five intends to stop using the service if the changes go ahead. A third of all respondents don't know what course of action they will take. Saturday mornings are the most popular time respondents say they will use core libraries, following by weekday mornings and afternoons.	Alongside Library service data, this consultation feedback will inform the opening hours of the core Libraries as the strategy is implemented.
One in seven respondents say they are likely to use the proposed online reservation service, and a third are willing to consider occasional use; two in five library users say they will not use this service.	A paid for reservation and delivery service will be implemented as part of the Libraries strategy and is designed to complement the provision of physical libraries, and to support specialist access to books and information.
There is a strong concern over the loss of staff, both for their knowledge and expertise but also because of their friendliness and for the support they provide. A large number of respondents believe the proposal places excessive reliance on volunteers, there was doubt over the capacity of volunteers to handle the management, financial and legal obligations and responsibilities associated with running a library. A	The strategy maintains professional library services and staffing levels proportionate to the number of libraries included in the core provision. Regarding volunteers, there are examples nationally, including in neighbouring Wiltshire, of community-led library services being successfully delivered with volunteers. In addition, the Swindon library service is currently supported by committed and capable voluntary staff. From the

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number of people point out that voluntary effort is more likely to be forthcoming in areas of relative affluence. There is limited interest in becoming part of a group to establish community-based library services; a quarter of respondents express a degree of interest. There is a similar level of interest in volunteering to help in a library.	consultation, around 400 individuals expressed a degree of interest in contributing to a group to establish community-led services, or to volunteer in a library.
Many respondents explicitly say they see no advantages in this proposal. Where advantages are identified, respondents see primarily the cost savings to the Council, along with the possible advantage of a more focussed service. Most respondents think the proposal is likely to be detrimental to children and families, to the elderly, to those less mobile, and to those less well off. Many point out that a significantly disadvantaged area in East Swindon will be left unserved.	<p>The Council has undertaken a detailed impact assessment that describes the groups that may be adversely impacted by the proposed strategy, the work it has done to engage those groups, and the steps it will take to mitigate that impact.</p> <p>The addition of Parks Library to the core provision will help address the concerns expressed regarding East Swindon.</p>
There is also strong scepticism over reliance on technology, and frequent reference to the regular failure of existing technology. Many respondents express concern over safety and security in unstaffed libraries, or libraries staffed by volunteers.	The Council is keen to ensure its Library services are enabled by effective technology. Service and IT teams are working hard to ensure reliability of existing technology, and that new technology to support access to services beyond staffed hours works effectively. The Council is learning from examples elsewhere as well as working with potential suppliers to ensure appropriate policies and safety considerations are met. Our implementation planning includes risk assessment, training and continued engagement with library users to ensure the practicality of these plans.
There are concerns over the funding of community-based libraries. Some	The financial challenges facing the Council are well documented, and the

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see the transitional funding as inadequate, others as unlikely to be replaced once it runs out, or dependent on the ability and willingness of parishes to make up the cost of keeping libraries operating. There is a prominent view that the Council should seek an alternative solution through raising Council Tax to cover the shortfall.	level of funding set out in the Cabinet reports of December 2015 and February 2016 established a level of funding for Library services that could be afforded to 2020, in the context of Council finances overall. The strategy for the service and additions recommended in this report secure the best outcomes within the resources available.
A significant number of people urge the Council to consider, or to adopt, the staff-led proposal for a trust model.	As reported in the July Cabinet report, there is much to recommend in trust and mutual models, but these would not in themselves deliver the changes to the service required to meet the scale and pace of savings required. This report brings forward work to examine the feasibility of alternative models of delivery, which will be reported back to Cabinet in February 2017.
Some respondents ask the Council to look at delivery models being deployed elsewhere. A service merger with Wiltshire, or a stock-sharing arrangement with another service, are suggested as possible solutions.	The Council continues to review the financial plans of other Library authorities and has found it difficult to draw comparisons – the Council's funding of Libraries has been planned over a four-year period, whilst many other authorities publically budget on an annual basis. As reported in the July Cabinet report, shared services with other library authorities around stock and IT already take place, and will continue to be explored over the coming years.
Several respondents make specific requests for their local library to be retained. The libraries at Park and Wroughton are those most frequently identified but are by no means the only ones. A significant number of people raise concerns over the future of the mobile and deposit collections	In light of consultation feedback, the Council has reviewed in detail its strategy to identify ways to further reduce costs or increase income targets to enable more libraries to be added to core provision, or to redistribute hours across its core provision. Central Library currently



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services. Concern over reduced hours leads many to suggest that the limited hours available be redistributed to enable the non-central libraries to open for longer.	meets a third of all current Libraries visits, and elsewhere in the consultation is identified as the natural alternative to their local Library by users. To further reduce the core hours at Central would jeopardise its capacity to meet anticipated demand. This report recommends the addition of Parks Library to the core provision, and the allocation of funding to support the development of community-led library services in Wroughton. Alternatives to mobile and deposit collection services are described elsewhere in this report.
Some respondents raised concern about the impact of the loss of the mobile library service.	Evidence shows take up of the mobile service is low (0.7% of current library visits) in comparison with the costs of the mobile service. Consultation with mobile library users identified that some users would be able to access other libraries in the core provision. All parish councils were invited to consultation specifically on this issue and those in attendance acknowledged its limited use. Measures relating to the promotion of the Home Library Service, the reserved items delivery service and on-line services are intended to enable access to library stock throughout the Borough. In addition transitional funding could support communities wishing to establish collection points or small stock collections. During transition the service will work with users of the mobile service to promote alternative ways of accessing library.

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## Staff submission

- 3.7 As part of the consultation, a submission was made by Libraries staff that proposed a five Library core provision, additional staffed hours and the establishment of a trust model to deliver Library services. Discussions have taken place between the Cabinet Member for Communities, senior officers and staff representatives to explore the staff proposals. Elements of those proposals have been reflected in this report namely the inclusion of Parks Library in the core provision, more flexibility in how business rate costs for the service are met, and bringing forward work to examine the feasibility of a trust model for delivery of the service. Accepting the staff proposals in their entirety would be unaffordable overall.

## Save Swindon's Libraries

- 3.8 A detailed consultation submission was made by Save Swindon's Libraries in addition to 204 printed postcards sent to the Cabinet Member. This raised a number of concerns and objections, with specific emphasis on the impacts of the scale and pace of financial reductions proposed by the Council to statutory requirements for Library services, to other aspects of public policy, to equality and diversity, and to residents the group identified as being unable to access Library services in future. The group also raised a concern that alternatives to the proposed strategy had not been considered and/or presented, and the submission recommended that the Council make a smaller financial reduction to the service, consider alternatives to its proposals, and consider a trust model to run the services, supported by a Friends of Swindon's Libraries charity.
- 3.9 For reasons specified in previous Cabinet reports, the scale of the financial challenge affecting Council budgets overall mean that there is no scope to lessen the financial reductions facing the Library service. The scale and pace of those reductions also limit the viability of alternative approaches that could be meaningfully consulted upon. The Cabinet report of 13 July 2016 described alternative approaches that have been considered and why they could not progress.
- 3.10 As with the staff submission, some elements of the Save Swindon's Libraries proposals have been reflected in the Libraries model recommended in this report, namely the inclusion of Parks Library in the core provision, more flexibility in how business rate costs for the service are met, and bringing forward the feasibility work regarding a trust model for delivery of the service. The Council would welcome an ongoing dialogue with Save Swindon's Libraries regarding the possible establishment of a "Friends of Swindon's Libraries" charity.

## Other submissions

- 3.11 In addition to the public responses submissions described above, submissions were also received from ward councillors, Parish Council's, primary school



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headteachers, UNISON and a petition received from Parks and East Walcot Community Forum. These raised a variety of issues that have been considered in arriving at the recommendations in this report.

## Member Task Group

- 3.12 At its meeting of 28 September 2016, the Council's Streetsmart, Highways and Communities Overview and Scrutiny committee approved the formation of a Task Group to review possible savings to the current Libraries budget. The Libraries Task Group has met on three occasions, and at its last meeting of 17 November 2016 approved recommendations, that the parent committee considered on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2016.
- 3.13 The Cabinet Member for Communities is grateful to the Task Group for its work in reviewing the Libraries finances. The proposed strategy has incorporated the Task Group's recommendations subject to any further comments by the Streetsmart, Highways and Communities Overview and Scrutiny committee.

## Libraries Strategy and Delivery Model

- 3.14 As reported to Cabinet in July 2016, the Library Service strategy is to build communities through literacy and learning. By 2020, the service aims to be recognised nationally for the quality of its services, innovation in delivery, cost effectiveness and the outcomes it achieves for early years, for adult learners, for active citizens and for active ageing.
- 3.15 Reflecting the public consultation, and the feedback of the Member Task Group, the proposed strategy would be delivered through a core provision comprising:
- 3.15.1 A network of five core Libraries of Central, North Swindon, West Swindon, Highworth and Parks supported by investment in technology that would allow access to library buildings beyond staffed hours. Staffed hours will change to 47.5hrs per week in Central, and to 15hrs per week to be available at North, West, Highworth and Parks Libraries.
  - 3.15.2 Professional Library services delivered by qualified Librarians and trained Library staff including service development, learning and outreach, local studies, information and digital literacy, stock management and volunteer co-ordination.
  - 3.15.3 Support ward councillors to develop parish, school, or community-led local Library services, including a menu of optional free and paid-for services.
- 3.16 The strategy and delivery model is founded on a principle of partnership in the design and delivery of Library services, and to secure their ongoing sustainability. The Council would fund expert, professional and innovative Library services, supported by local partnerships and income generation that help meet the costs

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of the service. This builds on the service's successful track record of partnerships, for example with the Skills and Employment team to deliver adult learning, with Create Studios around joint working and funding bids, with the Arts Council on programmes like Artswords, with Public Health around books on prescription and wellbeing zones, as well as locally based projects with Friends of groups.

## Core Provision

- 3.17 In developing this core provision, the Council has sought to balance competing criteria of (i) service reach and accessibility (ii) community need and (iii) affordability. The proposed core network of Libraries meet 80% of current visits, and mean that 84% of current Library users and 91% of Swindon's households are within 2 miles of a Library.
- 3.18 Following the Cabinet's recommendations of 13 July 2016, work has been undertaken to commence the procurement of technology that enables Libraries to be accessible to the public beyond their staffed hours. The procurement process is underway, and the timetable will enable that technology to be implemented in line with the transition to the new core model.

## Volunteering approach

- 3.19 The Council's provision would include dedicated resources to support the expansion of volunteering including dedicated volunteer roles in Libraries. Volunteer roles will be defined alongside the new staffing model, with recruitment and training and timed to support the implementation of the Libraries strategy.

## Outreach, Learning, IT & Digital Services

- 3.20 As stated in the July report, analysis of current usage also shows that current Library provision has low impact on those communities in Swindon that have the highest indices of deprivation. With the exception of Parks, neighbourhood Libraries in those areas only attract a small percentage of current visits. Whilst visitor numbers are low, it is also recognised that the services delivered from these Libraries are highly valued by the relatively few numbers of people who rely on them.
- 3.21 As a consequence, as part of the Council's future core provision, the strategy proposes that Libraries outreach and learning services are repurposed to deliver targeted literacy and learning programmes – designed in partnership with communities and partners - that meet local need and achieve measurable literacy and learning outcomes. The Libraries team are working with colleagues from the Council's Skills and Employment team to extend and grow the adult learning offer around digital literacy and skills.

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- 3.22 The Libraries team are also working with the Council's IT and Customer Services teams to explore and scope out new approaches to community IT from August 2017, should IT services currently provided through the non-core Libraries not be provided through community-led services. This work is starting with detailed analysis of current IT usage and will continue as part of service development. Current digital and online library services would continue with access to e-books, e-audio, e-magazines available to all library members and available from any location, at home or in a library. There is also access to a range of digital online resources. These are all available 24/7.

## Home Library Services

- 3.23 Under this strategy, the Home Library Service will continue to support residents with limited mobility. The Libraries team are working with RVS to promote the Home Library Service offer to those who may be affected by changes to the Mobile Library and Deposit Collection arrangements and unable to access libraries. This includes dialogue with RVS to ensure arrangements support volunteers to collect and deliver books whilst current Library settings are subject to change.

## Reservation services

- 3.24 The service will be implementing a paid for reservation service from 1 April 2017. Charges of the order of £1.00 per item if collected from a Library, plus a flat rate charge of £1 per delivery if reserved items are delivered to community collection point are being considered. Users with housebound Library Cards tickets will be exempt from these charges.

## Readers groups

- 3.25 After consultation with readers groups there will be an annual fee of £10 per member introduced, to cover the cost of buying in and preparing collections of books for readers groups.

## Trust Models

- 3.26 The Council has noted several positive examples of mutual and trusts across the country, and is keen to investigate the service and organisational advantages of that work. Working with DCMS, and other partners, and overseen by the Member Libraries Task Group, officers will assess the feasibility of establishing a form of trust model for Swindon's Libraries and report back to Cabinet at its next meeting of February 2017.

## Community Library services

- 3.27 The Council is committed to enabling parishes, schools, and community-led provision to be self-managed, resourced and operated by local communities, partners and volunteers, as part of co-located offers in public and community

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buildings. Alongside the Council's core provision, ward councillors, communities, and local groups will be encouraged and supported to maintain and develop community-led library services.

- 3.28 Appendix 3 sets out the range of measures and resources the Council would use to support Members and community organisations who wish to sustain local library services in their communities including the provision of advice, guidance, facilitation support and transitional funding that enables community-led provision to be established.
- 3.29 Wroughton Library is used by residents from Wroughton, the surrounding villages and more isolated rural communities, and the Council has looked closely at how the service can continue to be accessible to those communities. Recognising that resource constraints do not allow for Wroughton library to be included in core provision, and the proactive work of the three local Borough councillors, Wroughton Parish Council and the Wroughton Library working group, it is recommended that transitional funding be allocated to help establish continued local library services. Access to that funding will be subject to a successful community bid in accordance with criteria described in appendix 4. If achieved, this will provide a sustainable library service, albeit that Wroughton library will need be managed and funded by the community.
- 3.30 To further improve access to Library services across the Borough, and recognising the partnership that is developing between the Friends of Covingham Library, the local parish councils, the Diocese and ward members, it is recommended that transitional funding be allocated to help secure continued library services in Covingham over the next five years. Access to that funding will be subject to a successful community bid in accordance with the criteria described in appendix 4.
- 3.31 A similar partnership has formed in Upper Stratton, and it is recommended that transitional funding be allocated to help secure library services in that area over the next five years. Again, access to that funding will be subject to a successful community bid in accordance with the criteria described in appendix 4
- 3.32 The Council is also actively working with Liden, Walcot and other community groups to develop further community-led library services. To take these and other proposals forward, community organisations will be invited to participate in a formal bid process. The criteria for that have been reviewed by the Member Task Group, and will be authorised by the Cabinet Member for Communities. The process will ask groups to demonstrate how their proposal contributes to literacy and learning outcomes, its financial viability, the capacity to deliver, and the amount of transitional funding requested. Authority to approve community bids will be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Communities under the recommendations of this report.

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## Implementation

3.33 It is proposed that implementation take place as follows:

Stage 1 – 2017/18

3.34 Following feedback from community partners and detailed assessment of operational implications:

3.34.1 All current Libraries, including the remaining ten non-core libraries, will move to reduced hours with effect from 5 April 2017. Extended opening arrangements will be implemented in core Libraries from that date, subject to installation. Where partners and communities wish to contribute funding that helps enhance the Council's core provision, the Council would work with those partners to ensure a common implementation timetable.

3.34.2 Following approval of this report, the Council will initiate arrangements set out in appendix 2 to support the development of community-led library services. Key dates will be an Expression of Interest deadline by 31 January 2017, an application deadline of 31 March 2017, with decisions by 30 April 2017

3.34.3 With the exception of Central Library, for those Libraries currently operating in excess of 15 per week, opening hours for non-core libraries will be reduced to 15 per week from 1 April 2017. This will enable the libraries to remain funded until 31 August 2017, allowing a longer lead-in time for the development of community proposals. Given the pressing need to reduce costs, the mobile library services and deposit collections will cease from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. It is envisaged that funded services (stock, staffing, IT, building costs) will be withdrawn from non-core Libraries with effect from 31 August 2017. Information and support will be provided throughout the transition to users of these services to enable them to access library services in alternative ways.

3.34.4 The transitional funding of £500k approved in July 2016 remains in place to support this work, which may be used to support the one-off costs of establishing local solutions, for example, to meet equipment costs, IT investment, the temporary funding of facilities whilst local funding arrangements are established, and the training and development of local organisations and volunteers.

3.34.5 Establish feasibility of alternative models of service delivery, including trust and mutual models, reporting back to Cabinet in February 2017.

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Stage 2 – 2017-2020

- 3.35 For the Council's core provision, implementation of appropriate governance models, additional shared services, service efficiencies and the generation of additional income streams to further reduce costs to ensure services are delivered within the Council's 2020 affordability limit of £1.1m.

## 4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Alternative options, including those arising from the consultation, have been considered. The Council has reflected consultation feedback in the strategy described in the report.
- 4.2 The Council could choose not to adopt this strategy. However, this would then undermine any changes to the current service that might be proposed, including those that might sustain access to Library services.
- 4.3 Public consultation generated a number of responses calling for no change to current Library services. This is not an option given the financial pressures facing the Council and in any event, the current network risks being unsustainable as Library services are spread too thin to ensure reliable access and quality.
- 4.4 A range of different options for the network have been considered. For example, provision at Central Library or the other larger libraries could be further reduced to enable additional resources to be made available to smaller libraries. From data relating to how users access the service, it is clear that this would not maximise service reach and accessibility for the significant majority of current users and residents overall.
- 4.5 Consideration has also been given to other approaches for meeting the Council's criteria of affordability. Given the scale and pace required for cost savings to be made, this cannot be achieved without reducing staffed hours, and as a consequence, reducing the size of the Library network.
- 4.6 Alternative governance and delivery models have been assessed. The Council already works collaboratively with other authorities on its IT systems and stock purchasing and whilst the service will continue to achieve efficiency savings in these areas, in themselves, these are not sufficient to generate the required financial savings.
- 4.7 Representations have been made through the consultation to move Swindon's Libraries into a form of Trust. There are many reasons to consider a Trust model, and other Library Authorities have judged this to be appropriate to their circumstances. The priority focus in Swindon remains to successfully establish and implement the Council's core provision and work to support communities who wish to develop viable and sustainable community-led library services. In



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the short term, a Trust model in itself will have limited impact on Council budgets overall. However, feasibility work on alternative models of delivery – including trust and mutual models – has been brought forward, with recommendations brought back to Cabinet in February 2017.

- 4.8 New forms of income generation have also been considered. Whilst there are opportunities to create revenue through commercial approaches to use of space, and potentially through events and exhibitions, from experience nationally it is unlikely that any one idea will bring substantial income on its own. Rather a wider commercial strategy for the service is being developed across the range of Library services, to meet the ambition for the service to operate within the overall affordability limit of £1.1m.

## 5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

### Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The table below sets out the financial framework for the funding of the Council's core provision and transitional funding.

Library (hours it will be staffed)	Buildings	Stock, materials & IT	Staff	Income	Total
Central (47.5 hrs)	88	136	235	(77)	382
West (15 hrs)	44	27	42	(16)	97
Highworth (15 hrs)	20	25	32	(14)	63
North (15 hrs)	37	38	42	(54)	63
Parks (15 hrs)	9	23	43	(7)	68
Professional Library Services		126	416		542
<i>Total</i>	<i>198</i>	<i>375</i>	<i>810</i>	<i>(168)</i>	<i>1215</i>
	New income to be secured through additional income, shared services, further service efficiencies, and alternative models of delivery by March 2020				(115)
					1100
Business rates					292
<i>Transitional funding of £500k to support implementation of the delivery model</i>					

- 5.2 This financial framework has been revised since the Cabinet report of 13 July to include Parks Library in the Council's core provision. This is affordable within the £1.1m financial target for the service if £115k additional income and/or cost reduction, over and above current income is secured by 2020. This will be achieved through generating additional income, development of shared services, further service efficiencies and consideration of alternative models of delivery - including trust and mutual approaches.

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- 5.3 Existing income levels have been projected at current levels. At this stage, it is unclear what the effect of reduced staffed hours will have on this rate of income. A risk assessment of current and future income streams has been undertaken and the assumptions identified in the financial model are assessed as a medium level of risk. This will be monitored as the new model is implemented.
- 5.4 The ambition remains to get to a position by 2020 where the costs of the service are absorbed within the overall affordability limit of £1.1m, either through the establishment of alternative models of delivery as referenced in paragraph 5.2 above, or through additional income generation. The feasibility of achieving this will be kept under review as part of the Council's medium term resource planning process.

## Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.5 All legal and human rights considerations have been taken fully into account in compiling this report. It is considered that the recommendations of this report are compatible with Convention rights.
- 5.6 Swindon Borough Council has a duty as a Library Authority under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 "to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons' in the area that want to make use of it (section 7), taking into account local needs and within available resources.

## All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.7 As a consequence of this report, there will be substantial change in the Libraries workforce. This will include reductions in the number of posts in the service overall, as well as changing roles that will continue to best deliver the new strategy.
- 5.8 Staff and UNISON have been briefed on the potential implications of the Libraries strategy throughout the year, and have been briefed on the contents of this report. Formal consultation regarding the detail of the proposed Libraries structure will commence on 22 December 2017, and continue through to 13 February 2017. Subject to that consultation process, appointments to posts in a new Libraries staffing structure will commence late February 2017, and continue through March in time for the new model to take effect from 5 April 2017.

## Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.9 A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has been undertaken to assess the impact of this Libraries strategy and a number of impacts have been identified. These are assessed in more detail in the DIA. A copy of the DIA can be obtained from the report author.

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- 5.10 Through the consultation process specific targeted discussions were offered to representative bodies of key groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 to understand any potential adverse impacts and to consider what measures could be considered to mitigate these impacts. This included schools, pre-schools, older people's groups and various groups or individuals with characteristics of an equality protected group including; Sexual orientation, Gender identity, Race / Nationality, Older people, Religion and Disability.
- 5.11 The development of the libraries strategy has been presented to four meetings of the Swindon Borough Council Equalities Advisory Forum (EAF). This has provided valued feedback and scrutiny of the strategy development from an equality specific perspective. Prior to engagement and consultation, EAF advised on access to and engagement with groups with protected equality characteristics and helped with evaluating feedback and identifying mitigations that are set out in the DIA.
- 5.12 Users of the library service could be affected by the proposed strategy to varying degrees. The degree of impact and disadvantage would depend on a range of factors including proximity to and ability to travel to a core library, requirement for staff assistance to access different facilities and services such as books and resources, ability to access alternative IT infrastructure, and skills to use IT infrastructure without staff support, and individual circumstances
- 5.13 Particular impacts are likely for older people, children and young people, disabled users including physical disability, mental ill-health, learning disability and visual impairment. There are also likely to be impacts to users on the basis of sex and race. Other groups have been identified who may be particularly affected by the proposed strategy include users of a single library site (including the mobile library), those with a low Financial Economic Status, carers those communities who are facing high levels of deprivation in terms of education, skills and learning particularly around IT access.
- 5.14 It is not known which individual users would be affected by the proposed strategy or to what extent. A range of mitigating measures have been identified which can reduce the adverse impacts for groups impacted by the implementation of the strategy. It should be noted that mitigation measures will not eliminate all adverse impacts and the extent of the impact will depend on individual circumstance and ability to respond to the libraries strategy.
- 5.15 Key measures the service will take forward to mitigate potential adverse impact include:
- 5.15.1 Services, stock and materials available in different formats and languages to meet the needs of the whole range of service users, including provision and promotion of specific services, stock and materials for different groups, including specific materials
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- 5.15.2 Access statements for each library – statement to be available in libraries and promoted to non-core library users during transition – including map of accessible travel routes including walking and cycling routes, bus networks, bus maps and stops, signposting to nearest accessible facilities including toilets and parking spaces.
- 5.15.3 Information and support will be provided throughout the transition to users of these non-core services to enable them to access library services in alternative ways.
- 5.15.4 Promoting the Home Library Service to those who are unable to access a core library, including expanding and offering this service to carers
- 5.15.5 Replace the deposit collections in residential homes and sheltered accommodation with a purchasable service or a Home Library Service for users who are unable to access a core Library, providing a more targeted service, responding to those individual users needs
- 5.15.6 Promotion of a range of library services though the SAIL programme (Safe and Independent Living). SAIL workers are from a range of agencies who visit people in their homes e.g. social workers, fire service safety checks. This will enable effective promotion of access to services and facilities, core libraries, the home library service and other social contact for older people.
- 5.15.7 SBC is in the process of procuring technology to enable access outside of staffed hours. Details of the technology and the policies and procedures to support its use are unknown at this stage, but it is likely that, this could have particular impacts for: children, young people and students under a certain age who are unaccompanied will be unable to have access to a library during unstaffed hours; older people who may be more nervous of accessing a building using technology or of using an unstaffed library; disabled or older people who need staff support to access library services and facilities.
- 5.15.8 The extent of these impacts are unknown and will depend on the implementation of the technology enabled access. The Council will develop and implement appropriate policies and procedures to support and enable the most appropriate and inclusive access for library users. This could include for example safe and appropriate health and safety and fire evacuation policies and procedures, and child protection policies, as well as training and support particularly for those who may be less confident using technology enabled access to library buildings.

## Risk Management

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- 5.16 Any risks arising from the recommendations of this report will be managed as part of their implementation.

## **6. Consultees**

- 6.1 The Board Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

## **7. Background Papers**

- 7.1 Libraries Needs Assessment – February 2016  
7.2 Libraries Emerging Model – February 2016  
7.3 Libraries Strategy and Delivery Model – July 2016

## **8. Appendices**

- 8.1 Appendix 1 Consultation Process  
8.2 Appendix 2 Public Consultation Report – Phil Back and Associates  
8.3 Appendix 3 Libraries Vision, Strategy and Delivery Model  
8.4 Appendix 4 Community Libraries – Transitional Funding Bid Process

## **9. Key Decision/Decision in Cabinet Work Programme and Forward Plan**

- 9.1 This is a Key Decision and is included in the Cabinet Work Programme and Forward Plan for Month Year.