



Report sponsor: Deputy Chief Executive and
Strategic Director of Communities and Place
Report authors: Director of Leisure, Culture and
Tourism and Library Service Manager

ITEM 8

Community Managed Library Review Proposals

Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is for Cabinet to consider proposals for an extension to the duration of the current Community Managed Library Management Agreement with Direct, Help and Advice (DHA) and to the associated grant review period.

Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve a 12 month extension to the Community Managed Library Management Agreement with DHA to cover 2022/23.
- 2.2 Should Cabinet agree the first recommendation, officers also propose that Cabinet approve a revised start date for the 2022/23 DHA grant award review of October 2021 and also the use of the CML library reserve until the end of 2022/23.

Reasons

- 3.1 The impacts of Covid-19 have affected a large number of key service providers across the country during 2020/21. DHA have had the delivery of their original model affected by the pandemic and it is therefore equitable, in recognising their endeavour, to give them an extension of time to deliver on the original model. To achieve this, these proposals enable the impacts on DHA to be factored into the current Community Managed Library Management Agreement and grant review process.
- 3.2 The proposals will enable an associated grant review to be completed as previously requested by Cabinet.

Supporting information

- 4.1 In July 2017, the Council approved the implementation of the Library Strategic Review (LSR) outcomes. A key objective of the strategic review was to determine the best way to deliver and maintain a modern, high quality library service for Derby whilst delivering essential budget savings.
- 4.2 The library service was required to make savings totalling £673,000, within the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, which was achieved. The conclusion of the LSR was that the Council should retain five statutory libraries and aim to transfer the remaining ten libraries to a Community Managed Library, (CML) service model.
- 4.3 Following Cabinet approval of this approach, the Council carried out an expression of interest process for the ten CMLs, which was successful in attracting DHA.

- 4.4 The Cabinet report, approved by the Cabinet in 2017, included a grant review to be completed during 2020/21. The scope included a review of the levels of grant, the grant allocation mechanism and the support packages. After the completion of review the intention was to provide the CML delivery partner with a year's notice of the Council's future intentions. A 12 month extension to the current 4 year management agreement enables this to still be achieved.
- 4.5 During 2020/21, Covid-19 has had a significant impact on society including both private and public sector. Libraries in the city have responded by closing services, during three national lockdowns, or by significantly amending the delivery of services. These proposals helped to mitigate the key impacts that Covid-19 has had on DHA's original delivery plans for CML's during 2020/21.
- 4.6 The pandemic has meant that DHA has been able to display a level of creativity, flexibility and collaboration in their approach to service delivery over the last 12 months. This has enabled the community to benefit from the commitment that DHA have demonstrated in delivering some valuable service provision despite the challenges of Covid-19 in 2020/21. Some examples of this are shown below and the response from the community for these types of activities has been very positive. There is also the potential to see more on-line groups developed until customers are able to reconvene in person at the CML's.
- Implementing a Click & Collect service which is available via an online holds system or by contacting the libraries directly.
 - Setting up a number of on-line groups that are streamed through social media platforms such as the very popular Rhyme Time, which is filmed by two volunteers reading stories for the children and then posting onto Facebook.
 - Developing a regular coffee morning group which allows volunteers to interact online with other volunteers.
 - Encouraging retention of volunteers by the DHA team keeping in regular contact with volunteers via Facebook, WhatsApp, email, telephone calls, online events and competitions etc.
 - Working collaboratively and helping support the Community Hub with other key partners.
 - Creating a vision for CML's to become a community hub, to build stronger more resilient communities and to co-produce services that respond to local needs and aspirations will be valuable part to the community recovery of our city. Key work will need to be undertaken to build the community resilience and key partners are in agreement that the role that CML's can play in this is an important one to explore with DHA and the Council.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 DHA have been involved in these proposals, which they are supportive of.

Other options

- 6.1 For Cabinet to determine that the grant review is not required and that less than 12 months' notice will be provided to DHA on the Councils future intentions for the CML library service. The current management agreement with DHA is until March 2022.

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 The current forecasted cost of the 12 month extension to the management agreement is in the region of £200,000 – 240,000. It is anticipated that the existing budget provision will meet the costs.

Legal implications

- 8.1 If the recommendation set out at paragraph 2.1 is not accepted, it will be necessary to negotiate an alternative notice period with DHA to end the current arrangement in 2022. Other than this, the legal implications of these proposals on the management agreement between the Council and DHA have been considered and no significant implications arise. DHA are in mutual agreement with these proposals.

Climate implications

- 9.1 Retaining a network of library sites across the city reduces travel by residents.

Other significant implications

- 10.1 The extension to the management agreement with DHA supports the Our City and Our People themes in the Derby Recovery Plan and helps the CML library service contribute to Community Recovery in our city.

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal	Olu Idowu	23/02/2021
Finance	Amanda Fletcher	25/02/2021
Service Director(s)	Claire Davenport	26/02/2021
Report sponsor	Rachel North	18/02/2021
Other(s)	DLT	18/02/2021

Background papers: