

**Cabinet, 26 June 2018 – Item 5****COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE****Item under consideration: Surrey Performing Arts Library – Update on Development of Options for the Future****Date Considered: 08 February 2018**

1. At its meeting on 08 February 2018 the Communities Select Committee considered a report detailing options for the future of Surrey Performing Arts Library. This was the second time the Select Committee had considered a report on its future having previously reviewed the Service at its meeting on 7 November 2017. At this first meeting, officers were asked to establish a forum with user group representatives to review proposals for achieving the £180,000 saving required from the Surrey Performing Arts Library as outlined in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The Committee further recommended that officers consider other opportunities for reducing the cost of the Surrey Performing Arts Library such as exploring the introduction of a more efficient IT system and reducing the financial burden of the Inter Library Loan System.
2. The report considered by the Communities Select Committee on 08 February 2018 provided Members with an update on progress against recommendations considered at its previous meeting including detail on work undertaken to advance the options available for the future of Surrey Performing Arts Library. The report also contained an additional proposal which suggested that control of the performing arts library be transferred to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation called NewSPAL which had been established by user group representatives.
3. Select Committee Members recognised the challenging financial position that Surrey County Council finds itself in and highlighted the importance of achieving the £180,000 saving required by the MTFP. Members also, however, acknowledged concerns from service users that it was important for the separate music and drama collections to remain together to ensure that Surrey Performing Arts Library retained its distinct identity.
4. The Communities Select Committee had concerns with the business plan which had been put forward by NewSPAL, specifically relating to the subsidies that would be required to support NewSPAL over its first two years of operation while also drawing attention to the risks associated with the failure of NewSPAL to become a financially viable CIO. Members were, however, impressed with the amount of work which user group representatives had undertaken to create another option for the future of Surrey Performing Arts Library and were encouraged by the clear enthusiasm for the service among residents which Members believed would be key in the success of NewSPAL.
5. Members supported Option 1 for the future of Surrey Performing Arts Library whereby the collection would be housed within the existing library network. The Select Committee included a caveat to their support for Option 1 which stated that the entirety of the separate music and drama collections be kept together in a single library. The Select Committee also felt that NewSPAL should be given the chance to develop its business model for running the performing arts library over the next year with a view to taking over the future running of the service within a year if the CIO can demonstrate that its business model is financially viable.

**Recommendations:**

The Communities Select Committee:

- i. recommends that Surrey County Council implements Option 1 while the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) develops its proposals for funding and business model for taking over the running of Surrey Performing Arts Library on the condition that the entirety of the separate music and drama collections are kept together; and
- ii. supports, in principle, NewSPAL taking over the collection provided that the future of the collection is secure for the residents with the CIO.

**Rachael I. Lake**  
**Chairman of the Communities Select Committee**

**RESPONSE:**

I would like to thank the Chairman and Members of the Communities Select Committee for their recommendations on the future of the Surrey Performing Arts Library and for the work they have carried out in the last few months to develop these.

Option 1 in the consultation document was for the relocation of SPAL from Denbies into the mainstream library service and Recommendation 1 of the Cabinet report confirms this arrangement and that the SPAL music and drama collections will be collectively transferred to a single location at Ewell Library as an interim arrangement.

The Cabinet report has recommendations in support of the opportunity for the transfer of responsibility for the delivery of SPAL operations to NewSPAL.

NewSPAL has made great progress in its mission to develop a viable long-term proposition. The trustees have established arrangements for their constitution and governance etc. and they have made good progress in terms of fundraising against their target for set up and transitional costs, possible new premises, mobilising supporters and users as potential volunteers to support their operation, and the general development of their business model.

In accordance with our duty of good governance there are many practical arrangements that, in the interests of ensuring the successful transfer of the undertaking and its long-term sustainability, need to be carefully and thoroughly considered.

Formal agreement will be subject to an assessment of a full and detailed business plan and timeline from NewSPAL which the trustees will now be able to work on and submit in due course.

**Denise Turner-Stewart**  
**Cabinet Member for Communities**