SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

DATE: **25 SEPTEMBER 2018**

REPORT OF: **MRS MARY LEWIS CABINET MEMBER FOR ALL AGE LEARNING**

LEAD OFFICER: **DAVID HILL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CHILDREN FAMILIES AND LEARNING**

SUBJECT: **COMMUNITY PARTNERED LIBRARIES – CHANGES TO SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS**

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

As part of the Libraries Public Value Review in 2011, 10 libraries were identified to become Community Supported Libraries (CPLs). Cabinet agreed a recommendation that the CPLs would have a dedicated support team and they would receive weekly on-site support from this team based on 20% of their current opening hours at the date of transfer.

CPLs have been up and running successfully close to or over 5 years. They have become experienced and there is no longer a need for the 20% weekly presence on site of the CPL support team agreed by Cabinet in 2011 when they were set up.

This report proposes a redesigned support model for CPLs with reduced on-site presence. The support to the CPLs will continue but be delivered differently. All transactional support will come from each CPL's link libraries within the main service and a direct link to the specialised library teams. Increased facilitation of IT access will enable CPLs to undertake more tasks locally. Retention of access to the CPL Support team will continue which will provide supervision, training, support, performance management, escalation of issues where required, and ensure any policy legal or financial issues which arise are correctly dealt with. The team will provide intervention or emergency action and tactical support where needed.

Time released from the support team needs to be redirected to the further development of volunteer roles and increase in volunteer numbers in libraries.

The Cabinet decision needed is to agree the change to the weekly on-site presence by Surrey County Council library staff.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that Cabinet agrees to the introduction of alternative arrangements to provide support to CPLs and that the agreement to provide library team attendance for 20% of CPL opening hours is changed, with the resource being redeployed towards the development of volunteering across the library network.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:

Due to the maturity of the CPLs and level of knowledge and skills which have developed amongst volunteers, advances in digital technology, a well-established working relationship with the Council and a keenness amongst volunteers to expand what they do on-site to support the needs of residents, the library service is proposing changes in the support model.

The library service has consulted with CPLs about these proposed changes and the CPLs are engaged with taking this proposal forward. Their ideas and concerns have been fed into the redesigned support model.

The proposed changes recommend a decrease in the regular presence that CPL Support Team officers provide on site at each CPL from weekly to a monthly visit. Other changes include increased access to the library management system to enable volunteers to provide a fuller service to customers locally without having to contact a member of library staff and direct contact with other parts of the library service and the Council which currently go via the CPL team.

The experience of the CPL Support team in setting up and maintaining support to the CPLs has made them ideally placed to carry out a future programme increasing the amount of volunteering which already adds value to the library service and to build on that to ensure libraries remain vibrant community destinations and meet the needs of residents.

The changes will be phased and completed by April 2019.

DETAILS

Background

1. The CPLs in Surrey are volunteer managed libraries. Some are registered charities, some have more informal arrangements. CPLs have a management committee or steering group which oversees the strategy and running of the library and an operations group that manages day to day matters, supported by between 25 and 70 volunteers. At Warlingham the Parish Council provides funding for two part time members of staff who work alongside volunteers.

2. For each of the CPLs there is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Council and the CPL which defines the respective roles and responsibilities.

3. The Council provides all that is needed apart from staff for the running of the library and advice and assistance from the library service's Community Partnered library team which, when CPLs started, was set up to provide a physical presence at the CPL of 20% of opening hours per week.

4. Since their opening the library's CPL support team have worked closely with the volunteers including the on-site support, training and meetings. Both partners now feel that the extent of the on-site presence can be safely reduced and how support is offered changed while leaving in place sufficient contacts, transactional support and guidance. Giving the CPLs the ability to do more for themselves on-site will make things better for them and by speeding up processes provide improvements to customer service.

5. The library service is also seeking ways to sustain activities which are enjoyed and beneficial to Surrey residents from story times to creative digital sessions and supporting targeted groups, e.g. housebound users. In providing these services it is vital to increase the use of volunteers. The role of the CPL Support team needs to change to release them to work on the development of volunteer roles and the expansion of volunteer-led activities.

CONSULTATION:

6. Consultation meetings were undertaken with all ten Community Partnered Steering Groups (CPLs) in January 2018 and summer 2018. Details of the feedback from the CPLs is included in annex B.

7. The Library Service has shared with CPLs the budget challenges it faces along with proposals for meeting these across the whole service. Consultation involved meeting with all ten Steering groups where some included Lead Volunteers. More operational meetings were also followed up with all Lead Volunteers to register any concerns and share plans for phasing the change in support to them.

8. In January 2018, the library service shared national case studies about how other library authorities run their community partnered/supported library models. It also shared a list of the tasks that the CPL team officers undertake whilst they are at their weekly on-site visit at CPLs. The CPLs were asked for feedback on the types of improvements CPLs thought could be made in the support given to them. The main responses from the steering groups were around what greater access to the Library Management System (the library I.T. system)would provide and a better understanding of the types of additional tasks volunteers may need to take on with the reduced on-site support.

9. Further consultation in July/August 2018 covered these topics further and also the Council's budget situation, the development of the Surrey Vision 2030, the updating of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the role of the CPL support team in the future.

10. The outcomes from consultation have been generally positive.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

11. Through the Library Service working with each CPL the risks associated with the change of support will continue to be assessed and managed for each CPL.

12. If the Library Service continues to provide on site support to the level they do at present, this will not be making an effective use of staff resources and is a financial risk.

13. If the Library Service does not redirect the CPL Support Team to support volunteers in main libraries there will not be sufficient resource to continue to develop volunteering opportunities in libraries.

14. Without the knowledge and experience of the CPL Support team, it will be difficult to introduce more volunteers and retain them in the Council's libraries in sufficient numbers.

15. The Library Service has identified potential reputational and service delivery risks in changing the way in which CPLs are supported. Mitigating action is being taken through consultation with CPLs and careful consideration being given to feedback and concerns raised. Adding in appropriate new processes and support during transition and ongoing may result initially in more training and frequent officer visits during the transition.

16. Some of the changes in support, risks and mitigation include:

Risk	Mitigating Actions
Direct access to property helpline.	Mitigated with phasing and access to CPL support team still in place. Training, processes and service level agreements will be in place which will be agreed as part of the Schedules to the MOU. Managing volunteer expectations through continuous dialogue will be necessary. The CPL Support team will continue to support CPLs to escalate concerns and manage expectations.
Access to more of the library management system (LMS) to enable volunteers to deliver more support to customers directly.	Any risk to personal data is removed by locking down access for volunteers to specific parts of the library management system. The MOU has been revised to show more clearly I.T. and data responsibilities .Training and checking of understanding will continue as part of the role of the CLS Support team. Volunteers will be supported with training, checklists, written policies and procedures to help them to use the IT access correctly. Follow up checks will be undertaken with support put in place. The CPL Support team will constantly be updating and reviewing training needs. IT security is available which has been tested extensively nationally across other library authorities. The type of volunteer access to the LMS which is being extended has been tested in one CPL and Community Links in Surrey for some time.
Link Library support	Link library staff consistently trained to support volunteers including visits and work experience at CPLs. The consistency of support will be measured and CPLs will be engaged for feedback

	which will be shared with staff in link libraries.
Training	Training will continue to be assessed and support will be given to ensure Lead volunteers attend relevant training sessions.

Checks will be put in place to ensure cascaded training is delivered.

Refresher training will continue to be delivered particularly in areas of high risk – e.g. volunteers to continue to be capable in supporting equality. |
| Performance | Quarterly performance management meetings will take place with Steering groups. Any decrease in measurable data (e.g. visits and issues) will be supported with initiatives and activities to meet local needs in conjunction with the Steering group. |
| Link library staff concerns around potential additional workload or working with volunteers. | Link library staff will be given appropriate training and support as well as encouraged to gain experience at their local CPLs working alongside volunteers to build relationships. |

17. Safeguarding risks will be mitigated as now with training and updating

18. In planning these changes, the service sought legal advice which indicated a Cabinet decision would be needed to change the level of on-site support.

Financial and value for money implications

19. Within the proposed changes the revised service offer provides for the CPLs to be supported in a sustainable and cost effective way and allows a proportion of time from the CPL team to be refocused onto developing volunteering within the library service. These changes are within the current agreed budget.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

20. No significant financial issues arise from this report. The proposed changes to the support model for CPLs will allow support to be redirected to the further development of volunteer roles in libraries, with consequent benefits for the Council.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

21. The Council is under a general statutory duty by virtue of Section 7(1) of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 to "provide a comprehensive and

efficient library service for all persons". The CPLs help the Council to fulfil this duty by providing volunteer run libraries.

22. In proposing changes to the operation of the CPLs, in addition to its statutory duty set out above, the Council is subject to the normal public sector requirements for consultation, equities and to deliver best value in the delivery of its functions.

23. In this instance, no public consultation is necessary because the changes proposed are an internal operational change and do not detract from front-line service delivery. Notwithstanding this fact, targeted consultation meetings were undertaken with all ten Community Partnered Library Steering groups and the feedback is included in annex B.

24. The public sector equality duty contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 applies to the decision made by Cabinet in this report. This duty requires Cabinet to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics, foster good relations between such groups, and eliminate any unlawful discrimination. These matters are dealt with in the attached equalities impact assessment (EIA) at Annex C. Cabinet will note that no negative impacts have been identified through the EIA.

25. Should Cabinet approve the recommendation, changes will be required to the Memoranda of Understanding between the Council and the individual CPLs to reflect the proposed support arrangements set out in Annex A. Legal Services will assist the Library Service in reviewing the memoranda and putting the required changes into effect.

Equalities and Diversity- Summary of EIA key impacts and actions

26. An EIA has been carried out and is attached as annex C. The summary of key impacts and actions states:

Information and engagement underpinning equalities analysis

The proposals have been developed and considered by:
- Head of Cultural Services
- Lead Manager for Libraries
- Libraries Senior Management Team
- Community Partnered Library steering groups

27. The service provides opportunities for and receives regular customer feedback on all areas of library service delivery, although there has not been any specific public consultation or engagement carried out with service users as part of the development of the proposals or EIA.

Key Impacts (positive and negative) on people with protected characteristics

Positive impact:

The users of the CPLs will experience access to an improved level of service as the CPLs will be able to exercise greater interrogation of the Library Management System for the benefit of the user.

The CPLs will be empowered through transfer of responsibilities and the need for increasing self-reliance in the management of the library.

There will be an increase in assistance and widening of the volunteer pool which will benefit the volunteers, staff and users of Surrey libraries.

Changes made to the proposal as a result of the EIA
None identified

Key mitigating actions planned to address any outstanding negative impacts
N/A

Potential negative impacts that cannot be mitigated
N/A

Public Health implications

28. Volunteers generally benefit from taking part in volunteering activities. Previous reports into CPLs demonstrate a strong commitment from volunteers to their roles in CPLs alongside benefits to their health and wellbeing.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

29. Once a decision is reached by Cabinet, the Library Service will begin its phasing in of the new support model for CPLs involving training for both CPLs and library staff.

30. The outcome of the cabinet decision will be communicated to all ten CPLs by the Library Service through Steering groups. Staff in libraries will be informed through local staff meetings.

31. If agreed it is planned to have the changes in place by April 2019.

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Consulted:
Steering Groups, Volunteer Leads and Operational volunteer groups in CPLs have all been consulted with regards to the recommendation to change the way in which support will be delivered to CPLs. Staff in the CPL Support Team have also been consulted and they have actively defined how to support volunteers in CPLs.

Annexes:
A - Community Partnered libraries support offer
B - Feedback and Consultation
C - Equalities Impact Assessment

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