

Report to: **Audit, Best Value & Community Services Scrutiny Committee**

Date: **4 September 2012**

By: **Assistant Chief Executive**

Title of report: **Library and Information Service Review: Results of fact finding**

Purpose of report: **To provide the Committee with headline statistics of the research undertaken as part of the Library and Information Service review**

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**RECOMMENDATION: The Committee is recommended to consider the headline statistics of the Library and Information Service review and comment on areas they would like to see investigated further at the consultation stage.**

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## **1. Financial Implications**

1.1 There are no financial implications directly associated with this report.

## **2. Background**

2.1 A review is underway into three areas of the Library and Information Service:

- the two mobile libraries and the mobile office
- services to rural areas
- libraries in a five mile radius of central Eastbourne

2.2 The information presented here is the headline results from research into patterns of borrower behaviour, transport accessibility and demographic information provided by the East Sussex County Council Research and Information Team.

2.3 A survey of customers and non-users was carried out March-May 2012, focusing on lifestyle, travel and accessibility factors. The survey had a response rate of over 1,500. This data is currently being collated and full reports will be produced by autumn 2012.

### **2.4 Mobile Services**

- The two mobile library vehicles make 135 stops on a fortnightly rota, predominantly to rural areas and sheltered housing. The length of time the vehicle is stopped varies from 20-160 minutes. In 2011-12 there were 12,551 visits made to the mobile libraries, by 1,898 individual borrowers.
- The mobile office visits six locations on a weekly basis stopping for at 1.5 – 5.5 hours to offer IT access, tuition and an enquiry service. In 2011-12 the mobile office received 1,409 visits; data on the number of individual customers this totals is not held. It is thought many were repeat visitors.
- Mobile libraries perform more transactions per borrower than static branches, which perform an average of 33 transactions/borrower, whilst mobile libraries an average of 55 transactions/borrower. However, mobile libraries visit fortnightly so most transactions are fortnightly, compared to the three week loan period of books from static branches.
- 46% of mobile library borrowers also use a static branch.
- 15% of all borrowers across the county use more than one branch. The libraries whose users most frequently use more than one library are Willingdon where 51% also use another library, Pevensey Bay (49%) and Langney (48%).

- 99% of East Sussex residents can access a fixed or mobile library within 15 minutes by car, and 59% of residents are within 15 minutes walk of a fixed or mobile library. Combining the results for those who can walk to a fixed or mobile library within 15 minutes and those who can access a fixed library by walking/public transport, 86% of residents can access any library within 15 minutes.
- While the countywide results indicate high accessibility, there are many rural wards with levels of access to a fixed point within a 15 minute walk of under 70%. These are recommended as priority wards for mobile services, dependent on customer demand, due to the low accessibility of fixed provision. The full list of these wards is available in Appendix 2.

## 2.5 Rural Areas

- Local rural groups and organisations were asked to respond to an invitation to work with us to promote and provide access to library services. The survey was designed with advice from Action in Rural Sussex. It was distributed via their networks to all village halls and other groups, all parish councils via the Sussex Association of Local Councils, and to town councils and a range of other community contacts.
- Several parish councils, a town council, a village hall committee, a sheltered housing complex, a housing association, primary school, leisure provider and retail site responded to the survey. We will discuss with these potential partners how we can work together to provide access to library services.

## 2.6 Eastbourne Area

- The Eastbourne area has seen significant change over the last 10 years particularly due to the increase in housing in the Sovereign Harbour area. The early results from the Census 2011 indicate that the greatest population increase in the county has occurred in Eastbourne, with a 10.9% increase in population 2001-2011. A third of the county's 10% growth in working age population also occurred in Eastbourne, an increase of 9,000 people.
- There are currently six libraries in the Eastbourne area – Eastbourne town centre, Langney, Willingdon, Hampden Park, Pevensey Bay and Polegate. There are nine mobile library stops within five miles of central Eastbourne, five at sheltered housing within Eastbourne town and four rural locations. The mobile office stops for two hours every week at Sovereign Harbour.
- Sovereign ward has the lowest rates of library use for the Eastbourne area. Residents of the ward primarily use Eastbourne Central Library, Langney and Pevensey Bay.
- The data in Appendix 1 details current use of libraries in the Eastbourne area.

## 3. **Conclusion**

3.1 The above information will be combined with the survey results to inform the direction of the Library Service over the coming years in the County. Once proposals are firmed up, they will be brought to this Scrutiny Committee for comment.

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Local Member: All

Background Documents: None

**Appendix 1. Use of libraries in the Eastbourne Area.**

<b>Library</b>	<b>Weekly opening hours</b>	<b>Annual visitors 2011-12</b>	<b>Annual issues 2011-12</b>	<b>Active borrowers 2011-12</b>	<b>Public computer use</b>
Eastbourne	51.5	394,487	23,3949	11,896	64%
Hampden Park	32.5	36,565	51,938	2,066	50%
Langney	27	73,219	64,715	2,353	59%
Pevensey Bay	20	18,380	20,992	871	35%
Polegate	30	42,296	54,619	1,886	24%
Willingdon	25	35,154	36,150	1,166	40%

## Appendix 2: Wards with lowest accessibility to fixed or mobile service points, 2011

District	Ward name	Walk/PT - fixed - 15 minutes	Walk/PT - fixed - 30 minutes	Walk - fixed and mobile - 15 minutes	Car - fixed and mobile - 15 minutes
Lewes	Barcombe and Hamsey	2.6	60.7	42.7	93
	Chailey and Wivelsfield	0	41.1	41.4	97.1
	Ditchling and Westmeston	0	0.6	48.4	96
	Kingston	8.4	46	0	74.3
	Newick	0	88.1	79.5	99.7
	Plumpton, Streat, East Chilmington and St John (Without)	0	63.4	58.3	96.2
Rother	Brede Valley	10.6	81.4	58.9	98.7
	Crowhurst	9.2	63.5	39.7	97
	Darwell	8.1	46.2	33.8	92.6
	Eastern Rother	15.7	66	51.3	88.1
	Ewhurst and Sedlescombe	47.6	70.8	53	93.3
	Marsham	44.8	84.3	69.1	96.4
	Rother Levels	42.5	80.2	62.5	94.7
	St Marks	56.9	89.6	48.1	99.1
	Salehurst	0	60	54.8	97.5
	Ticehurst and Etchingam	1.6	59.5	58.8	98.2

Wealden	Alfriston	0	43.9	70.8	94.1
	Buxted and Maresfield	17.4	85.1	48.4	99.7
	Chiddingly and East Hoathly	0.1	60.5	33.6	96
	Cross in Hand/Five Ashes	54.7	90	15.6	98.9
	Danehill/ Fletching/ Nutley	3.4	56.9	32.8	96
	East Dean	1.9	71.4	47.9	90.2
	Framfield	19.4	84.8	46.9	99.3
	Frant/ Withyham	7.9	61.3	42.2	95.9
	Hartfield	5.4	66	29.2	92.9
	Heathfield East	7.7	59.9	32.2	98.1
	Herstmonceux	0	46.8	69.9	97.1
	Horam	2.2	91.4	71.6	98.6
	Ninfield and Hooe with Wartling	0.9	56.7	47.1	96
	Wadhurst	67.7	84.9	49.5	97.1