

## **Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy**

### **Appendix 2**

#### **Summary of Technical Appendices**

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# 1 About the Technical Appendices

- 1.1 In order to develop the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy East Sussex County Council undertook and commissioned a wide range of research in order to establish a robust evidence base from which it can determine how best to deliver a proposed future needs based library service.
- 1.2 A needs based library service means a library service where we prioritise our resources towards the achievement of outcomes that will best meet the needs of those who live, work and study in East Sussex. In order to do that, we need to know what those needs are and in which communities (of both people and place) they are greatest. We need to understand how people are using the Library and Information Service, how that is changing, and what impact it might have on what we do in future.
- 1.3 Understanding need enables us to identify the outcomes which the Library and Information Service is well-placed to help achieve, either in its own right, or by working with others. We can then identify how well our current library service is able to achieve those outcomes, what things we should continue to do or do differently, whether there are completely new services and activities we should provide because they would help achieve the outcomes, and whether we should stop doing some things completely. We also need to consider if there are better ways of providing this needs based library service that would make it more likely to achieve its goals. This is the basis of the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy.
- 1.4 All of the evidence that we used to develop the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is contained in seven Technical Appendices. This document provides a summary of the complete evidence base. The detail is contained in each Technical Appendix. The diagram below shows the seven Technical Appendices and their relationship to the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy.

Draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy						
Appendix 1 Rationale and Impact Assessment for the Proposed Needs Based Library Service						
Appendix 2 Summary of Technical Appendices						
Technical Appendix 1	Technical Appendix 2	Technical Appendix 3	Technical Appendix 4	Technical Appendix 5	Technical Appendix 6	Technical Appendix 7
National and Local Context	Needs Assessment	Service Description and Analysis	Property Assessment	Accessibility Analysis	Strategic Outcomes and Gap Analysis	Delivery Model Options Appraisal

## 2 National and Local Context

- 2.1 The draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is the final part of a wider Libraries Transformation Programme that has been designed to deliver a modern and sustainable library service which prioritises the needs of those who live, work and study in East Sussex, and which is able to adapt to future needs. The Libraries Transformation Programme has a savings target of £2 million by the end of our current Medium Term Financial Plan period in 2018/19, part of East Sussex County Council's overall savings plans of between £70 and £90 million.
- 2.2 By the end of 2017/18 the Libraries Transformation Programme will have secured measures to deliver £1.25 million of the £2 million savings target, through reductions in management posts and cutting back office costs, spending on books and other materials to reflect changing demand and to bring East Sussex into line with other local authorities, and library opening hours which were cut by around 25% in 2016.
- 2.3 In developing the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy we set out to identify up to £750,000 of further savings and income, by prioritising resources where the need for library services is greatest, whilst ensuring that we continue to deliver a comprehensive and efficient library service for the county. The draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy has identified savings of £653,000. This is approximately £100,000 less than the £750,000 savings target proposed, and overall, would equate to £1.903 million toward the total £2 million savings target. The draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is considered to be the most appropriate strategy to prioritise resources in order to meet the needs which have been identified at the current time.
- 2.4 We have set out to identify the range of needs that the Library and Information Service may be well-placed to help meet, either on its own or in partnership with others, within the resources that are available. This includes the particular needs of different communities who face greater disadvantage than others, whether this is directly or indirectly. The draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy also takes into account our legal responsibilities for providing a library service that is 'comprehensive and efficient'. All library services must provide, by law, free reading materials available to borrow by anyone who lives, works or studies (full-time) in the local area. Apart from this requirement, it is for local decision how the library service best meets the duty to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' service in practical terms, including how many libraries there are, where they are and when they are open and what each one offers.
- 2.5 The requirement to provide a 'comprehensive' library service does not mean that the Council has a duty to guarantee every individual resident access to any or all of the library services it provides at any cost. Rather, all residents

should have a reasonable ability to access library services using reasonable means, including access to services via the internet, taking into account constraints such as available resources.

- 2.6 The East Sussex Library and Information Service supports the County Council's four overarching priority outcomes of:
- sustainable economic growth
  - keeping vulnerable people safe
  - helping people help themselves
  - making best use of resources
- 2.7 Our Library and Information Services aim to support reading for pleasure and personal development, recognising also that literacy supports the local economy and people's ability to lead independent lives. We offer resources and personal support to help job seekers find work, increasingly via online searching and applications, and can help people identify and develop new skills and qualifications.
- 2.8 In our information age, where many materials and information resources have moved online, and as more commercial and public services have become digital, libraries provide free access to computers and to the internet to enable people to get online. Free internet access to computers and to the internet remains important. Some people are still excluded from the online world because of the cost of a broadband connection or mobile data package, or because they do not have the digital skills to use the internet.
- 2.9 The context to the development of the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is one in which fewer people are visiting libraries and borrowing books both nationwide and within East Sussex. Libraries remain a popular service, with 1.48 million visits to East Sussex libraries and 1.84 million items issued in 2016/17. However, both visits and issues have decreased by around 40% in the past ten years.
- 2.10 Widespread availability of affordable or free information and reading materials via the internet means a visit to the local library is no longer the only means of accessing information that it once was. The market for new and second hand books has become more competitive in the past fifteen to twenty years, and the development of the internet has also enabled a huge online marketplace to develop. At the same time, eBooks, eMagazines and eAudiobooks have developed which means people can access library services remotely.
- 2.11 Some people have argued that the usage of libraries has decreased because libraries have been closed or had their opening hours reduced. However, we know that, locally at least, that is not the case. In the period 2006/7 to 2015/16, when the number of East Sussex libraries open to the public remained the same, and before we made changes to library opening hours, there was a 29% decline in library visitors. In this same period we invested approximately £22m in new libraries and refurbished existing ones.

- 2.12 The Carnegie Trust found in a recent survey that 72% of people think that public libraries are important for communities whilst only 40% of people said that libraries were important to them personally. This raises the question of whether people's needs are increasingly being met elsewhere or whether people are unaware of the services that are available through library services that could be of benefit to them. When people in the same survey were asked what would encourage them to make more use of library services, the most frequent suggestion was to provide better information on what services are on offer. Among non-users the most popular improvement was 'providing other council services in library buildings'.
- 2.13 A key opportunity within the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy, therefore, is to seek to ensure that the Library and Information Service provides clear information about what library services are on offer, how people can make the most of what is available to them and to help people choose to use libraries because they see clear benefits and positive outcomes from doing so. There is also an opportunity to explore whether providing other services in libraries would help meet people's needs better through a more 'joined-up' offer.

## 3 Needs Assessment

- 3.1 The Needs Assessment is a key element of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy. Its prime purpose is to provide a clear evidence-based review of needs, both met and unmet, that impact on the current and future provision of the Library and Information Service. If our understanding of residents' needs is incomplete then the design and delivery of services is unlikely to fully meet their needs or achieve the required outcomes.
- 3.2 There is a clear distinction between the need and the demand for services. Need is what people could benefit from (that is an effective intervention or service); demand is what people ask for. Strategic Commissioning is about prioritising need over demand and supply. This Needs Assessment, together with the other Technical Appendices, provides an evidence base which enables us, through the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy, to prioritise our resources for library services towards the achievement of outcomes that will best meet the needs of those who live, work and study in East Sussex.
- 3.3 The Needs Assessment is framed around four Commissioning Themes, which reflect the Council's four overarching priority outcomes: driving economic growth; keeping vulnerable people safe; helping people help themselves; and making best use of resources. The Commissioning Themes are considered to represent the key areas of community need that the Library and Information Service may be best placed to meet or contribute towards, in support of the Council's priority outcomes. These Themes are:
- Reading and literacy
  - Economic development
  - Health and wellbeing
  - Digital exclusion
- 3.4 The process of undertaking a needs assessment is not an exact science. The Council has a duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 to provide a "comprehensive and efficient" library service. If a library authority wishes to make changes to its library service, it must carry out an assessment of need which is informed by consultation, Equalities Impact Assessment and an assessment of relevant library service data, to ensure that the duty is met. The Act does not set out a statutory measure of need and there are no national guidelines that spell out what is or is not a need in terms of library services. It is also important to highlight that, in most cases, the Library and Information Service is not the primary provider of services to meet identified needs. The role of the Library and Information Service is largely indirect in support of other more targeted service providers.
- 3.5 The Needs Assessment has considered a wide range of potential indicators of needs, clustered around each Commissioning Theme that may be addressed by the Library and Information Service. These have been refined to select the indicators which best illustrate need and which are based on robust, publicly available data at a sufficiently detailed scale that meaningful evidence can be

gathered at a local level across the county. The Needs Assessment has considered how the identified needs vary across the county, and whether there are specific groups of people whose needs are currently not met. Invariably it is the relative differences, not the absolute values, between the level of needs identified that are of most use in identifying areas to target resources where needs are greatest.

- 3.6 East Sussex generally compares favourably with many other local authority areas on a number of measures of need. In the analysis undertaken for the Needs Assessment there was, for most indicators, little variation across the whole county. However, for some indicators there were stark variations, and these are noted below. The Needs Assessment has sought to identify when the variation in needs is significant in scale and scope, compared to where the variations are minimal across the county. Where there are significant variations between parts of the county (in particular for indicators related to deprivation, ageing and health) the variations can reflect very localised pockets of need, even within each of the main urban areas.
- 3.7 The over-arching indicator of need is the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, however the full Needs Assessment document (Technical Appendix 2) contains detailed indicators and mapping of all of the needs used in the Needs Assessment. The highest deprivation levels are seen in parts of Hastings and the super output area covering Iden and Camber. There are also relatively high levels of deprivation in pockets of Bexhill, Eastbourne, Newhaven, and in and around Hailsham. However, it is important to recognise that not every person in a highly deprived area will themselves be deprived. Likewise, there will be some deprived people living in the least deprived areas. In terms of the findings of the Needs Assessment under each Commissioning Theme, deprivation, skills and educational attainment and income play a key role.
- 3.8 Literacy skills underpin success in all walks of life, and libraries have a key role to play in ensuring children in particular have the building-blocks for future academic and employment success, thereby improving people's prosperity, their health and their wellbeing. Young children's early communication and vocabulary skills are particularly important. In addition, the health and wellbeing benefits of reading for pleasure are evident for adults as well as children and young people.
- 3.9 On reading and literacy, the Library and Information Service has the potential to support the literacy needs of every child, although some children are likely to have higher needs than others, such as those living in households with low incomes, those with Special Educational Needs and those without English as a first language. Where there are low adult literacy rates (often linked with other indicators of deprivation) it is expected that this will create a need that can be positively met through access to library services. The areas of the county where literacy needs are greatest are areas to the north of Hastings, Camber, the north-east of Newhaven, south-east of Hailsham and south-east of Crowborough.



## Key findings - reading and Literacy

Children who are disadvantaged do worse at school than those from non-disadvantaged backgrounds.

At the end of primary school (Key Stage 2) only 51% of disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard for reading, 60% for writing, and 52% for grammar, punctuation and spelling, compared with 72%, 79%, and 74% respectively for non-disadvantaged pupils.

At GCSE (Key Stage 4) 39% of disadvantaged pupils achieve A\*-C in both English and maths, compared with 71% of non-disadvantaged pupils.

In 2016 about 29% of East Sussex state school pupils were disadvantaged at Key Stage 2 and 25% at Key Stage 4.

There are areas of East Sussex amongst the top 10% most deprived areas in England for working age adults with no or low qualifications or who cannot speak English well or at all. Parts of the county have an adult population with skills below a level which means they could compare products and services for the best buy, or work out a household budget.

- 3.10 The modern library service can provide information and support to individuals and businesses to help develop the economy. Economic performance in East Sussex is below the regional and national average, with a skills deficit being a contributory factor. For economic development, the need is primarily for people seeking work but struggling to find it because of, for instance, low levels of qualifications, poor literacy and numeracy skills, poor CV writing and interview techniques, and a lack information about availability of suitable jobs. Disability and long-term ill health are factors which can prevent people from obtaining a job when they want to work, and being out of the workplace for long periods of time can have a further impact on people's skills, levels of confidence and mental health.
- 3.11 The Library and Information Service can provide access to online information about job vacancies and training and skills development opportunities, and support individuals directly to develop skills such as applying for jobs and learning new literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. This can also boost self-confidence and preparedness for a job interview, increasing the chances of getting into or back into work. Indicators of deprivation and adult skills levels suggest that the greatest needs are in the north of Bexhill, Eastbourne, the north of Hastings, the north-east of Newhaven and east of St. Leonard's.

## Key findings - economic development

In 2016/17 4.5% of the working age population (16-64 year olds) were unemployed in the county compared to 4.8% in England and 3.8% in the South East. Hastings has the highest percentage at 6.3% of unemployment and Lewes has the lowest percentage at 3.8%.

There are 23 areas of East Sussex ranked within the 10% most deprived areas of England in terms of levels of employment, including 16 in Hastings, 5 in Eastbourne and 2 in Rother.

- 3.12 There are health and wellbeing needs which the Library and Information Service can meet by supporting community and individual resilience, health improvement and reducing health inequalities through the provision of safe and inclusive spaces, quality assured self-help information and resource materials tailored for residents of all ages, as well as direct signposting to other services. In particular, the Library and Information Service can provide resources and information to enable people to take greater ownership of their own health and wellbeing, to be more resilient, increasingly independent, self-sufficient and resourceful, and thus better able to help themselves.
- 3.13 Research has identified the positive benefits of reading for mental health, as well as the positive correlation between literacy and a person's ability to access health information. Those in greatest need are people in poor mental or physical health or at risk of developing health problems, particularly people with a long-term health problem or disability. The highest health deprivation levels and disability measures are concentrated in the coastal towns, either in central residential areas or large estates on the edge that often have other income, employment and social exclusion issues. There are some pockets of health deprivation in each of the three more rural districts, but usually associated with the mid-sized towns. One area with a relatively high percentage of residents with long term illness is east Bexhill. Other high levels are found in Eastbourne, Hastings, St. Leonards and Newhaven.

### **Key findings – health and wellbeing**

14 areas of East Sussex are ranked within the 10% most deprived areas of England in terms of health deprivation and disability, including 10 in Hastings, 3 in Eastbourne and 1 in Rother.

The county has a higher percentage (24.9%) of residents aged 65 and over compared to England (17.7%). The highest percentage of residents aged 65 and over is in Rother and the lowest percentage in Hastings.

There is a 13 year difference in life expectancy for those born in different parts of the county. The lowest life expectancy (75.6 years) is in Gensing ward in Hastings and the highest (89 years) in Mayfield ward in Wealden.

- 3.14 Information is increasingly moving to digital platforms and there continues to be a social divide between those who have easy access to the internet and those who are still offline. On digital inclusion, the needs which have been identified are the ability to access and use the internet to access information about skills and employment opportunities, health and wellbeing information, and accessing the more competitive online market place for goods and services, which can help households on low incomes.
- 3.15 Behind these needs are the affordability of home or mobile internet provision, the lack of basic digital skills (which is linked to low levels of educational attainment and also to age), and to a lesser extent, the availability of broadband technology. The data show that adults with the lowest skills levels are located mainly in the coastal towns of Newhaven, Eastbourne, Bexhill and

Hastings, as well as Hailsham and the far east of the county in Rye and surrounding areas.

### **Key findings – digital inclusion**

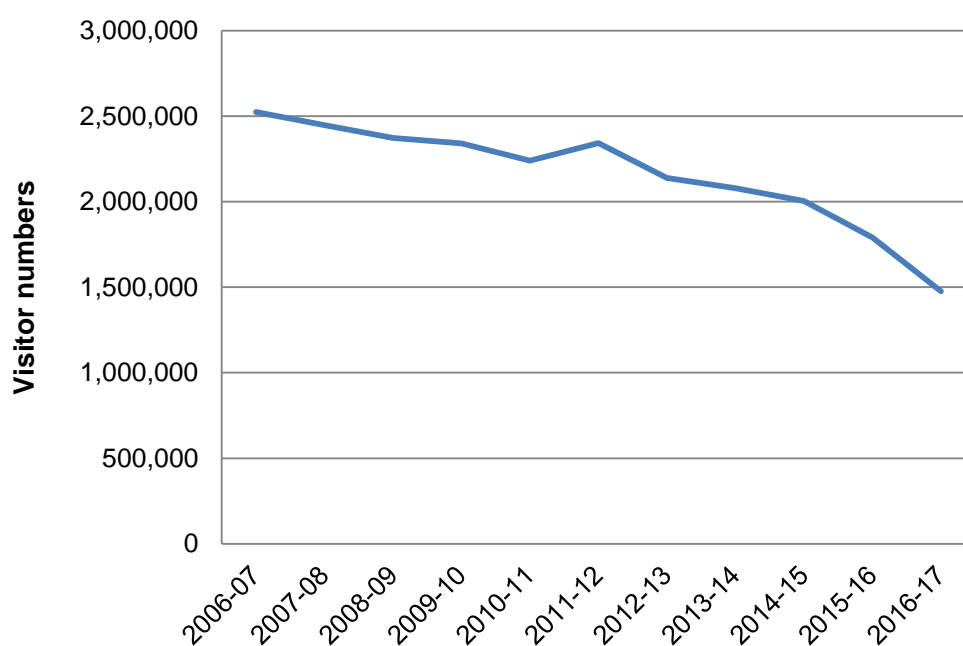
Affordability and basic digital skills are key drivers for digital inclusion. There are 18 areas in the county that are ranked within the 10% most deprived areas of England in terms of household income. This includes 12 areas in Hastings, 3 in Eastbourne and 3 in Rother.

- 3.16 The indicators of need identified in this Needs Assessment provide a baseline upon which to develop the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy, which will set the direction of the Library and Information Service for the next five years. The Needs Assessment considers these changes and has concluded that, for the duration of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy, changes in population, employment and economic activity, health and digital technology are unlikely to have a significant impact on its findings and overall conclusions.

## 4 Service description and analysis

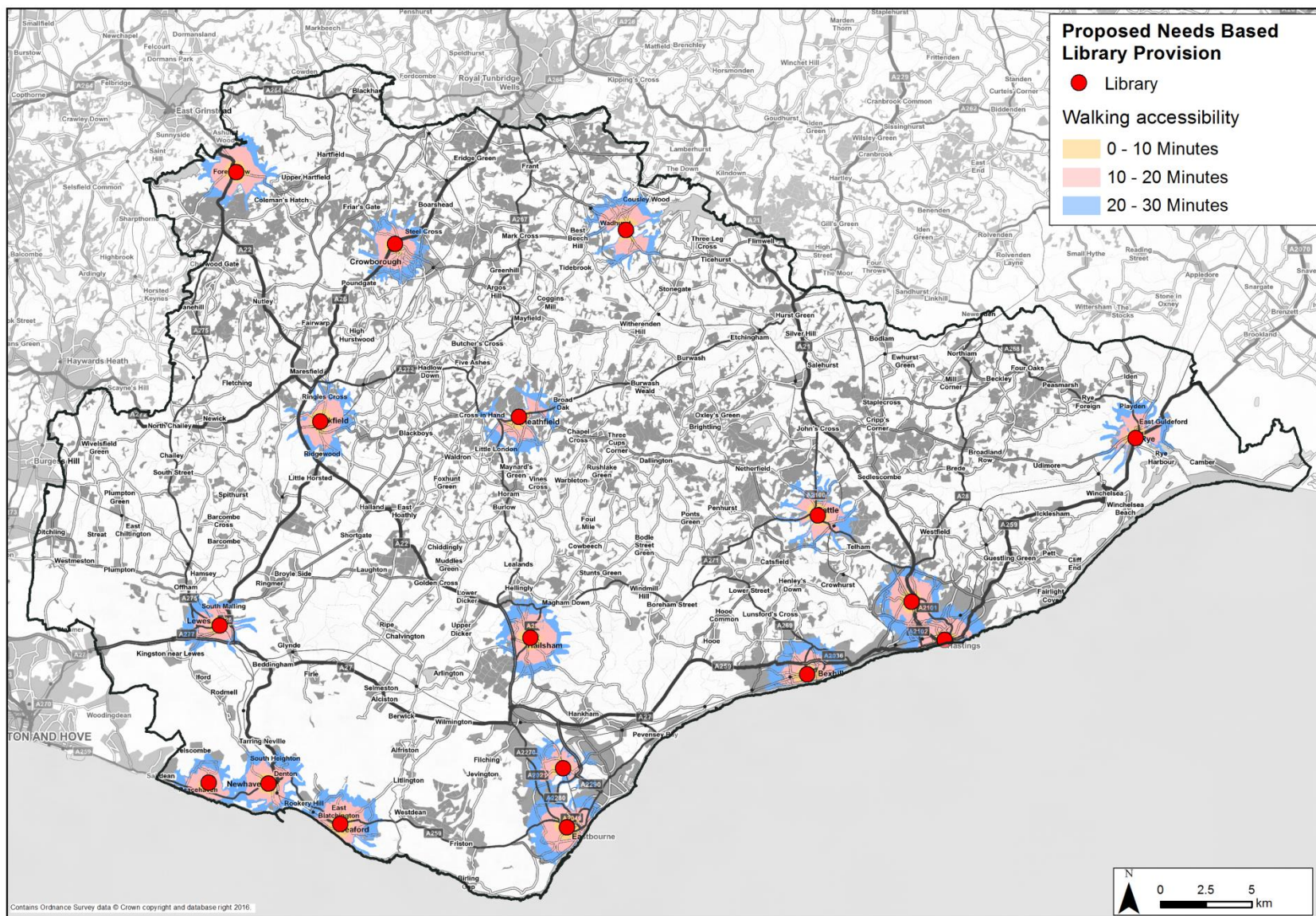
- 4.1 The Library and Information Service lends books and other materials, in hard copy and digital formats, provides information, and delivers formal and informal learning opportunities as well as volunteering opportunities. Computers and Wi-Fi are available in all library buildings to enable people to use the internet.
- 4.2 Access to the Library and Information Service is provided by 24 library buildings across the county, the online eLibrary, a Mobile Library Service, a Home Library Service, a Prison Library Service, a community information service (ESCIS) and a Schools Library and Museum Service.
- 4.3 We deliver a range of initiatives, both local and national, often with partners and sometimes externally funded. These include Bookstart to help parents/carers share books with pre-school children and IT for You to support people into employment by developing their IT skills.
- 4.4 Membership of the Library and Information Service is free to everyone who lives, works and studies in East Sussex. There are also customers who visit the library to use the resources and facilities, but do not have a membership. At the start of 2017/18 there were approximately 230,000 registered members of the Library and Information Service, or about 44 per cent of the East Sussex population. However, as mentioned earlier, the number of people visiting libraries and borrowing items from them is declining.

**Figure 1** Visitors to East Sussex libraries 2006/7 – 2016/17





**Figure 2 Current network of library buildings and Mobile Library stops in East Sussex**



- 4.5 At 31st March 2017, there were 62,027 active members of the Library and Information Service (people who borrowed an item in the previous twelve months). This is a reduction of 16% since March 31st 2015, when there were 74,176 active members.
- 4.6 Library stock, the materials available to borrow, is made up of a range of different formats, including books, DVDs, newspapers, and online resources such as eBooks, online encyclopaedias and training resources. Loans in all categories are decreasing year on year, with the exception of eBooks and eAudiobooks. Loans of eBooks have increased from 19,173 in 2014/15 to 30,843 in 2016/17.
- 4.7 Expenditure on materials (books and other resources) per 1,000 population was second highest in our comparator local authority group in 2015/16, and satisfaction with the condition and choice of stock has remained high despite the decline in library use.
- 4.8 Income for the Library and Information Service is generated through fees and charges (such as fines and reservation fees) as well as by delivering traded services such as the Schools Library and Museum Service and a Learndirect contract to deliver learning programmes. Despite recent efforts to generate more income, for example, by hiring out meeting rooms, income is decreasing for a number of reasons. In particular, income for the Schools Library and Museum Service is not sufficient to continue delivery of services to schools in the same way.
- 4.9 There are 237 computer terminals (referred to as the People's Network) and Wi-Fi available to use for free across the 24 library buildings. In 2016/17, there were 281,704 computer sessions in total, 49,125 (17%), of which were Wi-Fi sessions using the customer's own device. Wi-Fi has been available in all libraries since March 2016 and usage is growing.
- 4.10 In January 2015, there were 150 full time equivalent (FTE) members of staff within the East Sussex Library and Information Service. Following the implementation of two restructures associated with the Libraries Transformation Programme this has reduced to 96.5 FTE. The service had 0.23 staff per 1,000 population in 2015/16. At March 2017, this had reduced to 0.19, one of the lowest in our comparator local authority group. Over 400 volunteers provide additional library services, such as Rhymetime and Storytime and IT for You sessions. Comparison with our comparator local authority group shows that there is scope to increase the number of volunteers involved in providing the Library and Information Service.
- 4.11 Surveys show that nearly half (45%) of adult visitors to libraries in East Sussex are aged 65 and over and half (50%) are retired. However, in terms of registered members of the Library and Information Service, children and young people aged below 16 represent 26 per cent of all members, more than any other age group.

4.12 Most people who were asked consider their library visits to be related to leisure and enjoyment. Almost three quarters of adult library users (74%) visited a library to borrow, return, renew or reserve a book. The next most common reason for visiting (18.5%) was to access the public computers or Wi-Fi. Most adult library users visited at least once a fortnight, with the highest number visiting once or twice a week. There is a lack of awareness among non-users of the Library and Information Service about the range of different services on offer, particularly online services, such as eBooks.

## 5 Property Assessment

- 5.1 We own 16 of the 24 library properties, and the remainder are leased from public, private or voluntary and community sector landlords. We also lease Unit D, Ropemaker Park in Hailsham, which is the central storage and distribution point for library stock and base for the Mobile Library and some staff.
- 5.2 The total running cost of our buildings is approximately £850,000 per year, including £359,000 of business rates, £209,000 of maintenance costs and £177,000 of rents and service charges. Utility costs are around £105,000 per year.
- 5.3 In the past decade we have spent approximately £16.5 million on improvements and major refurbishment of East Sussex library buildings, including works to ensure libraries remain safe and in a good state of repair, so that they are fit to provide the services they need to deliver. Once the refurbishment of Hastings library is complete in the spring of 2018, this sum will have risen to £20.4 million.
- 5.4 In the current financial climate future investment on this scale is unlikely for the foreseeable future. However, it is estimated that it would cost around £2.6 million over the next five years to maintain the 24 library buildings the service currently operates in their current condition and stop them from deteriorating.
- 5.5 Many of our libraries also offer services delivered by, or in partnership with, other organisations. However, there is considerable scope for community groups, voluntary sector organisations, the private sector and other parts of the public sector (including other parts of the County Council) to make more use of libraries in East Sussex outside of normal opening hours. This could provide a source of income to help reduce financial pressures on the service, or enable income to be reinvested into delivering new services to meet local needs.
- 5.6 Four libraries have dedicated meeting rooms which are available for public hire by individuals, small businesses, charities, local organisations, service providers, partners and private enterprises. However, despite marketing of the meeting room spaces, they are under-utilised and are not realising their income generation potential. Further consideration could be given to more targeted marketing of the meeting rooms for ad hoc or longer term rentals, or entering into longer-term agreements with potential partners to rent the rooms as workspaces or places from which services to the community could be provided.
- 5.7 With decreasing visits and issues of items, there are also opportunities to release space within libraries for other organisations to use, so that costs can be shared and a rental income generated for the Library and Information



Service. The identified space could also enable the Library and Information Service to generate income by providing new or better services. This would help the service achieve its strategic outcomes if external funding is sourced, or by being paid to deliver services on behalf of others when they are commissioning services. There are nine libraries within East Sussex where this potential exists. The opportunities range from small shop-style operations or delivery of front-line services to the public, to spaces for meetings and training, to office space.

- 5.8 As a result of this review, operational bases for parking enforcement staff will be provided in Hastings, Eastbourne and Lewes libraries from July 2018. The Library and Information Service will deliver the functions of the three Parking Shops from these libraries. This joint venture will enable the new parking contract to be delivered at a lower cost due to the sharing of overheads and other operational costs.
- 5.9 In addition, the Seaford Integrated Locality Team, part of our East Sussex Better Together health partnership, will move into accommodation within Seaford Library. This team will bring together a number of social care and health services for adults, from the County Council and the NHS, within the community. Their services will not be delivered in the library.
- 5.10 As a result of these two proposals and other efficiency programmes which we have identified as part of the development of the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy, the Library and Information Service will save approximately £171,000 per year through a combination of efficiencies and the rental of library space.
- 5.11 The Library and Information Service will also need to continue to identify whether library services could be delivered in the same locality in a more cost-effective way and consider the potential for library services to share accommodation with other organisations, in order to reduce costs or to deliver a better service in conjunction with other services, or both. The consultation on the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy provides a key opportunity for the Library and Information Service to enter into a dialogue with potential partners over possible co-location of library services.

## 6 Accessibility Analysis

- 6.1 The Library and Information Service comprises both the physical infrastructure that people can use (e.g. library buildings and the services available within them) and the digital services that people can access online without having to visit the library, such as reserving and renewing items, downloading eBooks and eMagazines, and accessing online reference materials and information resources.
- 6.2 Published national research shows that the average journey time for trips people make by all modes of transport is 24 minutes. Trips for 'personal business' specifically include visits to libraries and the average trip duration for personal business is 20 minutes. This research suggests that reasonable travel time parameters for the majority of residents to access library services is in the order of 20 to 25 minutes by car or public transport.
- 6.3 Accessibility mapping software shows that, despite the fact that East Sussex is a rural county, the Library and Information Service has very high levels of physical accessibility to libraries. Everyone in East Sussex lives within a 20 minute drive of either one of the 24 libraries or the 88 Mobile Library stops.
- 6.4 Car ownership is generally very high across the county, with a county average of 78% of households owning one or more cars. It is recognised however that car ownership varies considerably across the county, with high car ownership in rural areas and lower levels of car ownership in coastal areas. However, in terms of access to libraries, the identified areas of low car ownership are compensated by having regular bus or train services and/or being in central locations where walking distances to local libraries are relatively short.
- 6.5 Overall across the county 97% of the population lives within a 20 minute journey time by public transport of an East Sussex library or a Mobile Library stop. This figure rises to 99.4% of the population for journey times of up to 30 minutes. In terms of journey time on foot, 22.7% of the population of the county lives within a 10 minute walk of an East Sussex library or a Mobile Library stop. This figure rises to 57% for walking times up to 20 minutes and 87.4% within a 30 minutes' walk of a library or a Mobile Library stop. Table 1 provides a more detailed breakdown.
- 6.6 Recognising that the majority of Library and Information Service customers use a library building rather than visiting the Mobile Library, the analysis has in addition considered physical accessibility just in terms of the 24 library buildings, and this also shows that the library buildings have very high levels of accessibility. 99.9% of the population of the county are within a 20 minute car drive time of one of the 24 East Sussex libraries. Nobody has a journey time by car in excess of 30 minutes. For public transport, 89.1% of the population of the county lives within a 20 minute journey time of an East Sussex library and 96.2% are within a 30 minute journey time. In terms of

journey time on foot, 16.3% of the population of the county lives within a 10 minute walk of an East Sussex library. This figure rises to 48.6% for walking times up to 20 minutes and 75.3% within a 30 minutes' walk of a library. Table 2 provides a more detailed breakdown.

- 6.7 An analysis of where East Sussex library users live and which libraries they use shows that users do not necessarily visit their nearest library. This shows that there are other factors apart from travel time that influence decisions on which library to visit, and there may be a range of reasons behind this, including where people work, or combining a visit to the library with a trip for another purpose, such as shopping or a leisure activity.
- 6.8 Accessibility to the Library and Information Service's digital services is also very high. This provides another means of accessing library services away from our library buildings via the internet, 24 hours per day. Household internet access has grown rapidly in recent years and a 2017 survey of East Sussex residents showed that 90% of them use the internet.
- 6.9 However, barriers do still exist for some residents. The Accessibility Analysis shows that residents in a small number of areas of East Sussex, in proximity to the main towns of Rye, Hastings, Bexhill, Eastbourne, Newhaven, Peacehaven, Lewes and Hailsham may be less able to access the Library and Information Service's digital services due to the affordability of broadband and mobile data packages and the costs of devices. Small geographical areas around Rye, Hastings and Eastbourne are also where residents are more likely not to have the digital skills required to access the eLibrary services independently.
- 6.10 Age is a key factor in people's level of digital skills and therefore use of the internet. Whilst 74% of people nationally aged 65-74 had used the internet in the past three months in a 2016 survey, this figure was only 39% for people aged 75 and over. The areas of the county where people's age is likely to be a factor which creates a barrier to eLibrary accessibility (because they are less likely to use the internet) is geographically slightly wider, and is around the coastal towns of Hastings, Bexhill, Eastbourne, Seaford and Peacehaven. Areas around the towns of Crowborough, Heathfield, Uckfield, Hailsham and Lewes are also included.
- 6.11 In these areas people are more likely to rely on access to a library building to use the resources available. Staff in libraries can help people access the resources they need, and both staff and computer buddies in libraries can help people who lack digital skills to get online and help narrow the digital divide.

**Table 1 Percentage of East Sussex population within different journey times of an East Sussex library or a Mobile Library stop**

	Car			Public Transport			Walking		
Journey time (minutes)	0 – 10	10 – 20	20 – 30	10 – 20	20 – 30	20 – 30	0 – 10	10 – 20	20 – 30
East Sussex population within journey time	527,108	413	0	380,428	131,466	12,448	119,851	180,616	160,338
Percentage	99.9%	0.1%	0%	72.1%	24.9%	2.4%	22.7%	34.2%	30.4%
Cumulative East Sussex population within journey time	527,108	527,521	527,521	380,428	511,894	524,342	119,851	300,467	460,805
Cumulative percentage	99.9%	100%	100%	72.1%	97%	99.4%	22.7%	57%	87.4%

**Table 2 Percentage of East Sussex population within different journey times of an East Sussex library**

	Car			Public Transport			Walking		
Journey time (minutes)	0 – 10	10 – 20	20 – 30	0 – 10	10 – 20	20 – 30	0 – 10	10 – 20	20 – 30
East Sussex population within journey time	496,817	29,982	722	307,975	161,783	37,461	86,113	170,113	140,967
Percentage	94.2%	5.7%	0.1%	58.4%	30.7%	7.1%	16.3%	32.2%	26.7%
Cumulative East Sussex population within journey time	496,817	526,799	527,521	307,975	469,758	507,219	86,113	256,226	397,193
Cumulative percentage	94.2%	99.9%	100%	58.4%	89.1%	96.2%	16.3%	48.6%	75.3%

## 7 Gap analysis

- 7.1 The Gap Analysis identifies which services should be provided by the Library and Information Service in order to meet the needs identified within the Needs Assessment (Technical Appendix 2). This includes a detailed consideration of individual services which could support each of the four Commissioning Themes identified by the Needs Assessment.
- 7.2 Library services commonly provide a wide range of offers to support different outcomes, tailored according to local needs and circumstances. These are reflected by the Universal Offers which East Sussex, like many other library services, subscribes to. There are, in theory, no limitations, to the range of services that can be delivered by a library service. The Commissioning Themes, therefore, are considered to represent the key areas of community need that the Library and Information Service may be best placed to meet or contribute towards, in support of the Council's priority outcomes.
- 7.3 The scope of the offer is also, in practice, limited by available resources. Primarily, the service offer must be in line with the provisions laid out by the statutory duty which requires the Council to provide books and other materials to borrow for everyone who lives, works and studies in East Sussex. The precise nature of the materials, and any others services that are provided by the Library and Information Service, is for the local authority to decide.
- 7.4 Overall, the Gap Analysis finds that the current offer provided by the Library and Information Service meet the needs which have been identified by the Needs Assessment to a high degree. A number of gaps have been identified, including more joined up working with other parts of the County Council to promote library services to specific groups and a greater focus on providing services through outreach work, recognising that some people who stand to benefit from the Library and Information Service require more targeted engagement. There are also some services which can be enhanced, such as the eLibrary, and new services, such as study sessions for school aged children, which would support the specific needs of different groups.
- 7.5 A number of services which are already provided by the Library and Information Service, which add value to the core service offer, are provided by drawing in external funding from partners such as the Department for Work and Pensions and Arts Council England. A number of our value added services are provided through the commitment of volunteers, including those within libraries, such as Computer Buddies, and those who provide the Home Library Service to customers who cannot get to a library easily. A number of the opportunities identified by the Gap Analysis to extend and provide new services through the Strategy would similarly rely on extending our volunteering roles and securing partnership funding.
- 7.6 By analysing each of the Commissioning Themes in turn, the Gap Analysis concludes by identifying four Strategic Outcomes which would underpin the

draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy and enable the Library and Information Service to prioritise available resources and service delivery according to need. Each of the proposed Strategic Outcomes is accompanied by a short summary of the overall service offer which would be required to meet it, as follows:

**Improving child and adult literacy.** We will provide a range of quality materials and personalised support for people's different needs, so they can enjoy the pleasure of reading and the better life chances that literacy unlocks for people.

**Supporting the economy.** We will provide training and guidance for people of all abilities seeking to learn and to work, so they are able to build skills and confidence in a supportive environment.

**Better health and wellbeing.** We will promote reading as a source of wellbeing and provide reliable information and services to promote good health and support people to manage their own health and the health of those they care for.

**Increasing digital inclusion.** We will provide free access to computers and Wi-Fi, and paid access to printers, with training for people to use technology and the internet, so they are able to independently access vital information and services and participate in the benefits of the digital world.

- 7.7 It is recommended that the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy should set out a comprehensive service offer for each of the four Strategic Outcomes, based on the findings of this Gap Analysis. Some specific gaps are identified which it is not yet clear that the Library and Information Service would be able to meet. Further efforts should be made to identify whether there are appropriate offers to resolve these within available resources, potentially by working with other services. Given that the offers provided by a library service naturally change and develop, as new opportunities are identified, it is not considered that the offers described by the Strategy should be considered exhaustive or necessarily provide for each individual gap that is identified.
- 7.8 The services which are identified by the Gap Analysis to deliver the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy also ensure that the Library and Information Service would meet the provisions of the statutory duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for everyone who lives, works and studies full-time in East Sussex.
- 7.9 A new vision is recommended for the Library and Information Service which would effectively draw the four Strategic Outcomes together. The evidence provided by the Needs Assessment and Gap Analysis demonstrates that this vision should have its foundations in the role of the library service to promote reading and knowledge to enable people to lead fulfilling lives. Collectively, the Vision and Strategic Outcomes would provide a clear direction for the delivery of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy.

## 8 Delivery model initial options appraisal

- 8.1 The Initial Options Appraisal aims to identify the different possible ways or 'delivery models' in which the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy could be implemented. It consists of an appraisal of the ability of five possible delivery models against a set of criteria to determine their suitability to deliver the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy. Following this a financial differences model was created to identify which of the delivery models would generate a surplus over the five year duration of the Strategy, and to estimate the size of the surplus. Finally, an overall assessment of the combined appraisal and financial differences modelling was undertaken, taking into account the limitations of the options appraisal process and other factors which are relevant to the context in which the Library and Information Service operates. The assessment of the delivery models against the suitability criteria and the financial differences model were undertaken by an independent consultant, Mutual Ventures.
- 8.2 The five delivery models considered were:
- Remain in-house with re-engineering;
  - Establishing a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC);
  - Establishing a Public Service Mutual (PSM);
  - Outsourcing the service (to a 'for profit' or third sector provider); and
  - Establishing as a joint venture (JV) between the Council and the library service staff group.
- 8.3 The Initial Options Appraisal did not aim to identify a single preferred option, rather its goal was to assess the sustainability of several potential delivery models and identify their relative strengths and weaknesses from a variety of perspectives.
- 8.4 The process was undertaken during the development of the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy at which stage the draft Vision, Strategic Outcomes and draft Gap Analysis had been identified. By definition, therefore, it was not possible to base the Initial Options Appraisal on a complete draft Strategy. However, it should be borne in mind that this appraisal process is a snapshot at this point in time. The range of delivery models, their benefits and advantages may change over time. We may, following consultation on the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy, or at some other point in the future, seek to deliver a different vision and outcomes for the Library and Information Service, which might give a different conclusion to the options appraisal process contained in this Technical Appendix.



- 8.5 The first option considered, keeping the service in-house with 're-engineering' through the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy, scored second highest at 67% against the assessment criteria, mainly because it maximises council control over the service, and does not incur any implementation costs or procurement costs. The changes could be implemented quickly and one-off savings and efficiencies achieved in the short-term. Its limitations are that it does not provide the Library and Information Service with full commercial freedom and has a limited ability to grow revenue streams and realise an ongoing surplus. It also limits the ability of stakeholders to influence the service in a formal capacity, such as a board of directors would do in a Public Service Mutual (PSM) would do. There may be opportunities to extend further the Council's partnership working with other library authorities, but the potential for savings is considered to be low as the Council has already implemented a major cost reduction and efficiency programme through the Libraries Transformation Programme to reduce the costs of management and back office services. Further opportunities for joint working would need to be considered on a case by case basis.
- 8.6 The Local Authority Trading Company (LATC) option achieved the highest mark (74%) against the assessment criteria and would generate the highest surplus, estimated at around £267,000 over five years. LATCs are companies set up by councils specifically to trade at a profit, and this is their key advantage over an in-house service, which is also fully controlled by the local authority. LATCs possess greater freedom than in-house library services to develop and trade services, including the development and delivery of new non-statutory services which can generate a surplus for the organisation. However, only up to 20% of the revenue of the LATC can come from outside of the 'parent' council.
- 8.7 Although the LATC option comes out well overall, for an LATC to become financially viable, there would need to be a developed market in which our Library and Information service could trade at a profit. At present the opportunities for us to do that are limited as most councils are not outsourcing their library services. Taking this into account, and also the likely set-up costs, which have not been estimated at this Initial Options Appraisal stage, and which would in all likelihood erode a significant proportion of the estimated surplus, it is not recommended that an LATC is considered at present.
- 8.8 The PSM option scored third highest (56%) against the assessment criteria, reflecting its ability to gain buy-in from staff and other stakeholders while also exploiting commercial opportunities. A PSM is an organisation that has left the public sector and is either wholly or partly owned by its employees. There is usually a board of directors, which may include community representatives. Some PSMs, such as Libraries Unlimited in Devon and Suffolk Libraries have charitable status, which means they have trustees. PSMs can increase the level of freedom and autonomy experienced by staff and managers, enabling them to be more creative within their roles, within a new organisational culture, and this can make the PSM less bureaucratic.

- 8.9 PSMs can have a high degree of commercial freedom to explore new areas of service growth. However, as with the LATC option, these opportunities need to exist within the market place. The estimated surplus for the PSM option in this Initial Options Appraisal was low, with a surplus of just over £56,000 over five years, excluding set-up costs. Discussions which we have had with other councils who have established PSMs for their library service show that this surplus would certainly be wiped out by the set-up costs, and there is likely to be a net deficit at the end of the five year period of the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy.
- 8.10 Many PSMs have business models which include the kinds of measures that we have already implemented or propose as part of the Libraries Transformation Programme during the three-year period from 2016/17 to 2018/19. Over and above this, potential savings associated with a PSM are often reliant upon achieving charitable status, which can reduce the PSM's liability for business rates. Local authorities currently retain a proportion of the business rates they collect and there are proposals for councils in future to be reliant solely on business rates and council tax for their funding. A business rates saving for a PSM for the East Sussex Library and Information Service would therefore mean that we were diverting resources away from one or more local authorities to the PSM. For all of the reasons above it is not recommended that a PSM is the right delivery model for the East Sussex Library and Information Service.
- 8.11 The outsourcing option scored 49% against the assessment criteria. Outsourcing involves the procurement of a third party to deliver the library service on behalf of the Council via a contract, including potentially through a social enterprise or charity, a 'for-profit' provider or another local authority. Outsourcing offers a high degree of council influence and control, as the Council would specify in the contract what it wanted to be provided. The other key benefits are the ability to tap into expertise to deliver an improved service from an external provider and the potential for savings and efficiencies to be realised as a result of the library service being part of a wider organisation.
- 8.12 Outsourcing would certainly require a procurement process, with the financial and time implications that carries with it unless outsourced to another local authority under legislation which avoids this requirement. Specific risks to the Council associated with this option include the unknown likelihood of the provider re-investing any surpluses back into the Library and Information Service and the risks around service delivery if the provider does not meet the required level of performance. It is not possible to forecast the potential viability of the service should it be outsourced. Interested providers will have their own business models and will structure their service proposal in different ways. It is impossible therefore to assess the viability of a provider's proposal until it has been received as part of the procurement process. The low score against the assessment criteria and the inability to undertake a financial differences model for this option mean that there is no clear evidence to recommend it as a preferable delivery model for the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy.

- 8.13 Finally, the joint venture option scored 50%. The term joint venture can describe a range of different commercial arrangements between two or more separate entities. Each party contributes resources to the venture and a new business is created in which the parties collaborate together and share the risks and benefits associated with the venture. Each party generally has an expertise or need which is central to the development and success of the new business which they decide to create together. It is also vital that the parties have a 'shared vision' about the objectives for the joint venture.
- 8.14 While a joint venture will bring several advantages (mainly relating to accessing commercial expertise and the benefits associated with a range of stakeholders assuming ownership and decision making roles), the complexity of establishing the model and the associated timescales represent a risk to the Council. The surplus for the joint venture is estimated to be the same as the PSM option at just over £56,000 over five years, excluding set-up costs. This surplus would certainly be eradicated by the set-up costs, and there is likely to be a net deficit at the end of the five year period of the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy.
- 8.15 The Initial Options Appraisal does not identify an evidence base for recommending an alternative delivery model as the most suitable means of implementing the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy. It is therefore recommended that the current in-house service, with re-engineering through the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is retained.