

Audit, Best Value & Community Services Scrutiny Committee Library and Information Service RPPR Board

Libraries' Transformation Programme – Cabinet item 7

The RPPR Board of the Audit, Best Value and Community Services Scrutiny met on the 13 November 2015 and the 9 December 2015 to consider the Libraries' Transformation Programme. The Board has examined the Libraries' Transformation Programme, which includes an internal review and the development of a strategic commissioning strategy for the Library and Information Service (LIS). The Board has reviewed the evidence and proposals for the LIS contained in the Cabinet report.

The Board agreed the following comments and recommendations for Cabinet to consider:

- The Board supports the proposal for the Libraries' Transformation Programme, which is outlined in the well evidenced report. It provides a positive approach to the future provision of Library Services in the 21st century, which will need to be well publicised and marketed.
- The Board would like to be kept abreast of staffing implications as these become clearer.
- The Board noted that the Libraries' Transformation Programme has taken into account the requirement to provide a 'comprehensive library service'.
- The Board recommends that pilots are implemented in rural areas, in conjunction with the local community, in order to explore ways of providing library services that better meet identified need, than the traditional mobile library service. Such pilot schemes could include on-line ordering and delivery of books.
- The Board would like to see the Library and Information Service move further towards providing e-services and would like more publicity of this service and the computer skills training available.
- The Board supports an evidence based approach towards the book fund that takes account of actual stock usage, as well as comparative data from other local authorities.
- The Board recommends that when consulting on opening hours, people should be encouraged to propose alternative patterns of opening hours that best meet their needs, which includes swapping the times and days of the week when libraries are open e.g. Saturday afternoon for Monday morning.
- The Board looks forward to undertaking a broader scrutiny of the long term plans for the Library and Information Service as the strategic commissioning strategy is developed.

Councillor Mike Blanch
Chair