

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 9 November 2017

Report of the Head of Asset Management

Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:
Rishton & Clayton-le-Moors,
and Lytham

Proposals Relating to Libraries

(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer – not for publication)

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Executive Summary

This report outlines proposals in relation to the provision of library facilities.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order No. 25 have been complied with.

Recommendation

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) Approve the development of a detailed options appraisal for the provision of a library service in Lytham.
- (ii) Consider the issues relating to Rishton Library, dismiss the community interest in the site and rescind the decision to declare the property surplus.

Background and Advice

At the meeting held on 13 July 2017 Cabinet approved a report setting out proposals for the re-opening of Libraries across Lancashire. This report provides an update on proposals in relation to two further library services.

Lytham Library

Provision of a library service in Lytham was originally delivered from Lytham Library and Registration offices within Lytham Institute and closed on 30 September 2016. The former library was operated from part of a building owned by Fylde Borough

Council, subject to the County Council having a user right agreement, but is under consideration in relation to its suitability for future service delivery. It is proposed that a range of options for service delivery are considered.

If agreed, the findings of the options appraisal will form the basis of a further report for consideration by Cabinet.

Rishton Library

Rishton library is subject to a live proposal for a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) with detail relating to the application set out at Appendix 'B'.

Rishton Library was declared surplus in September 2016 and remains operational pending completion of works to Copper House Children's Centre, Rishton to install a 'satellite' library service.

Rishton Library building is registered as an asset of community value and there is a listed community right to bid in place, should the building be disposed of. The current terms for a transfer under the Community Asset Transfer policy, and as further agreed at the Cabinet meeting on 10 August 2017, are for a 125 year lease. This would still be considered as a disposal for the purposes of a community right to bid. Any transfer of Rishton Library as a community asset transfer would trigger a moratorium period allowing the group that has registered the asset six weeks to decide if they are still interested in buying the site and then up to six months to raise funds to be able to bid for the property on the open market. More information outlining the community right to bid and issues relating to Rishton Library is included at Appendix 'A'.

In this regard any change to the provision of a library service in the Rishton area would be subject to a formal consultation with the public about which form they would prefer their service to take, e.g. a full county council library, an independent community library, a satellite library, etc.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

The timescale for the reopening of facilities that have closed, and in some cases had been prepared for sale/transfer, requires a significant amount of activity including the following considerations: recruitment of additional staff; purchase of furniture; building and equipment safety checks; building condition works; ICT facilities and infrastructure; and the securing of book stock.

The use of re-instated library buildings will also be reviewed to ensure flexible use of buildings and identify opportunities for other service delivery by County Council services and third parties that will both enhance the benefit offered to communities and support their sustainability

Risk management

Financial

Once the options for the provision of a library service in Lytham are fully scoped they will form the basis of a report to Cabinet. This will include a full assessment of any financial costs and impacts.

The Government introduced flexibility for capital receipts to be used to fund revenue expenditure that meets certain criteria. As part of the County Council's budget for 2017/18 a value of £12.500m income from capital receipts is budgeted for with a further £5.000m built into the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2018/19. It is important to note that the decision to retain Rishton Library may impact on the achievement of the required value of capital receipts and consequently any associated revenue expenditure that was/is dependent upon the same. This will be monitored closely throughout this financial year.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
The Property Strategy (Neighbourhood Centres) Response to Consultation	8&26/9/2016	Steve Browne/(01772) 534121
Community Asset Transfer and Independent Community Libraries	7/12/2016	Mel Ormesher/(01772) 536966
Community Asset Transfer and Independent Community Libraries	23/1/2017	Mel Ormesher/(01772) 536966
Community Asset Transfer and Independent Community Libraries	9/3/2017	Mel Ormesher/(01772) 536966
Property Strategy (Neighbourhood Centres) - Community Asset Transfer and Independent Community Libraries	6/4/2017	Mel Ormesher/(01772) 536966
Property Strategy - Community Asset Transfer, Independent Community Libraries and vacated Children's Centres on school sites	27/4/2017	Mel Ormesher/(01772) 536966
Proposals relating to Library Buildings which were closed/proposed for closure as part of the Property Strategy (Neighbourhood Centres)	13/7/2017	Mike Kirby/(01772) 533285
Proposals relating to Library Buildings and Community Asset Transfer	10/8/2017	Mel Ormesher/(01772) 526966

Proposals relating to Library Buildings and Community Asset Transfer 14/9/2017

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Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

Appendices 'A' and 'B' are not for publication - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information