



Executive
23 May 2011

**Report from the Director of
Environment and Neighbourhood
Services**

Wards affected:
ALL

**Update on the implementation of the Libraries
Transformation Project**

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report updates Members on the implementation of the Libraries Transformation Project, including the closure of the six libraries

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That members note this report.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 At its meeting of 11 April, Executive Committee decided to proceed with the Libraries Transformation Project. The extensive report and accompanying information are still available online. That decision was called-in by the Scrutiny Committee, who considered the matter on 27 April 2011.
- 3.2 A key issue in the original decision report is support to young people studying. This was raised as a major issue during the consultation, and as such was addressed in the extensive Library offer set out at paragraph 4 of that report.
- 3.3 That report did not contain detailed timescales on the implementation of the proposals, and the operational delivery is delegated to officers. Detailed planning is now underway.
- 3.4 At the Scrutiny Committee a number of delegations were heard, one of which was from the Youth Parliament. They expressed particular concern about study space during the 2011 exam season, and asked for reassurances about the availability of space. This resulted in a referral from the Scrutiny

Committee back to this Committee The Scrutiny Committee agreed the following recommendation:

The Executive to ensure that the existing Libraries or suitable alternative local premises continue to be available for young people throughout the 2011 exam period

- 3.5 This report is to confirm to members that no libraries will be closed until after the last 'A' Level exam, which will be on 1 July 2011. Accordingly, there is no need for the Executive to take any additional steps to address the Scrutiny Committee recommendation, as the existing libraries will continue to be available for young people throughout the 2011 exam period.
- 3.6 At the time of writing, it remains difficult to give a confirmed date of closure of the six libraries, due to management of variables including contractual notice periods for facilities, the profile of staff who are leaving and the potential legal proceedings (see para 5.2 below).
- 3.7 Members are reminded that on 11 April they decided to take a report detailing implementation of the Project at the meeting in April 2012.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The financial implications of the Libraries Transformation project were set out in detail in the report of 11 April.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The legal implications of the Libraries Transformation project were set out in detail in the report of 11 April.
- 5.2 Members are informed that the Council has very recently received a pre action protocol letter from solicitors on behalf of two library users in which they set out their grounds for challenging the Council's decision on the Library service. A response is being prepared by the Council. The library users may commence legal proceedings against the Council by way of Judicial Review. This could also have implications for the date of closure of the six libraries.

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 The diversity implications of the Libraries Transformation project were set out in detail in the report of 11 April.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

- 7.1 There are no direct staffing implications of this report

Background Papers

None additional to those cited in the report of 11 April

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