

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE ORGANISATION POLICY AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE OF MEETING: 29 JANUARY 2019

**SUBJECT OF REPORT: LIBRARIES & CHILDREN'S CENTRE UPDATE
(COMMUNITY ACCESS REVIEW)**

TOWN OR PARISH: ALL

**OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: ANDY BRISLEY, LIBRARIES &
INFORMATION MANAGER AND JENIE EASTMAN, EARLY YEARS AND
CHILDREN'S CENTRES SERVICE LEAD**

KEY DECISION: N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the panel receives and comments on the progress being made with regards to the delivery of the agreed outcomes of the Community Access Review since the previous report of the 13 March 2018

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report provides a further update on activities to deliver the agreed outcomes of the Community Access Review (CAR) since the previous report of 13 March 2018

2. POLICY

The Corporate Plan sets out the vision for North Somerset as: *a great place to live where people communities and businesses flourish*, and for the organisation to provide: *modern, efficient services and a strong voice for North Somerset*.

The review is part of the Council's transformation programme and cuts across all four themes of the programme with a particular emphasis on 'Delivering Together' and 'One Council'.

Corporate Strategies and Policies

Key internal strategic documents will ensure these are considered as the project progresses. These documents include:

- **The Medium Term Financial Plan**
- The Customer Access Strategy
- The Corporate Asset Management Strategy (and Asset Management Plan)
- The Digital Access Strategy

3. DETAILS

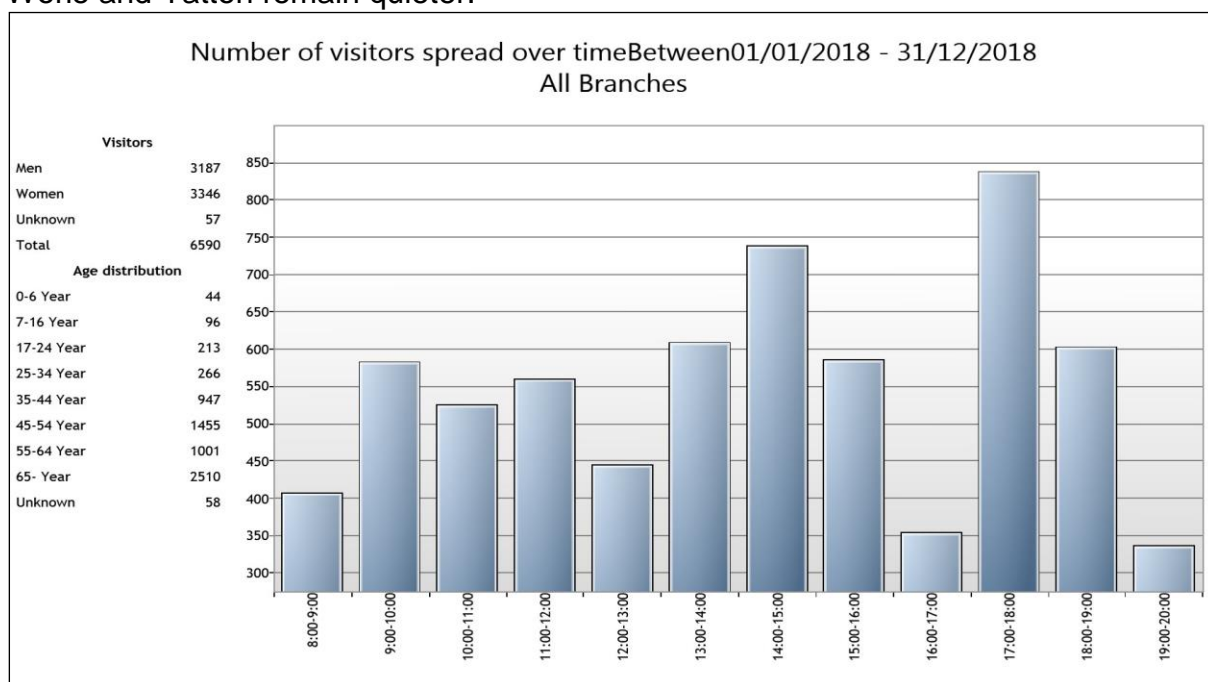
3.1 LIBRARIES

3.1.1 Premises

Phase 1 of CAR resulted in 3 premises, Pill Library, Yatton Library and Worle Children's Centre undergoing alterations to enable them to operate as combined Libraries and Children's Centres, all of which have now been operational for over a year. The overall customer feedback in these localities continues to be positive and Yatton has seen a considerable growth in lettings of the community meeting rooms. Worle library which relocated from purpose built premises remains quiet. Considerable efforts to promote the library within the local community are ongoing. Further savings required by Children's centres during 18/19 have seen the withdrawal of their staff based at Yatton and Pill, with local activities and events now undertaken by visiting Children's Centre officers from other localities. The sale of the old Worle Library to a local business, realised a capital sum of £235,000.

3.1.2 Extended Access

Use of the Extended Access system installed at Portishead, Winscombe, Worle and Yatton Libraries has continued to grow in popularity. The system, which allows registered service users to enter the library during unstaffed hours between 8am and 8pm every day, is proving particularly popular at Portishead and Winscombe, whilst Worle and Yatton remain quieter.



The four libraries were visited on over 6500 occasions during Extended Access hours in 2018, with over 3500 of these by users aged over 55.

3.1.4 MTFP savings 2018/19

Library service budget reduction savings for 2018/19 included a number of premises proposals involving the closure of Long Ashton library and work to seek savings through possible relocation of both Clevedon and Nailsea libraries.

- **Long Ashton** Library closure was the subject of considerable engagement with local members and Long Ashton Parish Council. Following a consultation exercise in September 2018, (<http://consult.n-somerset.gov.uk/consult.ti/LAL18/consultationHome>) the premises closed at the end of December and were replaced by a twice weekly mobile library service at the Community Centre. The initial visits have proven popular with in excess of 50 residents attending during each 2 hour slot. North Somerset officers continue to work closely in support of the Parish Council library working group which aims to establish a small community library at an alternative location within the village.
- **Clevedon and Nailsea** libraries remain under review with the aim of achieving further savings across the 2 sites of £100,000 in 2020/21. Officers will continue to engage with the Town Councils and other partners to ensure that both libraries will be considered as part of the overall emerging plans for the towns.
- **Staff Structures and opening hours.** Revised staff structures established in July 2017 as a result of CAR were matched very closely to the operational opening hours of Libraries. Further budget reductions required during 2018/19, resulted in the loss of a further 3.5 FTE staff providing MTFP savings of £120,000. In consequence of these savings, opening hours at a number of sites were further amended or reduced.

3.2 CHILDREN'S CENTRES

Children's Services maintain a network of 13 children's centres across North Somerset, some of which are now integrated community sites with libraries, such as Pill, Worle and Yatton. There are two outstanding Community Access Review developments still progressing;

3.2.1 Early Birds Nursery at Long Ashton

Building work started on 2nd January to create space for an additional 12 childcare places. These will be available from March 2019 and plan to be running at capacity from April 2019. This will increase revenue and support childcare sufficiency in the local area. An additional 4 Early Years workers are being recruited to ensure we continue to provide quality childcare.

Close links are maintained with children's centre team to improve outcome for children & families. Family Support workers continue to work with families in the local area. One to one 'Theraplay' sessions with children & parents run from the nursery site. There are plans to continue to run baby clinics on site. Long Ashton is well served with regular parent and

toddler groups in other community spaces and there are pre-schools at both Birdwell & Northleaze primary schools. The children's centre continues to support the monthly 'Saturdays' at the Hebron Church.

3.2.2 Banwell, Winscombe & Sandford Children's Centre

North Somerset Council is in negotiation with Banwell Parish Council to bring forward the lease surrender date from April 2020. We wait for both sides legal representatives to finalise the terms of the licence. Banwell Parish Council plan to relocate their Parish Office at the site and encourage a range of other community users. The children's centre team continue to run services on site that include Forest School, Child Health Visitor clinics, breast-feeding group, childminder network, baby massage and paediatric first aid. Family Support workers continue to work with families in the local area.

4. LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

- Libraries – 1964 Public Libraries & Museums Act, superintended by the Libraries Minister (Michael Ellis MP). <https://tinyurl.com/h9xv75u>
- Children's centres – 2006 Childcare Act, 2009 Apprenticeship, Skills, Childcare & Learning Act. <https://tinyurl.com/yd5j3z5o>

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

There are project governance arrangements in place. A risk log has been produced and reputational, legal and financial risk are closely monitored, managed and mitigation actions agreed.

6. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

The council produced detailed service data to help inform the consultation and engagement process of Phase 1 of the Community Access Review. This information was published online and available to the public. Equality considerations continue to be at the centre of our on-going service re-design. We will continue to engage communities, staff and equality groups as we develop our services.

Full equality Impact Assessments were undertaken for the budget savings identified. Early engagement in terms of sharing the proposals with the North Somerset Equalities Stakeholder Group took place. This is proposed to continue.

The relevant EIA documents can be found at:

<http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc28603.pdf>

The Children's Centre EIA can be found from page 181 and the Library EIA from page 237

7. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

There are statutory requirements in relation to both library and children's centre services. For example the Public Library and Museums Act 1964 places a duty on library authorities to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service which broadly speaking means a service free of charge for people who live, work or study in their area to borrow or refer to books, printed material and pictures in line with their needs and requirements. Similarly, the Childcare Act 2006 (reinforced in the 2009 Act) requires local authorities to play an important strategic role in the provision of childcare in their area and places a duty on authorities to provide or commission children's centres.

8. CLOSURE OF COMMUNITY ACCESS REVIEW

The Community Access Review Board, at their meeting on 10 January 2018, agreed to the closure of the Review. The board acknowledged the considerable changes, integrated working and savings achieved by both Libraries and Children's centres and agreed that the services had now returned to business as usual. Outstanding service specific projects (eg Clevedon & Nailsea Libraries) will be picked up through a new board to be established later this year.

AUTHOR

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Exec report 6/2/18 - budget

<http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc28624.htm>

- Previous Scrutiny Reports

CoCo 7 November 2017

<http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc28403.pdf>

CoCo 14 March 2017

<http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc27963.pdf>

CoCo 13 March 2018

<http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc28676.pdf>

- December 16 Exec Report – CAR
<http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc27794.pdf>
- Long Ashton Library Consultation
<http://consult.n-somerset.gov.uk/consult.ti/LAL18/consultationHome>