The Vision for Library and Information Services 2013 - 2016
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Executive Summary

The Library and Information Service has achieved well against the Vision for 2009 -12: new libraries were opened in Rye and Wadhurst, Forest Row Library was significantly refurbished and extended, self-service facilities were implemented in a further three libraries and we continued to develop modern library services for the people of East Sussex.

The next Vision will be informed by a number of factors including:

- The Council Promise
- Views of residents as expressed in recent consultation and surveys
- The Library and Information Service Review 2012
- The unique make up of our county

There are three key targets which will feature in our medium term planning:

1. **Ensuring libraries are at the heart of communities and the first point of contact**
   - Providing new libraries with increased facilities – in Seaford, Newhaven and Hastings
   - Increasing the number of Community Help Points
   - Increasing access to a wider range of public services
   - Ensuring libraries support and promote the work of the County Council
   - Working with partners to improve services to the community

2. **Enabling people to develop their potential and improve their life chances through**:
   - Access to lifelong learning and skills, including employability
   - Supporting health and wellbeing
   - Supporting literacy
   - Providing access to information and advice
   - Providing access to and guidance on using digital services
   - Developing volunteering opportunities

3. **Working more effectively with reduced resources by**
   - Developing choice for customers in the way they access services
     - Providing more self-service facilities
     - Using technology to work more effectively and efficiently
     - More efficient use of buildings e.g. out of hours, review of opening hours
     - Targeting services to reflect the need of the local population e.g. focus on areas of deprivation
1. Foreword by Councillor Dowling

We know that libraries play a key role in communities. They provide community space where residents have access to the internet and information, access to council services, opportunities to read for pleasure, formal and informal learning opportunities and social interaction.

Libraries are well positioned to act as focal points in their communities and we are continuing to develop and improve the range of council services offered through our library facilities. For example, we already deal with applications for concessionary fares on our buses and help with discretionary payments. Libraries play an important role in the council’s communications strategy as focal points for the provision of council information in a systematic way across the full range of services.

We are diversifying the means of delivery by providing online services such as access to information and access to our library catalogue (our e-library service) and always remember that residents appreciate books and buildings and continue to invest in a £13 million programme of refurbishment and new libraries across the County.

Libraries play an important role in the economic wellbeing of the County: improving skills for both adults and children, offering accredited learning via our LearnDirect provision to increase employment chances, and providing the ‘Peoples Network’ - access to computers and the internet for those that don’t have the facilities at home. With the help of our volunteer Computer Buddies, we help people to get the skills they need to access online services and develop digital skills. We’re committed to helping small businesses to start up and flourish and we know how important digital inclusion and digital literacy is for residents to ensure they can make the most of opportunities presented via the internet and social media – the Library and Information Service is well placed to support this.

The County Council has promised to support the most vulnerable people and the Library and Information Service brings significant benefits to people’s lives. Use of these services contributes to wellbeing and personal development. Library staff help people to increase their life chances by providing access to learning, literacy, technology and information in ways to suit everyone – online, in our welcoming buildings and through outreach activities.

East Sussex County Council is committed to further development of the Library and Information Service for the benefit of East Sussex residents. We recognise the importance of libraries and are continuing to invest in new library buildings over the next three years to provide communities with the resources, information and community space they need to flourish.

Our Vision for the next three years has key themes of ensuring libraries are at the heart of communities, enabling residents to develop their potential and working effectively with reduced resources.
2. Background

Purpose
The key objective for the Library and Information Service is to develop a high quality library service which promotes reading and lifelong learning, and provides access to information and council services. The service is committed to providing excellent services to the people of East Sussex – being customer focussed, cost-effective and responding to the changing needs of our County.

What we do
The Library and Information Service offers lending, reference and information services, including newspapers and magazines, and local studies information, to anyone living, studying or working in East Sussex. We provide free access to computers (and have 250 available across the county), the Internet and a range of applications at our static libraries. In addition to lending books and e books, we also lend DVDs, story tapes and CDs for a charge. We operate two mobile libraries, providing a range of library services and a mobile office which delivers access to council services, learning opportunities and access to ICT facilities in remote areas.

Accredited online learning including literacy, numeracy and ICT is provided from libraries in Hastings, Bexhill, Eastbourne, Newhaven and Peacehaven, as well as Egerton Park Children's Centre.

Electronic access to our services, including the facility to reserve and renew resources online as well as access to online reference resources such as encyclopaedia, is available through our comprehensive web-pages at www.eastsussex.gov.uk/libraries. We offer a database of community information at www.escis.org.uk. People can follow us on Facebook at http://www.facebook.com/eastsussexlibraries and view our collection of historical images at http://www.flickr.com/photos/escchistoricalpics/

The Equal Access Service delivers a volunteer service to housebound customers and carers throughout the county, provides audio books free of charge to visually impaired readers and delivers reading and reminiscence resources to people in care.

The Schools Library and Museum Service provides resources and advice for schools and school librarians. This includes the loan of books and artefacts ranging from Roman coins to an entire Victorian kitchen. Schools can also have advice on the management of their school library. The service operates on a trading basis with income of approximately £400,000 per annum.

Statutory Requirements
There is a statutory requirement to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service under the terms of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. The Equality Act 2012 protects from discrimination people with one or more protected characteristic; age, gender, disability, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation and gender identity. The Public Sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act requires that public bodies show due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups.
3. Review of the Vision for the Library and Information Service 2009-12

Our Vision was:

“A sense of person, a sense of place”

We will provide library services which meet the needs of individuals, recognising their particular requirements and wishes, in the context of a service that enriches communities

The key strands to this strategy were serving individuals, supporting communities and empowering staff

Headline achievements include:

Our programme of construction and renovation:

- The new Wadhurst library opened in July 2010 - visitor numbers increased by over 50% and issues by 30%.
- Similarly, issues have doubled in the new Rye Library since it opened in January 2011.
- Forest Row Library was refurbished and extended in 2011.
- A new library and adult day care centre is being built in Seaford as part of a £6.6 million project.
- New libraries in Hastings and Newhaven are planned at a cost of £7.5million.
- Opened a new shared modern storage facility for Libraries and Records which offers economies of scale and therefore financial savings in terms of staffing and use of space.

Modern ICT infrastructure:

- Introduced free Wi-Fi provision in four libraries in the county - Eastbourne, Lewes, Peacehaven and Rye.
- Extended the provision of self-service facilities in libraries - in addition to Bexhill, Eastbourne and Lewes libraries, customers can self-serve in Crowborough, Langney, Rye and Uckfield Libraries.
- Introduced two telephone numbers for enquiries and renewals extending access past local library opening hours as well as launching an automated telephone renewal line in early 2012 providing a 24 hour service for customers.
- The launch of a successful Facebook site, with more than 1000 likes.
- Use of Flickr to give customers easy online access to photographic material.
- Launch of e-books service.

Increased usage/satisfaction:

- In 2011/12 there were 2,311,141 visits to library buildings, an increase of 1% on the previous year.
- Over 2.73 million items were borrowed from libraries in 2011/12.
- Over half a million searches were carried out on our online information resources including 328,869 searches on Ancestry and over 35,000 searches on Find My Past.
- There were 1,130,267 visitor sessions on our community information database, ESCIS.
- Supported 283 Learndirect learners to achieve a literacy or numeracy certificate in 2011/12.
Improved performance

- Over 10,000 children took part in the Summer Reading Challenge in 2012
- Managed by the Library and Information Services, HMP Lewes won the CILIP Prison Library of the Year 2012
- Expansion of adult learning via Learndirect provision; growth of contract from £180k to over £300k per annum, serving over 300 learners in 2011/12
- We embedded an efficient process to ensure all policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and accessible to staff

Working effectively with other council services and partners

- Worked with Adult Social Care Teams to promote services such as the Home Library Service, audio book and Large Print services.
- Worked with East Sussex Record Office and Children’s Services to create an exhibition of oral histories from people of diverse backgrounds who have moved to East Sussex. The exhibition toured libraries, community events and is now being used in schools.
- Worked with Public Health to promote national initiatives including Games 4 Life and Stop Smoking campaigns.
- Strengthened partnerships with the voluntary sector to promote their services and to promote our offer via their networks. Partners include Macmillan, Alzheimer's Society, East Sussex Association of the Blind, Eastbourne Blind Society, Active Rother/Hastings and Walking for Health.
- Successful partnership with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and Sussex Partnership Trust to develop and promote the Books on Prescription scheme of self help titles for adults and families – issues of titles included in the scheme increased by 86% in 2011/12 compared to 2010/11.
- Co-produced events for LGBT History Month with Bourne Out and Hastings and Rother Rainbow Alliance.
- Worked with Diversity Lewes and Afrikaba in Hastings to provide events for Black History Month.
- Bookbox Project – outreach collections of books are now available in Sussex Police custody suites, five women's refuges and Newhaven Foyer supported housing for 16-25 year olds.
- Worked with Booktrust to deliver Bookstart, a national initiative encouraging parents of under fives to share books and use libraries with their children
- University of Brighton - by hosting MA Information Studies research students. Development and delivery of the Public Library Skills Programme to offer an innovative CPD course to our own staff and other authorities, meeting an identified need for this type of activity and creating a career path.

Extended range of services

- Applications for Concessionary bus passes can now be made in all libraries
- Applications for Discount card for carers can be made in libraries
- Choice ID applications can be made in libraries to help young people get discounted travel
- Registration services are available in Uckfield Library now and will soon be launched in Hailsham Library
- Ask an Expert initiative is run countywide providing residents with information and advice from a wide range of experts
- Ran a Family Time course at HMP Lewes Library to provide prisoners with the skills to support their children in literacy.
- We created branding and launched a second-hand bookshop in Eastbourne Library to maximise income generation and offer volunteering opportunities at the beginning of December 2012
- A Community Help Point was launched in the new Rye Library in partnership with Rother District Council, providing a local service for Rye residents
- Reading groups have doubled with 150 in 2009 increasing to over 300 in 2012

We are now planning for 2013-2016, basing our plans on:
- Council priorities
- Views of residents as expressed in recent consultation and the Public Library User survey (Appendix One)
- Library and Information Service Review 2012 (Appendix One)
- The unique make up of our county

4.1 Council priorities

The Council’s Promise

We will, in partnership, make the best use of resources to:
- help make East Sussex prosperous and safe;
- support the most vulnerable people;
- improve and develop roads and infrastructure;
- encourage personal and community responsibility;
- deliver the lowest possible council tax; and
- be a voice for East Sussex, listening and answering to local people

The Vision for the Library and Information Service supports the Council’s Promise.

The Library and Information Service already contributes significantly to helping make East Sussex prosperous and safe, alleviating some of the problems residents may experience in the current economic climate such as unemployment and reduced income. Libraries offer free access to books, information and ICT at a time when people have less money. Staff help people get back into work by offering practical help such as courses in ICT and skills for life, as well as information about jobs and job-hunting. We promote social cohesion by encouraging people in communities to meet together and many families make the most of our free events. We provide children with access to free books and activities to help with homework and to encourage a lifelong love of reading. Older people are a significant part of our membership and many use libraries, mobile libraries and the mobile office as a point of social contact and attractive meeting space, as well as to use computers, learn how to get online, read newspapers and borrow books. We aim to support the start up of small businesses by providing working space and ICT facilities in library buildings and access to the resources and information they need to succeed.

In line with the Council’s Promise, the service will focus resources on supporting the most vulnerable people. Free access to the Library and Information Service has significant benefits for vulnerable people e.g. digital inclusion through free access to computers and the internet as well as support to learn how to access services online and volunteers from our Home Library Service deliver library materials to people who have difficulty leaving their home.

Over the next three years, we’ll ensure that those who need services most are aware of what is available in libraries that could enrich their lives, in both library buildings and online, through targeted promotional activities and outreach.

We contribute to the Council’s promise to improve and develop roads and infrastructure by providing information in libraries about transport schemes and infrastructure. We will continue to be the focal point where people can go to find out about the County Council, its plans and its services.
We will encourage personal and community responsibility by continuing to increase the number of volunteering roles and volunteers in libraries and encouraging communities to be more involved in the delivery and direction of services to ensure they meet the needs of local people. There are already over 300 people who volunteer with the Library and Information Service in a wide range of roles including computer buddies who help people to get online, home library service volunteers who deliver books and other items to those who can't visit the library, local studies volunteers who help us to sort and catalogue our historical local information and young people who help us to deliver the Summer Reading Challenge for children. We also have a new role of bookshop volunteer helping us to run our second hand bookshop in Eastbourne Library. We intend to offer more volunteering opportunities to encourage community involvement in our delivery of services and to provide people with meaningful, enjoyable volunteering roles which may lead to better employment chances and increased wellbeing.

We will play our part in helping to deliver the lowest possible council tax by continually reviewing our processes and practices to ensure we are as cost-effective as possible. One example of this is the Time and Motion review which was recently carried out in libraries. We will be implementing recommendations from this review which demonstrate areas of savings or income generation.

In everything we do we will be listening and answering to local people. We continually offer the opportunity to feed back on our services, through consultation, surveys and customer comments.

4.2 Views of residents as expressed in recent consultation and surveys

We have used a number of tools to gather data to inform our strategic planning, including

- Have Your Say - a major survey to find out how residents access library services
- The Public Library User Survey
- Consultation on new libraries

Have your Say
This survey gathered both qualitative and quantitative data and was carried out between February and May 2012. It was targeted at two different groups of people, the East Sussex resident’s panel and other residents.

In total, 2,544 responses were received - 862 from the residents’ panel and 1682 from other residents.

Conclusions from the Have Your Say survey
Two thirds (65%) of respondents use the library that is closest to their home and, their methods of transport for getting there are influenced by the proximity of the library and convenience or ease. For some a visit to the library was part of another activity. Respondents’ lifestyles had an effect on their borrowing habits as shown by the number of people who borrowed books on behalf of others and the number of books that respondents had the time to read in a week.

A large percentage of respondents have access to the internet (91%) however less than a fifth of these respondents were interested in ordering library books online (17%) or e-books online (19%). 605 respondents told us that they would be interested in helping to increase access to library services to help those who couldn’t get to a library and additional comments received (64) told us how important the mobile library service is to respondents.

A small number of respondents (37) hadn’t used the library because they had acquired books from other sources. As there are now more options available to acquire books at a low cost it is possible that some people may explore these options first rather than make the library their first port of call.
Respondents also told us that they used the internet to find out what they wanted to know rather than accessing the reference section of the library. The increased use of the internet is having an impact on how and where people find out what they want or need to know.

There are some differences between the views of the residents’ panel and the other respondents. This is particularly apparent in the results for the mobile library and usage of the library questions. These differences will need to be taken into account when making decisions.

The Public Library User Survey (PLUS) 2012

The PLUS survey is carried out nationally every three years and gives a comprehensive analysis of adult customers’ satisfaction with services and facilities on an individual library basis. It is extremely useful for tracking local trends in satisfaction levels as well as benchmarking against near neighbours and on a national basis. We use the information to target our resources on improvement.

Almost 7000 forms were completed by East Sussex customers in November 2012.

Headline data for East Sussex shows:

- 98% of customers rated customer care as very good or good
- 91% rated their library overall as very good or good
- Libraries which have had significant improvements since the previous survey in 2009, saw major increases in customer satisfaction e.g. overall satisfaction with Rye Library (new library opened in January 2011) increased from 75% to 95%, Forest Row (extended and refurbished in 2012) increased from 77% to 93% and Wadhurst increased from 68% to 99%. This endorses our strategic direction in terms of buildings and our customer focussed approach.
- Libraries we are working to improve such as Hastings, Newhaven and Seaford were rated lower by their customers e.g. Hastings 85%, Seaford 79% and Newhaven 73%

In terms of services:
- 67% indicated they visited to borrow books during their visit
- 20% intended to use a computer
- 24% visited to find information

When asked how the library has helped them with different aspects of their life, customers gave the following responses

- 36% said it helped with health and wellbeing
- 17% said it helped their family and relationships
- 20% said it helped to meet people
- 58% said they used the library for study or learning
- 32% said it helped to get online
- 10% said it helped with personal finance
- 11% said it helped with job seeking
- 8% said it helped with their job
- 27% said it helped with their retirement

Areas of improvement for the next three years identified by this survey are:

- Attractiveness of outside of buildings (65% average very good or good)
- Attractiveness of inside of some buildings e.g. Newhaven 46% and Hastings 62% against an average of 83%
- Choice of books (currently 76% rated very good or good)
- Opening hours were rated 89% overall but there are specific libraries where this is significantly lower e.g. Langney 65%, Newhaven 59%, Pevensey Bay 62%, Wadhurst 60%, Forest Row 64%
4.3 Review

An extensive review of the Library and Information service was carried out over 4 months in 2012. This review has had a significant impact on the Vision for 2013 - 2016

Executive summary of the Library Service Review 2012

The Library and Information Service (LIS) has travelled a long way over the last 7 years since the first Vision Document, putting it at the leading edge of service provision and addressing public needs. It has managed its finances in a challenging climate, refurbished its static libraries and planned for further renewal. It has led the agenda on community hubs and on “Total Place” working.

Libraries are the primary contact point between the public and the County Council. Based in the community, as a neutral and safe space they offer a valuable opportunity for the Council to meet with its customers. This network of contact points offers other council departments an environment to deliver their services, as demonstrated with the issuing of bus passes, the provision of health information and the skilling of the public, directly through Learndirect and indirectly through the provision of information, the People’s Network, books and support.

The LIS has challenging cost savings targets over 4 years resulting in staff reductions. It has demonstrated a proactive response to this by using channel shift initiatives such as self service and automated renewals. It is planning a time and motion/Lean study to ensure effective use of staff. However, in the long run, further reductions in staff will result in a reduction of service for the customer.

There is a statutory requirement to provide Library and Information services to the public and to base this service on an assessment of public need.

In order for the service to remain ahead it needs to stay flexible enough to undertake further changes as the environment dictates. It should aim to always deliver what the public need, before they need it and to focus attention on actions that mitigate the effect of staff reductions.

To be able to accomplish this it needs to:

- be smarter about assessing local needs
- be clearer about the current customer profile
- develop mechanisms for evaluating the success of the service
- continue to actively plan its workforce to provide for future needs within cost savings targets
- improve the marketing of its services to the public
- actively investigate opportunities to deliver County Council promises on behalf of, and in partnership with, other departments

4.4 Unique make up of East Sussex

East Sussex comprises the coastal urban boroughs of Eastbourne and Hastings, and the geographically larger, more rural districts of Lewes, Rother and Wealden. The East Sussex population grew by 34,400 or 7%, to 526,700 between 2001 and 2011, while the number of households rose by 17,300 to 231,900. Over three-quarters of the population live in urban areas or market towns.

The county is predominately rural geographically with almost two-thirds falling either within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or the South Downs National Park. The county’s population continues to age and Rother district ranks highest of all districts and unitary authorities in England based on percentage of the population aged 85+ and 90+. There are significant pockets of deprivation and the larger number of these can be found to the east of the county.

Investment in improved broadband connectivity and speed is taking place which helps to mitigate transport issues but poor connectivity still remains an issue.
5. The Vision for the Library and Information Service 2013 - 2016

The key priorities for the Vision 2013 - 2016 are:

- embedding libraries at the heart of communities and as the first point of contact
- enabling residents to maximise their potential
- working more effectively with reduced resources

5.1 Embedding libraries at the heart of communities and as the first point of contact

We will:

- Provide new libraries with increased facilities at Seaford, Newhaven, Hastings (including a new local studies centre) tailored to the needs of the local communities
- Carry out consultation with residents and stakeholders to inform the planning for new libraries
- Support the start up of small businesses by providing working space and ICT facilities in library buildings and access to the resources and information they need to succeed
- Use the analysis of the results of the Public Library User Survey carried out in November 2012, to implement improvements in line with customer views
- Increase the number of Community Help Points in library buildings to give residents better access to council services. Currently we have Help Points in Uckfield, Heathfield and Rye Libraries. We aim to extend this to another two libraries
- Provide a wider range of council services to give easier local access
- Contribute to the Council’s communication strategy by continuing to develop libraries as focal points for the provision of council information in a systematic way across the full range of services. We will support the work of other departments to promote their services and provide venues for them to reach residents
- Work with partners to improve services to the community

5.2 Enabling residents to develop their potential:

We will:

- Continue to provide resources, information and activities which contribute to lifelong learning.
- Help people to get the skills they need for employment by offering opportunities for online learning to gain qualifications.
- Provide access to resources, ICT facilities and the internet to help job seekers
- Continue to develop volunteering opportunities
• Support literacy by focusing our activities and outreach on those who need to develop this vital life skill

• Run initiatives and activities for families and children to support family cohesion, literacy and a lifelong love of reading.

• Continue to provide access to quality information in a range of formats

• Provide access and guidance to use digital services such as online banking, shopping and government websites

• Support the initiative to implement Superfast Broadband across the County by providing opportunities for people to develop the skills they need to get online and promoting the campaign in libraries

5.3 Working more effectively with reduced resources

We will:

• Work with the communities with the greatest need e.g. focus on areas of deprivation.

• Identify and target those people who would most benefit from using our services

• Work with the Communications Team to undertake customer segmentation and marketing campaigns to retain existing customers and attract new ones

• Promote use of online services including development of the virtual library

• Continue to develop self-service facilities in libraries

• Continue to find ways to use technology to work more effectively and efficiently

• Enable more community use of buildings e.g. out of hours

• Review opening hours

• Ensure best use of the stock fund – reprioritise spending

• Procure and implement a library management system with improved facilities for customers and more efficient staff processes

• Carry out a staffing review, informed by a recent Time and Motion study

• Improve access to and analysis of management information to drive performance improvement
APPENDIX ONE

Library and Information Service Review 2012

1  Executive Summary

1.1 The Library and Information Service (LIS) has travelled a long way over the last 7 years since the first Vision Document, putting it at the leading edge of service provision and addressing public needs. It has managed its finances in a challenging climate, refurbished its static libraries and planned for further renewal. It has led the agenda on community hubs and on “Total Place” working. In order for it to remain ahead it needs to be flexible enough to undertake further changes as the environment dictates. It should aim to always deliver what the public need, before they need it.

1.2 To be able to accomplish this it needs to:
- be smarter about assessing local needs
- be clearer about the current customer profile
- develop mechanisms for evaluating the success of the service
- continue to plan its workforce to provide for future needs
- improve the marketing of its services to the public

1.3 The Review Board considered the “so what” question, what impact does the service have on the life chances of the local community, and concluded that measuring this presents some serious challenges. It acknowledges that this is a national problem and that there is no “golden solution” anywhere else. However, the need to gather qualitative measures as well as identifying the effect of changes in the service is still important.

2.  Library Service Review

2.1 The Service
This Service Review covers the Library and Information Service which has an annual net budget of £6.6 million for 2011/2012.

The LIS offers lending, reference and information services, to anyone living, studying or working in East Sussex. It provides access to computers, the Internet and a range of applications in 24 static libraries – Appendix 1. In addition to lending books and e-books, it also lends DVDs and CDs for a small charge. It operates two mobile libraries, providing a range of library services and a mobile office which delivers access to council services, learning opportunities and access to ICT facilities in remote areas.

2.2 Scope of the Review

2.2.1 The Board acknowledged that the Library and Information Service constantly challenges itself through the use of tactical reviews. Currently there are 3 detailed areas under review:
- services to rural areas
- mobile libraries and the mobile office
- libraries within a five mile radius of central Eastbourne.

The Board chose not to investigate these areas in addition to the work that is already being carried out. However, the recommendations of this Service Review will feed into the results of these specific reviews and help direct the resulting action plans.

2.2.2 The following are also excluded from the review:
- stock purchase procedures – the library service is part of a purchasing consortium of nearly 50 authorities that ensures best price and practice
o Learndirect – this is a cost neutral service which is dependant on external funding, that could be reviewed as part of a wider service review of adult education
o SLAMS – this is a traded service which is large enough to warrant its own review
o The Prison Library – the provisions of this service are outlined in the Service Level Agreement with HM Prison Service
o Capital Programme – all bids are made through a robust programme of reconciling policy, performance and resources and are linked to identified service priorities

2.3 Objectives of the Review
To establish a service offer which is sustainable for the future within a strategic commissioning framework:
- demonstrate that it meets needs
- achieve the aims and priorities of the council
- be affordable in the context of the financial constraints
- be clearly communicated to customers and stakeholders so that expectations are managed and the service offer is clearly understood and meets customers’ needs
- deliver value for money for our customers
- have due regard to the Equality Act 2010

3. Approach
The Review is overseen by a Service Review Board, supported by a Service Review Team and challenged by an external critical friend as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Job Title / Organisation</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Sue Hawker</td>
<td>External Critical Friend</td>
<td>Director Business Change, West Sussex County Council</td>
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4. Evidence Considered

4.1 The review gathered evidence from the following:
- Policy Steers (Appendix 2) and interview with Lead Member
- Business Plans
- Vision for Library and Information Service 2009 - 2012
- Performance data
- Interviews with library staff, key stakeholders and partners
- Interviews with other library services: 3 Local Authorities and two non-public library services
- Results of survey commissioned in 2009
- CIPFA national Public Library User Survey and Benchmarking Tool
- Literature Review
- Documents published by MLA (Museums, Libraries and Archives) Council and the Arts Council
5 Background

5.1 History

5.1.1 Public lending libraries started to appear in the 19th Century to provide opportunities for self improvement for the working class. The 1964 Act made it a statutory duty for Councils to provide a library service of lending and reference, free at the point of use. This heralded an expansion of library provision and investment.

5.1.2 However, in the 1990s the number of available books, professional staff, issues and visits to libraries began to decline. In addition, 1997 saw the end of the Net Book Agreement, an agreement between publishers and booksellers guaranteeing a fixed price. This opened the way for supermarkets in particular to sell popular titles such as lightweight fiction and celebrity books at discounted prices. The effect has been an explosion in lightweight publishing and a major reduction in “serious” publishing.

5.1.3 Recent influences in library and information service provision include:
- national initiatives such as the Summer Reading Challenge and World Book Day UK (both started in 1998)
- the Peoples Network, launched in 2000, to provide universal access to the Internet
- the increase in on-line reference material and journals
- the growth of information and information sharing
- the availability of information through the Internet
- the change in culture from libraries being silent study areas, focussed on book lending, to spaces where the public can interact with the service and Council, where children are welcome and where events are staged
- one stop shop

5.2 East Sussex Library and Information Service

5.2.1 In 2005 the Library and Information Service launched its first Vision statement, outlining the direction of travel for the following 3 years. The main aims were:
- to provide access to books, learning and reading
- to develop digital citizenship
- to develop community and civic values
- to have trained and expert staff

5.2.2 Achievements through this time included:
- opening of a new library in Lewes
- issues rose by 2% in 2008/9
- self service facilities were piloted in Bexhill and implemented in 2 further libraries
- 250 People’s Network computers were replaced
- 8 libraries were refurbished
- adult learning through Learndirect grew from £60k contract to £200K
- the Mobile Office was launched

5.2.3 In 2009 the second 3 year Vision document was launched: “A sense of person, a sense of place.” The key strands were empowering staff, serving individuals and supporting communities.

5.2.4 Achievements through this time included:
opening of a relocated and larger Library in Rye, including a Community Help Point, in partnership with Rother District Council
- refurbishment of Wadhurst, Forest Row and Hastings Reference libraries
- self service facilities introduced to 4 more libraries
- work on a major new development in Seaford commenced
- plans developed for Hastings and Newhaven libraries
- centralised phone numbers implemented
- an increase in subscription services
- an increase in all on-line activity
- an increase in children undertaking the Summer Reading Challenge by 32% in 2009 and a further 10% in 2010

5.2.5 A key objective for the service has been the training and development of its staff. This has been achieved through a number of initiatives, including:
- the development and implementation of a training passport for Library assistants
- the development of professional training in co-operation with the University of Brighton.

5.3 Trends

5.3.1 Changes resulting from advances in technology will continue to provide a challenge and opportunities for the service. Recent changes include the advent of e-books and the increased use of social media as a means to communicate with the public.

5.3.2 There is a national move towards providing public services in community hubs and libraries are well placed to deliver this agenda. This brings economies for the service providers and a “one stop shop” benefit to the user.

5.3.3 There is also a drive by service providers (both public and private) to interact with customers through the use of IT rather than through traditional media such as by letter or phone. Libraries will have an increasingly important role in enabling the public by providing the People’s Network and through skills development.

5.3.4 Physical visits to East Sussex libraries are declining in numbers in line with the national trend. However, when libraries have been refurbished or moved to more effective locations, then footfall increases bringing benefits to the library user and the local economy. – see paragraph 6.6 Activity

5.3.5 The pace of change, through technological, environmental and social factors has increased exponentially in recent years and is likely to continue to do so. An ability to adapt to these changes is essential for effective service delivery. There is a constant need to assess local needs, monitor the changing environment and review current thinking in the industry.

6 Findings and Conclusions

6.1 Statutory Requirements and Local Strategic Framework

6.1.1 Under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 the Library and Information Service has a statutory duty “to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof” and this duty extends to all those resident, working or studying in the county. (Appendix 3) What is less defined is what “comprehensive” and “efficient” mean. Under the Equalities Act 2010 the council has a duty to have regard for the needs of people who have 7 protected characteristics. (Appendix 3) Also, under the General Duty of the Local Government Act 1999 the Council “must make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness” and consult with representatives of service users. (Appendix 3)
6.1.2 The Local Inquiry conducted by Sue Charteris on behalf of the DCMS looked into plans that the Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council were proposing around restructuring of the library service. The inquiry found that the council was in breach of its statutory duties because it had failed to make an assessment of local needs.

The inquiry found that:
- the council failed to have a strategic plan for the Library Service
- the council failed to have a plan and commitment to a comprehensive outreach service
- the review of the service was focused on asset management and cost savings
- the plans failed to meet the needs of some deprived communities and could not show due regard for the needs of children.
- the council had failed to consult adequately with its local residents regarding the closure of a library

6.1.3 The Vision for the East Sussex Library and Information Service, 2009 – 2012, is a document outlining 3 key strands of the Library and Information Strategy over 3 years - empowering staff, serving individuals and supporting communities. This document includes plans for consultation and targets in 4 key service areas:
1. Increase membership and usage of library service
2. Increase access to library service, council services and lifelong learning by using ICT effectively
3. Develop libraries at the heart of the community
4. Ensure staff have the knowledge and expertise to deliver high quality services and that there are sound performance management systems in place

6.1.4 The document is supported by an Equal Access Strategy, a Strategy for Library Services for Children and Young People in East Sussex, a Strategy for Library Services for Older People in East Sussex, an Information Service Strategy and a Local Studies Strategy. Equality Impact Assessments have been completed for all of these strategies.

6.1.5 The Vision document sets out the measurable actions planned to fulfil these strategic goals. However, as discussed at 6.4 below, while it is clear that the service is constantly evolving, more could be done to evaluate the actions and demonstrate the impact of the service in a more tangible way.

**Conclusion:**

A The Library and Information Service is required to have an on-going strategic plan, based on local needs assessment, which meets the needs of local people, particularly deprived people and people who fall within the 7 protected characteristics. Service users or their representatives must be consulted on these plans. This is particularly important around services that may change/reduce or appear to change/reduce.

The previous Vision documents broadly achieved this.

The Vision for Library and Information Service, 2012 – 2015 will be key to outlining a strategic plan to a standard that meets the Charteris recommendations. See paragraphs 6.7 and 6.8

B The Library and Information Service has excellent plans in place to meet its requirements under the Equalities Act 2010.

6.2 Political Steer

There is a clear political steer at this time that there will be no closures of static libraries.

6.3 Professional Steers

6.3.1 In October 2009, the Chartered Institute of Library Information Professionals (CILIP) published a document entitled “What Makes a Good Library Service?” This outlined guidelines for:
The document gives a 10 point checklist for assessing whether the authority is providing a good library service (Appendix 4).

Conclusion:
C There is evidence that the Library and Information Service is meeting all 10 points on the CILIP checklist and is providing a good library service.

6.4 Measurement of Effectiveness

6.4.1 The purpose of the Library and Information Service was defined during the review as “Helping to resource and empower the community to live to the best of their ability.” (This resonates with the published statements from other providers such as Kent County Council – “To enhance the quality of life for all Kent’s residents and communities, by stimulating lifelong imagination, exploration and discovery.”)

6.4.2 At a general level there was much anecdotal evidence that had come from users about how the service had made a difference to them at the moment of interaction with the service. There was less evidence of the longer term effect of the service.

6.4.3 Specific evidence about the impact of the service is hard to find. Various staff at all levels were asked “how do you know you are doing a good job?” Only two answers gave examples that clearly illustrated this:
1. After the Summer Reading Challenge, teachers reported that pupils returned to school two reading levels higher than pupils who hadn’t undertaken the challenge.
2. After changing the way books were presented on the shelves following some training, the children’s area in Lewes had noticed a substantial increase in issues despite a reduction of available stock on the shelves.

6.4.4 Performance is quantitatively measured at the activity level - increase in users, issues etc. Feedback about whether the Library and Information Service makes a significant difference to the prosperity, literacy or life chances of the local community is more variable. Although measuring such things is difficult at best and subjective at worst, attempts should be made whenever possible, particularly where there are major changes to the way that services are provided. For example, a set of training modules has been developed with the University of Brighton to provide professional training for staff. This type of professional training which focuses on Public Library provision is not currently available elsewhere. The Management team should be given credit for identifying a problem and creatively coming up with a solution. A further step would be to identify the impact that this investment is going to have on the service and service users in quantifiable terms.

6.4.5 After changes have been implemented the impact is measured quantitatively. However, qualitative measures have not been measured as effectively.

Conclusion
D Evaluation of activity is the key measure of success employed and this is undertaken comprehensively. To be able to prove efficiency and effectiveness, other forms of measurement should be pursued, particularly around the impact that activity has, wherever possible. This should be built into the planning phase of any project.

E Managers should be able to identify the change that they are expecting in staff who undertake training and then assess whether this change has happened. They should also be able to identify what
difference this change will make to the provision of the service. This should be at a service wide level, not just individually.

6.5 Benchmarking and Measurements of Efficiency

6.5.1 Visits were made to 3 other authorities and two non-public library services. (Appendix 5) The 3 other authorities were all pursuing the model of community hubs, partnership working and matching service provision against local needs. Two authorities had dramatically reduced their mobile library services. None of these other services were undertaking major initiatives that were appropriate for East Sussex that hadn’t already been implemented or planned for. There were a number of options at an operational level that could be considered.

6.5.2 CIPFA collects and publishes public library statistics on an annual basis. Comparison can be made with “near neighbours” as defined by CIPFA. In addition, East Sussex County Council participates in the Public Library User Survey (PLUS) which is carried out every three years. The survey measures customer experience and can be used for benchmarking. (Appendix 6a and 6b)

Conclusion

F The LIS Policy Steer, outlining the direction for the service, is in line with the policy steers of neighbouring authorities. In many cases the service is ahead of its peers, with a streamlined service, working in partnership with other ESCC services and external partners.

G The Library and Information service is comparable with its near neighbours in terms of number of electronic stations, staffing numbers and book stock. It has one of the highest populations per service point indicating that there are fewer libraries per head of population than many other authorities.

H Out of 15 comparable services it had the 5th lowest expenditure and 3rd highest income in 2009 -2010. It had one of the lowest spend on total lending stock in 2009-2010.

I In the 2009 PLUS survey, which looked into customer experience, 88% rated their library very good or good, taking everything into account. The service attained the lowest score overall in comparison with all of the English Counties that carried out the survey, the highest being 94%. Since this survey there has been an investment in a refurbishment programme. The next survey, due this year, should indicate improvements, particularly around specific libraries that performed less well. This needs to be monitored closely.

6.6 Finance

6.6.1 The annual net budget was £6.6 million for 2011/2012. Serving a population of 515,500 residents it costs less than £13 per person per year.

6.6.2 The budget forecast for the Library and Information Service is to come in on-line at the end of this financial year.

6.6.3 Income from fines and reservations has been declining, principally through improving communications with service users about overdue items and availability of stock. (Appendix 7) Loss of income has been managed through careful control of expenditure.

6.6.4 Analysis of the expenditure per library in 2009/10 is shown in Appendix 8. See Appendix 8, worksheet 2, for an estimate of expenditure, visits and issues for the current financial year, for 3 refurbished libraries. Of note is the effect of the capital investment at Rye Library. There is a marked improvement in cost effectiveness at Rye Library which had been the most expensive library per visit and issue. There is also an improvement for Wadhurst Library. Annual expenditure for Forest Row
has increased dramatically, resulting in increased unit costs at this site. However, overall the refurbishment programme has resulted in better cost effectiveness.

6.6.5 A reduction in the Book Fund has been managed through:
- participating in the new CBC contract that gives greater discounts
- providing on-line resources, some negotiated in collaboration with other authorities – the Encyclopaedia Britannica is a national contract
- circulation of stock that offers regular users access to a wider selection
- use of paperbacks rather than hardbacks

There has been no increase in complaints regarding the stock.

6.6.6 There is an existing 3 year financial plan with savings targets:
- 2012/13 £210,000 – 3% of budget
- 2013/14 £207,000 – 3% of budget, plus a share of £40,000
- 2014/15 £40,000 – 1% of budget

The savings for 2011/12 were £215,000

The savings planned in neighbouring authorities are outlined in Appendix 5

6.6.7 These savings will be achieved through staff reductions and changes to some back office functions. The service will absorb the effects of inflation on the bookstock budget. The result will be a slight loss in service and longer waiting times for books and for enquiries. There are currently no plans to manage savings targets beyond those identified in 6.5.6.

6.6.8 Quarter 3 dashboard is attached – Appendix 9

Conclusion

J Income is likely to continue to fall – hire of DVDs is declining and e-mail reminders and the ability to renew on-line are reducing fines from overdue books. Other forms of income, or further efficiencies, will need to be found if current levels of service are to be maintained.

K The cost analysis exercise should be completed at the end of the financial year and the impact of investment carefully assessed.

6.7 Activity

6.7.1 In the year to November 2011, over three and a half million transactions were made in East Sussex Libraries, by nearly 115,000 borrowers.

6.7.2 The current trend is for certain activity levels to go down. (Appendix 10) This is in line with the national trend and is unlikely to change in the near future. But increase in footfall would bring benefits to the local community, offers staff the opportunity to interact with users and expands opportunities for other services to respond to customer needs. This can be achieved through signposting or even having a shared presence such as at Rye Library.

6.7.3 Marketing of services is universally held to be very difficult for libraries. Evidence also shows that the public are not fully aware of what the Library and Information Service offers. If increase in footfall is deemed to be important, then effective marketing will need to be a focus for the service.

6.7.4 However, on-line activity is increasing and the need for on-line services can be seen as a development opportunity as well as an opportunity to market services to the public thus increasing "virtual" footfall. The Library Service Facebook page was launched this year. Initial feedback is that this has been very well received.
6.7.5 The relocation of Rye Library with improved facilities and services showed a sharp increase in issues and visits. This pattern is reflected in the refurbishment of Wadhurst and Forest Row. (Appendix 11) Such refurbishments generate a “buzz” in the local community and give the Library and Information Service an opportunity to communicate its service offer.

6.7.6 Extensive building works at the Sovereign Harbour development brought new people into the County. However, provision for library services was not included in the plans. This is a loss of opportunity for the Library and Information Service specifically and the County Council in general. This is an example of the location issue being addressed by the current specific reviews.

6.7.7 Future building works are planned in the Wealden area which may impact on services.

**Conclusion**

L Communication with the public on what is available physically in the libraries and on-line will remain an issue for the service. This is particularly true if an increase in footfall is to be achieved. Marketing will be a key priority for the service and refurbishments/new builds offer perfect opportunities to convey what a modern library service can offer.

M Having the right library in the right place, such as in Rye, clearly meets the local need in an effective way. To remain effective the Library and Information Service will be required to monitor changes in population and their needs. Monitoring developments and remaining agile enough to respond is vital for the future of the service.

6.8 Consultation

6.8.1 There is plenty of evidence of consultation on planned changes to the service. Each change in recent years has been accompanied by specific consultation.

6.8.2 In the late summer and autumn of 2009 an extensive public survey of users and non users of library services took place in East Sussex. The questionnaire focused on people’s opinions of the services. It also asked non users why they didn’t use the service.

6.8.3 On the 27th February 2012 surveys were launched to explore customer views on:
- services to rural areas
- mobile libraries and the mobile office
- libraries within a five mile radius of Eastbourne.

6.8.4 A survey has also been launched to establish whether local organisations would like to work with the Library and Information Service to improve access to services.

6.8.5 The Youth Inspection Teams have undertaken surveys of a sample of libraries and their feedback has been invaluable in helping to shape provision of services for teenagers.

**Conclusion**

N Consultation on planned changes is the standard for the Library and Information Service.

O The use of representative groups to provide feedback gives excellent customer insight and leads to improvements in the service. Opportunities to do this with other representative groups should be undertaken wherever possible.

6.9 Local Needs Assessment
6.9.1 The report from Sue Charteris regarding the Wirral inquiry outlines her recommendations for local needs assessment. The following is taken from her report:

While the analysis of local needs may involve a shifting set of circumstances and a developing methodology over time, I would currently reasonably expect an analysis of needs to be based on:

1. consideration of the wide range of those needs caught by the definition of all those who live, work and study in the area, and the specific needs of adults and children and young people of all ages;

2. an assessment of accessibility – drawing on travel data including car usage data, public transport routes and the cost of services;

3. consideration of the views of existing users, and an attempt to analyse the reasons and motivations of non users and how their use could be encouraged;

4. an assessment as to whether there is any differential impact (via an equalities impact assessment) on whether any specific communities or groups would suffer any adverse impacts as a result of the changes to the service; and

5. consideration of information from partner organisations and other departments, including reference to learning strategies for children and adults, links with social and adult care, and employment initiatives.

Point 1 clearly outlines a requirement to look at the needs of all those who live, work and study in the county, not just users.

6.9.2 Assessment of need is currently achieved through a number of avenues: consultation, demographic analysis of users, transactional data, usage patterns, East Sussex in Figures data, all of which meet points 2, 3 and 4 of the Wirral report recommendations. It should be noted that professional library staff will have, through experience, an excellent understanding of local need, particularly of their users.

6.9.3 However, assessment of wider public needs is an area that could be developed at a deeper level. The Library and Information Service is currently working with the Research and Information team to explore other forms of data analysis such as:

- Service User Insight
- Mosaic geo-demographic profiling

Data around health needs, poverty, child poverty, employment, educational achievement etc can be obtained from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

6.9.4 Recent results from the Service User Insight report indicate that one in 6 residents borrowed a book from a library last year, and almost one third of the county’s children. However, lower levels of library use appear to occur in areas of high deprivation.

6.9.5 A combination of consultation on needs, analysis of wider public needs and consultation with partners gives the service the basis on which to define future strategy. Any public consultation must ensure that there is equality of access to the consultation.

**Conclusion**

P Some needs analysis has been carried out in the past using various forms of data and librarian experience.

Q Further in depth assessment of local needs must be carried out to form the basis on which to make plans.

R Plans for consultation on changes must ensure that there is equality of access to the consultation.
6.10 **Collaboration**

6.10.1 The Library and Information Service has set up a number of effective partnership working arrangements that have added value to the customer or cut costs. Headline examples:
- Rother District Council at Rye Library
- Bus Pass scheme on behalf of E,T&E
- Co-operation with Children’s Centres
- Registration Outstation at Uckfield Library
- Adult Social Care at the proposed Seaford Library

A fringe benefit of this collaborative work is that other teams become champions of the Library and Information Service and help in changing people’s perception of what a library can offer.

6.10.2 The Library and Information Service is part of the CBC contract that negotiates the procurement contract for stock acquisition and bibliographic services on behalf of 43 authorities.

6.10.3 The Library and Information Service is part of an Inter-authority lending agreement.

6.10.4 Further opportunities for partnership working will arise as a result of the survey with local organisations.

6.10.5 Feedback from current partners points to excellent working relationships, a willingness to be adaptable and to take on new opportunities. Customer service is excellent which is particularly appreciated.

6.10.6 The collaboration with Brighton University to deliver professional training for library staff demonstrates an innovative approach to the service that is ahead of peer authorities. The interest shown by other authorities confirms that a genuine need was identified and met in a creative and cost effective way.

6.10.7 As further opportunities to work with partners arise, success factors will be less about books and more about the impact such collaborations have overall on the local community. New objectives and performance criteria will need to be developed in order to measure the effect of such projects.

**Conclusion**

S The Library and Information Service excels in its proactive pursuit of partnership arrangements. The current policy of seeking further opportunities is both beneficial to the customer and to the County Council at large. Work with the Brighton University is exemplary.

T New types of KPIs will need to be developed to measure the effectiveness of collaborations.

7 **Options Appraisal**

7.1 Attached (Appendix 12) is a document outlining options for providing services that have been considered and the benefits and disadvantages of these possibilities. The Library and Information Service has a track record of actively seeking out options and reviewing them as part of business planning. Options that are deemed to be of most benefit are already being considered and implemented where possible.

8 **Recommendations**
8.1 Develop a strategic plan based on local needs assessment, which is flexible enough to respond to changes in population, technological innovation and developments in best practice.

8.2 Develop mechanisms for impact assessment of the Library and Information Service. Take the opportunity to explore the qualitative impact by building measurable success criteria into all projects at the planning stage.

8.3 Undertake the 2012 Public Library User Survey, compare with the 2009 survey and track and report on the impact of refurbishment.

8.4 Carry out a profit and loss assessment of DVD rental and use to identify when DVD rental is no longer self funding. Draw up actions to respond to loss of income.

8.5 Repeat unit cost analysis exercise after financial year end 2012 and use to report on the impact of investment. Develop action plan to mitigate higher unit costs.

8.6 Investment proposals, such as the hardware replacement for the People’s Network, need to reflect current and forecast demand. Proposals should be based on strategic plans to respond to IMDs, usage trends and should remain responsive to public needs.

8.7 Continue to consult with the public on changes, ensuring equality of access to such consultation and involve representative groups wherever possible.

8.8 Analyse the distribution of library provision against population, with particular reference to local need and feed this information into the Mobile, Rural and Eastbourne Reviews.

8.9 Continue to explore opportunities for service development and their relevance to East Sussex Library and Information Service and implement where appropriate.

8.10 When collaborating with other services and organisations, negotiate KPIs to ensure that the effectiveness of projects is measured.

Janet Webb
Project Manager
East Sussex Library and Information Service Review
Equality impact assessment summary report
for the Vision for Library and Information Services
2013 – 2016

Please complete this summary, which will be used to publish the results of your impact assessment on the County Council’s website.

Date of assessment: 9th April 2013

Manager(s) name: Abigail Luthmann  Role: Equal Access Manager

Proposal, project, service, strategy or policy, that was impact assessed:
The Vision for Library and Information Services 2013 – 2016

Summary of findings:
This EqIA demonstrates that only positive impacts will be felt by those individuals from equality characteristic groups, plus other groups considered by ESCC.

The focus of the Vision on vulnerable groups within East Sussex and areas of deprivation will ensure effective partnership working within the council and with other partners to target resources where they are most needed.

Summary of recommendations and key points of action plan:
The LIS will continue to work in partnership to address the needs of equality groups within East Sussex. Specific actions include:

- Promoting the support role of libraries in welfare reform changes to provide access to computers and help to learn computer skills.
- Promotion of library volunteering opportunities for young people and others seeking employability skills.
- Wider promotion of the community hub concept and offering use library buildings to other services on closed days.

Groups that this project or service will impact upon

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