

Eich cyf / Your ref:

Fy nghyf / My ref:

Dyddiad / Date
7th April 2014,



Christine Chapman AM
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Dear Ms Chapman

Re: Inquiry into Public Libraries in Wales

I refer to your letter dated the 26th March and thank you for the opportunity to contribute.

Please find below responses presented in order of asking:

- has your local authority undertaken equality impact assessments when considering the potential closure of libraries in your area, and if so, please can you provide details;

No decisions have been made around the potential closure of libraries within Carmarthenshire, however a service review and staffing restructure is currently underway. We recognise that library services have to be delivered within available resources, managed and operated efficiently and in innovative ways. The ethos of Public Library services need not change; however the "Books plus" service vision developed for Carmarthenshire libraries looks to change user and non-users perceptions of libraries, which will allow for inclusivity and greater access for all.

Whilst it is inevitable that not all communities within Carmarthenshire will have their own static libraries, and to some extent where they continue to exist they must be considered fit-for-purpose or else co-location or area based services must be considered. St Clears community library is a good example. The library has been co-located with the Arts and Craft Centre as an innovative approach that could be replicated elsewhere, where better facilities and a greater availability of resources allows for increased participation and opportunities.

Services have to be delivered within available resources, it is therefore vital that they are managed and operated efficiently and in innovative ways.

See : Appendix 1 – Staff EIA

Appendix 2 – Review of Provision EIA

- has your local authority consulted with local representatives of vulnerable users when considering the potential closure of libraries in your area, and if so, please can you provide details;

The Authority undertook a full budget consultation exercise during the autumn of 2013 and this included the general proposals for the rationalisation of community and mobile library services. An explanation of the Authority's consultation exercise follows:

OUTLINE OF APPROACH AND CONSULTATION METHODS

The settlement provided by Welsh Government has challenged the Authority to make significant cost reductions. In response, Council departments identified proposals for making savings. These were considered at a seminar for all councillors in October,¹ and it was determined that all were worthy of further consideration through a public consultation process. The following consultation methods were adopted:

Budget road shows

Following publicity, sessions were held in six locations across Carmarthenshire.² In addition, representatives attended the annual Youth Conference. The road shows led to discussion and contact with a total of 158 people.

Stakeholder event

40 representatives of key stakeholder groups³ attended a seminar in early December. The session involved discussion on the 51 proposals, and an opportunity to suggest ways the Council could make savings or generate income.

Social Care Health and Housing budget seminar

Around 30 third sector organisations attended this seminar, held in early December. The session was an opportunity to find out more about the Council's budget situation and some of the consequent challenges that it faces in delivering and commissioning services. Discussions concerned possible responses from third sector organisations, including a greater focus on income generation, and the option of jointly bidding for contracts.

On-line survey

The survey provided financial and service information on each of the 51 proposals and asked respondents to express a view on the degree to which they supported the proposal. Views were also sought regarding the potential impact of implementing the proposal on people and communities.⁴ Hard copies were available by request. A total of 851 survey responses were received from various sections of the community.⁵

Citizens' Panel survey

¹ To view the report on the seminar, visit: <http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/English/council/budget/Documents/budget-consultation/members-seminar.pdf>

² Sessions were held in Newcastle Emlyn, Whitland, Llanelli, Ammanford, Carmarthen and Llandeilo.

³ Representatives were drawn from: town and community councils, business, Youth Council, 50+ Forum, Citizens Panel, third sector, and Equality Carmarthenshire (an umbrella group of key equality groups).

⁴ The responses are important in establishing the impact of Council proposals on people – a key consideration in undertaking good decision making based on evidence, and a requirement of the 2010 Equality Act.

⁵ Of the 851 responses: 86% were from individuals, 12% from CCC employees and 2% from groups or businesses; 91% described as white, 5% minority ethnic. Responses were received from all age groups. 53% of responses were from women (44% from men), and 49% were single with 36% married. 6% described themselves as disabled, 41% held a religion or belief (46% did not), and 87% described themselves as heterosexual (3% either lesbian, gay or bisexual).

Combined data from the September 2013 issues of the 50+ Forum and Citizens' Panel surveys has been used as a source of comment on the Council budget (402 comments).⁶ Other information from the surveys has been used to provide information on attitudes towards Council Tax.

Other

Comments were received from a featured Carmarthenshire News coupon (82 comments), with an additional 94 comments made via email or letter.

The public consultation phase ran from 19th November 2013 to 3rd January 2014.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Rationalisation of library services with the narrative “Libraries and Mobile Libraries

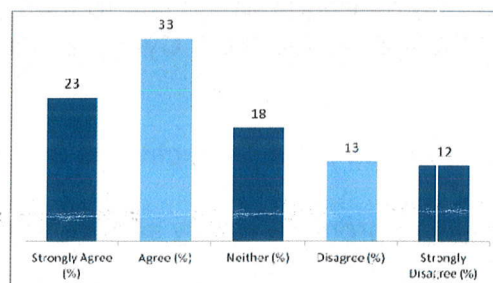
Libraries & Mobile Libraries – main findings

Total Budget: £2,095,000
3 Year Savings: £141,000

2014 - 15	2015 - 16	2016 - 17
18	29	94

Description: Review community and mobile library provision, contract cleaning and staff. Continue to roll out the successful implementation of community involvement in the library service (e.g. Pontyberem).

Average index score: 0.42
Rank (of 51): 12
Sample Size: 423



Stakeholder	Staff	BME	-16	16-24	25-64	65+	F	M	Dis-abled	Rel-igion	LGB
0.7	0.48	-0.67	-0.32	0.33	0.4	0.62	0.38	0.44	0.26	0.49	-0.55

⁶ The question posed was: 'do you have any reasonable suggestions as to how the Council could make efficiency savings or raise income?' The same question was asked in the on-line survey, to ensure comparability of results.

Key themes from the public consultation:

- Discontinue mobile service
- Mobile service essential for housebound in tackling social isolation
- Deliver differently – less staff, more volunteers
- Libraries are the focal point of the community / essential to civilised community
- Keep main libraries open and close the others
- Mitigation – integrate libraries into customer service centres (CSCs); use libraries as mini CSCs – help with forms, etc.; use community halls as libraries

- what links are there between education services and public libraries in your local authority.

Carmarthenshire Library Service has played a fundamental part in delivering the County's Corporate and Community Strategy (2004 -20) – *Thinking Together, Planning Together, Doing Together* by helping to deliver the following themes:-

- Opening Doors, Lifelong learning – helping everyone achieve their potential from childhood to old age.
- Feeling Fine, Health and Wellbeing – tackling the causes of ill health by looking at life in the round
- Making Better Use of Resources
- Building a Better Council

There are several important key areas that link education services and public libraries within Carmarthenshire, with the main focus being on the children and young people of the county who are encouraged in various ways to utilise the services provided by a county network of regional, community branch and mobile libraries. Libraries clearly add another dimension to learning by providing information and support materials throughout childhood and teenage years that support the individual's educational needs both formally and informally.

Library information professionals promote the summer reading challenge scheme to schools via e-mail power point presentations and personal visits to schools. They support Language and Play steering group meetings which link to the Foundation Phase in schools, and also promote 'Pori Drwy Stori' which is Booktrust Cymru's literacy and numeracy initiative for the Foundation Phase.

In addition library based arranged activities include:

- Class visits to promote library service and reading in general, and to support particular topics/curriculum strands
- Default membership scheme
- Author/storyteller/illustrator/etc workshops for special occasions, e.g. World Book Day. Often funded via grants accessed by library service.
- Special mini-projects, such as buddy reading and literacy schemes
- Longer-term projects: Book Award, LEGO project, Premier League Reading Stars, Museum box loans, etc.
- School library service: primary school box loans, teacher cards, secondary school librarian cards
- Advisory role re: school libraries

- Homework clubs at some branch and regional libraries with IT and book driven information retrieval at the forefront of delivery.
- Work experience placements for school students

In addition to the partnership work undertaken with external agencies such as Rathbourne, Communities First etc. libraries also work with national partners to deliver initiatives such as Flying Start and BookStart projects and form part of the South West Wales branch of the School Library Association which includes school librarians from the SWAMP region.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Gilbert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end.

Dave Gilbert OBE
Deputy Chief Executive

Appendix 1

Initial Equalities Impact Assessment (Staff)

Department:	Regeneration & Leisure	Completed by (Lead):	Jane Davies	Date of initial assessment:	10 nd December 2013
Division:	Cultural Services / Libraries	Designation:	Senior Cultural Services Manager	Revision Dates:	13 st January 2014
Area to be assessed (i.e. name of policy, function, procedure, practice or a financial decision):		Function			
Is this an existing or new function, policy, procedure, practice or decision?		Existing			
1. Describe the aims, objectives or purpose of the function / policy, practice, procedure or decision and who is intended to benefit.		<p>Service Realignment – Staff Restructure</p> <p>The Library service was transferred to the Regeneration & Leisure Department on the 1st September 2012, having previously been managed by the Education Directorate. The Library service itself was managed by three area managers, covering Ammanford, Llanelli and Carmarthen. Since the transfer, the Leisure division has restructured and Library services now form a key function within the newly formed Cultural Services team. The appointment of a Library Services Manager role took place during March 2013.</p> <p>Following on from this appointment a vision for the service has been developed where one library service for Carmarthenshire based around the “Books Plus, More Than Books” offering, currently delivered by Llanelli library. This will be facilitated by a staffing compliment structured around each of the 4 main key functions of the library service as opposed to the regional structures where duplication of key roles exist within the service.</p> <p>Phase 1 enables the development of four effective management teams based across main areas of service, which will be supported by senior staffing roles and frontline operational staff. Following the appointment of Phase 1 of the structure, Team Managers are expected to roll-out proposals for phase 2 in line with service responsibilities, which will complete the realignment.</p>			

<p>The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have 'due regard' to the need to:</p> <p>(1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;</p> <p>(2) Advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and</p> <p>(3) Foster good relations between different groups.</p> <p>(See guidance notes)</p>		<p>2. What is the level of impact on each group / protected characteristic in terms of the three aims of the duty?</p> <p>Please indicate high (H), medium (M), low (L), no effect (N) for each</p>	<p>3. Identify the risk or positive effect that could result for each group / protected characteristic?</p> <p>Risks</p> <p>Positive Effects</p>		<p>4. If there is a disproportionately negative impact, what mitigating factors have you considered?</p>
Protected Characteristics	Age	Low	None	None	None
	Disability	Low	None	None	None
	Gender Reassignment	Low	None	None	None
	Race	Low	None	None	None
	Religion / Belief	Low	None	None	None
	Pregnancy and Maternity	Low	None	None	None
	Sexual Orientation	Low	None	None	None
	Sex	Low	None	None	None
	Welsh Language	Low	None	None	None
	Any other area	Low	None	None	None
5. Has there been any consultation / engagement with the appropriate protected characteristics?				No	
6. What action(s) will you take to reduce any disproportionately negative impact, if any?				None	

<p>7. Procurement</p> <p>Following collation of evidence for this assessment, are there any procurement implications to the activity, proposal or service?</p> <p>Please take the findings of this assessment into your procurement plan. Contact the corporate procurement unit for further advice.</p>	<p>No</p>		
<p>8. Human Resources</p> <p>Following collation of evidence for this assessment, are there any Human Resource implications to the activity, proposal or service?</p>	<p>Yes, initially 5 current managerial positions will be given the opportunity to apply for new positions or confirm in post opportunities during Phase 1 of the realignment, with further employment opportunities during Phase 2 rollout if unsuccessful during the initial phase. There are no foreseeable potential redundancies at this stage.</p>		
<p>9. Based on the information in sections 2 and 6, should this function / policy / procedure / practice or a decision proceed to Detailed Impact Assessment? (recommended if one or more 'H' entered in Section 2)</p>	<p>No</p>		
<p>Approved By:</p>	<p>Jane Davies</p>	<p>Date:</p>	<p>10th December 2013</p>

The Equality Impact Assessment in relation to the libraries and mobile libraries. This is a working document which will be refined and updated as the framework and specific service provision proposals are presented.

Appendix 2

**Carmarthenshire County Council
Equality Impact Assessment**

Contact Name	Ian Jones	Title	Head of Leisure
Budget title	Libraries & Mobile Libraries – Review of provision		
Amount £	£2,095,000		
Saving £	£141k (£18k 14/15; £29k 15/16; & £94k 16/17)		
Description	<p>Review of provision</p> <p>The Library service was transferred to the Regeneration & Leisure Department on the 1st September 2012, having previously been managed by the Education & Life Long Learning Directorate. The Library service itself was managed by three area managers, covering Ammanford, Llanelli and Carmarthen. Since the transfer, the Leisure division has restructured, and Library services now form a key function within the newly formed Cultural Services team. The appointment of a single Library Services Manager role took place during March 2013. Following on from this appointment a vision for the service has been developed where one library service for Carmarthenshire based around the “Books Plus, More Than Books” offering, as currently delivered by Llanelli library. This vision will be delivered by a staffing compliment structured around each of the main key functions of the library service as opposed to the regional structures where duplication of key roles exist within the service.</p> <p>As part of this new vision, the 3 main town Libraries in Llanelli, Carmarthen and Ammanford will be brought into line to provide one consistent service model. More localised community libraries will be reviewed in conjunction with the existing mobile provision to ensure a modern, fit for purpose service is provided for the residents of Carmarthenshire, its diverse population spread and its mix of urban and rural communities.</p>		
<p>Will this proposal have an adverse impact on any particular groups of people including those who may be disadvantaged by virtue of gender, race, religion / belief, age, disability or sexual orientation? Will it impact disproportionately on those in lower income groups?</p>			
No	<p>The proposals being put forward look at providing a more efficient service with improved outcomes. Key groups such as the less mobile, more secluded, and those on lower income will continue to be a priority for the service, and reflected as such within any final proposals.</p>		

If Yes, please briefly describe the nature of the impact. Which groups are likely to be affected and in what way?

Description of impact

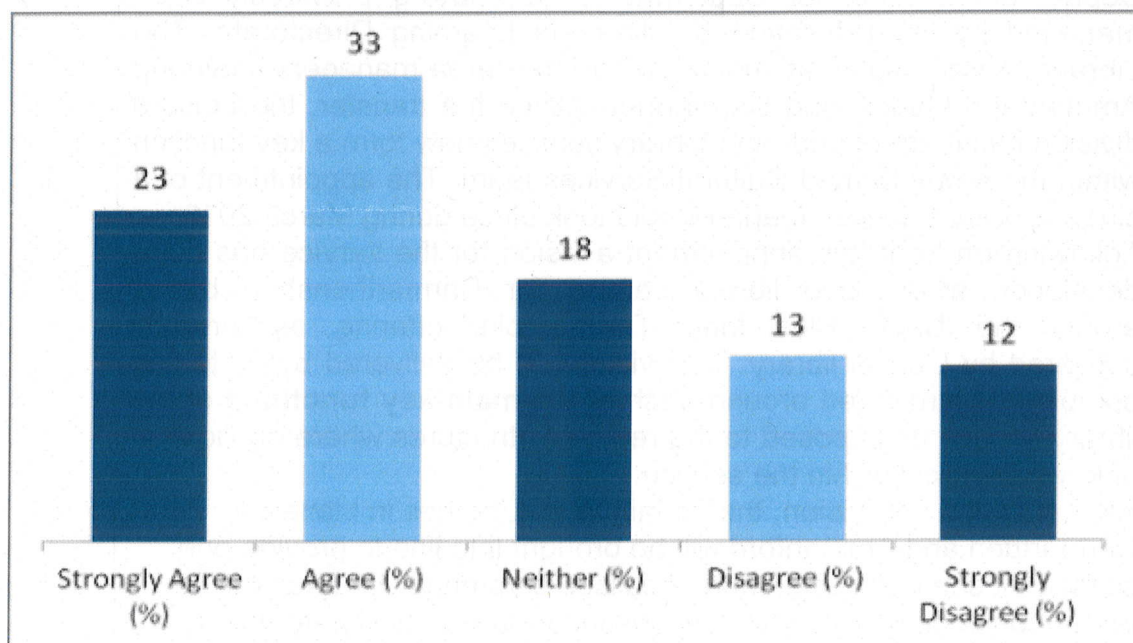
Consultation

Have you consulted any of these groups or their representative bodies?

Yes

If so please give details, what was the outcome?

Description: Review community and mobile library provision, contract cleaning and staff. Continue to roll out the successful implementation of community involvement in the library service (e.g. Pontyberem).



Key themes from the public consultation:

- Discontinue mobile service
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Description of consultation

This proposal was considered as part of the authority wide road-show consulting on all corporate efficiencies during the Autumn of 2013.

Mitigation

Taking account of the public consultation feedback, further internal discussions with officers and members, as well as discussing approaches across Wales and beyond, the service is committed to providing positive outcomes for existing and potential library service users across Carmarthenshire.

Our review of the service will focus on improving these outcomes whilst analysing and challenging the inputs that currently go into providing the service. All areas will be looked at to ensure we work as efficiently as possible with the reducing resources at our disposal. These will include the following:

- Staffing costs and numbers (looking at more self service, voluntary and on-line options)
- Premises costs (looking at co-location such as St. Clears Library and Craft Centre; as well as reducing our current costs e.g. reviewing cleaning arrangements and energy saving initiatives)
- Reviewing our mobile service to make it more responsive and agile, taking account of our urban and rural mix.

Details of steps to be taken to mitigate any adverse impact

The re-structure of the service will bring together a service which is currently dispersed, allowing for the staffing skills set available to be fully utilised, and at the same time creating budgetary efficiencies which will allow for departmental corporate efficiency savings to be delivered, along with the continuation of frontline service developments at library centres.

Context

Is this proposal part of a wider plan which would place it in context? (e.g. closure of an individual facility in the context of a wider investment programme).

The review of this service is consistent with the authority's wider review of assets and provision across a multitude of services. The Leisure Division is working closely with a number of other departments, including Community Development and Corporate property, as well as external agencies such as the Chief Society of Librarians, and CyMal (Welsh Government dept with responsibility for Libraries, Museums and Archives) to re-model our service and ensure it is fit for purpose for the 21st Century, as is that case across most authorities in Wales at this point in time.

Details of context of the proposal

A "New Team Approach" for Carmarthenshire County Library Services To be part of a service group that takes every available opportunity to:

- Increase participation levels in each service area.
- Increase community engagement and volunteering opportunities within all services, including the exploration of

	<p>community management models for some areas of service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide buildings that are fit for purpose, including continuing to review the rationalisation (where appropriate) of Community buildings and facilities. • Strengthening existing partnerships and developing new relationships with potential partner organisations at all levels. • Continuing the core commitment that all service staff feel valued within a rapidly changing and highly challenging financial environment.
<p><u>Monitoring</u> Do you have any plans to monitor the ongoing impact on the affected group(s)?</p>	
	<p>An annual report is provided to CCC Scrutiny members on progress with all Arts Services and the Libraries in particular. The library service is also required to report annually on the national library standards framework.</p>
<p>Other information Is there anything else which ought to be recorded?</p>	
	<p>None</p>