Item no.   9   on agenda

Brighton & Hove City Council

For general release

Meeting:	**Culture & Tourism Sub-Committee**
Date:	**14 June 2006**
Report of:	**Director of Cultural Services**
Subject:	**Update on Libraries Strategy**

Ward(s) affected: All Wards

1.   Purpose of the report

1.1   To update members on progress with the Libraries Strategy, approved by Culture and Tourism Sub-Committee in February 2006.

2.   Recommendations

2.1   Members are asked to note the progress achieved.

3.   Information/background

3.1   *Framework for the Future: Libraries, Learning and Information in the Next Decade* published by the DCMS in 2003, has set out the government's vision for the future of public libraries. As well as emphasising their role in promoting reading, improving literacy and enabling access to lifelong learning, libraries are seen as important community hubs and key access points to online services.

3.2   In January 2006 members of the Culture and Tourism Sub-Committee met to develop their vision and aims for Brighton & Hove City Libraries, and the resulting strategy was approved by members at the February meeting of the Culture & Tourism Sub-Committee. A timetable for consultation and for the development of a more detailed programme of action was also agreed.

4.   Libraries Strategy Progress Report

4.1 Libraries Services Strategy was sent out to a wide range of stakeholders, partners and staff for consultation. Around 150 questionnaires were sent out to key external stakeholders, including schools, colleges, the universities, community organisations, cultural organisations, existing and potential partners. All Councillors have been sent the questionnaire along with key council officers in other departments, and all library staff have also been asked to comment. A total of 345 questionnaires have been issued.

4.2 The closing date for completing the questionnaire is 31 May and to date around 26 completed forms have been returned. Once the returns have been analysed a report on the results of the consultation will be presented to the Culture and Tourism Sub-Committee at the next meeting in September 2006.

4.3 Over the summer, there will be further discussions with key stakeholders following up on their comments in order to develop more detailed programmes of action for each of the four areas of the new Libraries Strategy. A report on these proposals will be made to the November Sub-committee meeting.

4.4 The public will be asked to comment on the Libraries Forward Plan following approval by the Sub-committee, using the website and hardcopies in all libraries. These comments will be used to shape and develop library service plans as they are revised and progressed through the corporate team planning process.

5. **Strategic Financial Planning**

5.1 In response to the recommendations of the Audit Commission Inspection and in order to include more strategic financial planning in the Libraries Strategy, we have begun to examine value for money issues in libraries services and the link between quality, cost and satisfaction. Four areas have been identified as key areas to focus on:

- Examination of previous surveys and consultation to identify what is most likely to increase satisfaction levels, and for comparison with other authorities
- Research potential link between bookfund expenditure, satisfaction and performance
- Review impact of previous capital investment on satisfaction and performance

- Begin work on each of the 4 service objectives for further areas of analysis, eg investment in services to minority groups and the impacts/outcomes achieved so that this can be compared with other services

5.2   Some work has already been done on researching a potential link between bookfund expenditure and satisfaction levels by looking at performance reported by other comparative authorities.   No conclusions have been reached at this stage and there is more work to be done on this complex issue.

6.   Community and Library Profiles

6.1   Detailed knowledge of the local community served by each library or group of libraries is essential for effective service planning, so highly detailed Community Profiles have been produced for each community that each of our libraries serve.   Detailed profiles for each library have also been produced to identify costs, performance and other information to help identify areas for improvement. This information will be used together with the results of the consultation process to inform the development of the Libraries Forward Plan.

7.   Future Timetable

Activity	Date
Libraries Strategy	
Libraries Strategy agreed by Culture and Tourism Sub-Committee	2 February 2006
Consultation with key stakeholder, partners, councillor and staff.	Deadline for return of questionnaires: 31 May 2006
Report to Culture and Tourism Sub-Committee on results of consultation	September 2006
Feedback and comments received during consultation to inform Libraries Forward Plan to be discussed by the Culture and Tourism Sub-Committee	November 2006
Following the Committee's approval	November 2006

of the Libraries Forward Plan, the document will be made available to the public for comment via the Council's website and throughout all the libraries (it will have already become a public document for the two weeks prior to the committee).	

8. Consultation

8.1 All councillors have been sent the Libraries Strategy and a questionnaire. More detailed proposals will be brought back to the Culture and Tourism Sub Committee in the autumn.

8.2 Stakeholders, partners and the general public are being consulted as per timetable indicated in section 7 above.

8.3 Trade unions are being fully involved in the discussions on organisational changes, and staff who are directly affected are being fully consulted about the proposals. All library staff are being kept informed of developments through staff meetings.

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Financial implications

The strategy will be produced from within existing resources. There may be financial implications arising from actions contained within the finished strategy and these will be reported at the appropriate time.

Accountant consulted: Patrick Rice 17 May 2006

Legal implications

The Public Libraries and Museum Act 1964 requires the 149 first tier English Local Authorities to provide "comprehensive and efficient" public library services. This Council is one of those 149 authorities. The contents of this report comply with the provisions of the Act and with the Government's long-term strategic vision for the role of public libraries contained in the DCMS publication "*Framework for the Future : Libraries, Learning and Information in the Next Decade*" (referred to at 3.1 of the report).

Lawyer consulted: Dianne Bates   Date: 23rd May 2006

Corporate/Citywide implications	**Risk assessment**
The provision of a high quality library service supports council and national shared priorities, and the performance of the Library Service contributes to the council's Continuous Performance Assessment.	Failure to provide a good library service would impact on the cultural elements of the council's Continuous Performance Assessment (CPA) i.e. through the failure to meet the Public Library Service Standards.
Sustainability implications	**Equalities implications**
One of the objectives of the Service Review is to ensure sustainability for Library Services.	A core objective of the Library Service is to provide free and equal access to services, and the review will test this and establish programmes of action to deliver on this vision.
Implications for the prevention of crime and disorder None	

Background papers *[Part 1 reports only]*
1.

Contact Officers
Sally McMahon, Head of Libraries of ICT tel. 296963

LIBRARIES FORWARD STRATEGY QUESTIONNAIRE

PART 1

AIM 1 – To promote reading and informal learning for people of all ages through the provision of wide ranging books and other library materials, and high quality services in partnership with others.

Q1 – Are the following an appropriate programme of actions to promote reading and learning for all? *(please tick Yes or No)*

Programme of Action Could Include	Yes	No
1. Improve our collection of books and other materials, to provide wider choices to inspire and inform		
2. Encourage wider reading and creative writing skills through reading promotions, workshops and literacy programmes		
3. Develop and extend services to children and young people, in order to support children's learning and development		
4. Develop services to encourage families to read and learn together		
5. Widen participation in learning through opportunities for independent and informal learning, working in partnership with other providers, particularly schools		
6. Provide information and access to learning opportunities to support workforce skills development and routes to employment		

Q2 – Is there anything else you think should be included?

Q3 – What are your top **THREE** priorities of programme of actions on reading and learning? *(please circle 3 numbers from the above 1-6 or your added option)*

1   2   3   4   5   6   Your Option

AIM 2 – To provide a focus for community activity that is accessible and welcoming to everyone, and delivers flexible services to targeted groups, working in partnership with other agencies.

Q1 – Are the following an appropriate programme of actions to provide a focus for community activity? *(please tick Yes or No)*

Programme of Action Could Include	Yes	No
1. Develop and extend services to older people that can be delivered both in libraries and into people's homes and other locations		
2. Support individuals and families at risk, connecting up with other community agencies to deliver services more effectively		
3. Extend library services to reach all parts of the community through targeted and flexible services, for instance to black and minority ethnic communities, children in care etc.		
4. Improve library environments making them more welcoming and accessible, and improve opening hours relevant to community needs		
5. Develop an asset strategy for libraries that recognises existing and future community needs, and ensures that libraries are included in all future infrastructure developments in the city in line with regional recommendations		
6. Develop libraries as centres for community activity, and as an access points for other services and agencies through co-location and co-operation with other agencies		
7. Develop local ownership of libraries through effective consultation and involvement in the development and delivery of services		

8. Develop effective formal and informal partnerships within the community to achieve the shared priorities of central and local government		

Q2 – Is there anything else you think should be included?

Q3 – What are your top **THREE** priorities of programme of actions on providing a focus for community activity? *(please circle 3 numbers from the above 1-8 or your added option)*

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   Your Option

AIM 3 – To provide access to information, learning and leisure through IT, to reduce the digital divide and enable all citizens to engage in the opportunities provided by information and communications technology (ICT)

Q1 – Are the following an appropriate programme of actions to provide access to information, learning and leisure through IT? *(please tick Yes or No)*

Programme of Action Could Include	Yes	No
1. Provide top quality information and referral services, making best use of both electronic and hard copy resources		
2. Improve and develop libraries' web presence to provide 24/7 interactive access to services		
3. Provide access to e-government services and online services of other agencies that people wish to reach		
4. Exploit our cultural resources through the digitisation of materials and the development of electronic learning resources, bringing together collections in a variety of media		
5. Provide access to online learning resources and support the development of IT skills in the community		
6. Promote IT resources and facilities available in libraries, such as free access to the internet, online reference books and aids for people with disabilities		
7. Capitalise on advances in technology to improve library		

	Yes	No
systems to increase their efficiency and effectiveness		
8. Research and develop new electronic opportunities such as online books		

Q2 – Is there anything else you think should be included?

Q3 – What are your top **THREE** priorities of programme of actions on Providing access to information, learning and leisure through IT? *(please circle 3 numbers from the above 1-8 or your added option)*

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   Your Option

AIM 4 – To build the capacity of Libraries to deliver high quality services that people want through effective planning, marketing, and staff development, ensuring financial sustainability, and exploiting new partnership opportunities and sources of income.

Q1 – Are the following an appropriate programme of actions to build the capacity of Libraries to deliver high quality services. *(please tick Yes or No)*

Programme of Action Could Include	Yes	No
1. Improve the marketing of libraries, taking advantage of opportunities for publicity and developing a clear and identifiable libraries' brand		
2. Implement workforce development programmes through effective staff recruitment and training, leadership development and sharing innovative solutions and best practice to achieve new ways of working		
3. Review working practices and staff structure to reshape the service to more effectively deliver service objectives		
4. Exploit new opportunities for income generation, embed sustainability and seek to add value to core		

services		
5. Work with other council services and agencies to deliver co-ordinated services and achieve value for money		
6. Develop improvement plans that recognise that one size doesn't fit all, ensuring that libraries services are tailored to community needs		
7. Implement effective planning and performance monitoring systems to ensure sustained improvements of services		
8. Seek to achieve and exceed the Public Library Service Standards and other local and national performance measures for libraries		

Q2 – Is there anything else you think should be included?

Q3 – What are your top **THREE** priorities of programme of actions on building the capacity of libraries to deliver high quality services? *(please circle 3 numbers from the above 1-8 or your added option)*

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   Your Option
PART 2

Library Services are increasingly working in partnership with others to improve services to the community. Are there ways that the Library Service could work with your organisation to achieve these shared objectives?


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PART 3

Do you have any comments about the visions and aims for the Library Service?

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CONTACT DETAILS

Name of respondent ……………………………………………………………………

Name of organisation……………………………………………………………………

Purpose of organisation ………………………………………………………………
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Number of members in your group (if known)

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Would you or any of your members be prepared to be contacted for further consultation?

If yes, please provide contact details

Name ……………………………………………………………………………………

Address

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