Sharing Responsibility for Libraries: "More than a Library"

Introduction

June 2015

Milton Keynes **Libraries**

MILTON KEYNES
C O U N C I L

Sharing Responsibility for Libraries Programme: More than a Library!

Contents

Introduction

In February 2015 the Council proposed a review of libraries (alongside children's centres and youth services) as part of the budget to take effect from April 2015. The associated savings target for the libraries was £189k in 2015/16 (reduced by £250K from £439K) and £100K in 2016/17. The brief was as follows:

"A comprehensive assessment of service function, requirements and asset structure will be carried out as part of the Community and Cultural Services Review (CCSR) to reduce the cost of the delivery of library services"

There was a fear that some of the services could close unless there was significant buy-in from other forms of support and/or funding. Transitional funding was put in place to create time for this review to take place and to develop new ways of working.

In the delivery of any services, Milton Keynes Council has to be mindful of the need to comply with the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 (PLMA) under which all Local Authorities have a statutory duty to deliver a *"comprehensive and efficient library service"* to all people who are resident, work or are in full time education in the Borough. The Act requires the provision of facilities to borrow books, records and films in sufficient range, number and quality to meet the needs of all. The Act has restrictions in terms of charges that can be levied, however charges can be made for loss, reservation, late return or damage to material. In addition, Local Authorities *"must encourage adults and children to make full use of the service and provide advice".*

Back in 2012 the Council adopted "Future Libraries MK" and its associated Delivery Plan. Many improvements have been achieved over the past three years in terms of an improved customer offer as well as operational efficiencies and savings. This has amounted to £560K between 2012/13 and 2014/15.

Outcomes of Future Libraries MK

The outcomes of the Future Libraries MK project have been far reaching and there have been many successes achieved, some of which have significantly changed the way libraries operate in the long term, others have been more subtle but nevertheless important. These outcomes have been grouped into three key areas:

Community

- Three new **community asset related partnership agreements** were developed for Woburn Sands, Stony Stratford and Olney Libraries with the freehold of Stony Stratford and Olney being transferred to the respective Town Councils.

- A focus on Woughton through **targeted outreach work** has resulted in the number of children participating in the Summer Reading Challenge doubling. This has been supplemented by a grant from Arts Council England of £89k to support the Digitalis programme in the area.

- **Volunteers** are supporting all of the libraries. Particular successes are at Kingston and Olney Library. The establishment of a Volunteer 'Extra' scheme at Woburn Sands Library, has allowed library **opening hours to be extended** through the sole management of the library by volunteers.

- Olney Town Council took over responsibility for the running of the library building under the **Community Asset Transfer** scheme and the library, which will continue to be managed by the Council, now operates alongside other Town Council functions.

- The Reference Library at Central Library **merged** with the Local Studies space creating a new area which has been used for public workshops, meetings, exhibitions, talks and projects.
- **Donations** received from library customers have supported extra activities for children. £2,605 has been raised since April 2014. This has exceeded the original target.

Customers

- Children's Library Plus Survey in 2014 showed that 91% of 0-16 year olds were **satisfied** with libraries.
- **Opening of the relocated** Kingston Library in January 2015 has been popular.
- **eBook lending** became fully operational with loans increasing by 50% since implementation. There has been a similar increase for **eAudio**. This success has resulted in an expansion of the online offer to include over 2000 **eNewspapers** from all over the world.
- The **Volunteer IT Buddies** in CMK have provided over 300 sessions.
- The new Kingston Library offers a **charged for Children's Hour** which regularly attracts up to 50 children. This scheme is to be rolled out across all libraries.

Operations

- A **full staffing review** was completed in 2013 which resulted in a reduction in back office staffing and savings of £147K being achieved.
- All libraries are closed once a month to allow for a **full staff workshop**.
- Central Library opened on 1st April 2013 for the first time on a **Sunday**.
- A 3-year business plan for the new Kingston library has been developed which has a strong focus on **self-service and income generation** from commercial lets.
- **Free Wi-Fi** has been rolled out at all libraries.
- After a review of provision and an assessment of the costs, the Council's HMP Woodhill **Prison Library Service ceased** in April 2013.
- £142,000 has been **invested** in the Central Milton Keynes Library heating system leading to savings in running costs.
- The Council has invested in the implementation of **self-service points** across all libraries. This project will enable customers to renew their books more efficiently and for Libraries to meet the planned reduction to staffing.
- In 2013/14 a review of the **School Library Service** was undertaken to assess efficiency, effectiveness and future options. This has led to savings of £38K and a more efficient and self-sustaining operation.
- New long term **business partners** have been secured at Kingston Library such as Explore Learning.
- The new Kingston Library has adopted a **minimum staffing** model based on the self-service model which improves how staff interact with customers.

Savings

The implementation of the Future Libraries project and other work has resulted in the following savings:

	£'000
2010/11	
Book Fund Reduction	-89
Changes to the Joint Agreement with BCC	-50
2010/11 Total	**-139**
2011/12	
Deletion of Libraries, Heritage & Learning Manager's post	-83
Savings from new Westcroft library relocated facility	-15
Cease joint arrangement with Bucks CC	-7
Reduce opening hours across all libraries by 2 hours per week.	-81
2011/12 Total	**-186**
2012/13	
Work with Woburn Sands and Stony Stratford on asset related community partnership agreements.	-100
Implement final stages of Bucks Council joint arrangement contract and the previously agreed re-structure of support posts (porters and mobile library)	-32.5
Develop new service-wide operational structure to ensure sufficient customer facing staff is in place, trained and motivated. Also review back-office functions of the library and re-structure to create greater flexibility and efficiency of operation	-60
Improved purchasing arrangements with suppliers	-10
Increased income generation from a range of services, programmes and events. These include donations, grants, increased charges and rents.	-34.5
Total 2012/13	**-237**
2013/14	
Work with other communities on partnership agreements relating to assets and co-location opportunities - Stony Stratford	-21
Savings related to the service wide staffing review - MK Central library	-140
Savings as a result of reduced operational costs of the mobile library vehicle since purchase.	-16
Additional income from donations and hire of library spaces	-30

Further efficiencies in recruitment and purchasing arrangements in libraries	-7
Implementation of Wi-Fi & card payment devices within libraries. Investment in 2012-13 is offset by income generated from charging for Wi-Fi access.	*-8*
Total 2013/14	**-222**

2014/15

Further savings as a result of reduced operational costs of the mobile library vehicle since purchase.	-26
Efficiencies related to introduction of self-service radio frequency identification technology	-45
Additional income from donations and hire of library spaces.	-19
Savings from Central Library gas costs	-4
10% savings from furniture and equipment budgets and 10% in repairs and maintenance budgets across all libraries	-7
Total 2014/15	**-101**

Figure 1 - Cost savings achieved 2010 - 2015

This has resulted in the total savings over past 5 years of £885K.

However, the service is required to make further savings over and above those already achieved. The introduction of self-service technology and kiosks in all libraries is due to be completed within the next 12 months. Other savings relate to the deletion of two management posts.

Over the next three years Milton Keynes Libraries needs to secure additional savings totalling **£449K**.

Saving targets identified in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan include:

LIBRARY BUDGETS	2015/16 £000	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000
Base Budget	**2,428**	**2,085**	**1,821**	**1,744**
Savings -				
Installation of self-service function all libraries	78	88		
Two senior management posts deleted	80			
Savings made to date	158	88		
Other savings identified in Future Libraries MK				
CCSR	*189*	*100*		
Outsource Libraries Management		*80*	*80*	
Savings yet to be identified	**189**	**180**	**80**	
Revised Budget	**2,081**	**1,817**	**1,741**	**1,744**

Figure 2 - Planned savings 2015 - 2019

Further indicative savings could include:

SAVINGS OPPORTUNITIES	One off capital cost £000	Capital contribution from tariff	2015/16 £000	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000
Deletion of Manager post			-44		
Reductions in staffing post implementation of self service project			-126		

Figure 3 - Future savings identified

There are many additional options which will evolve as result of the engagement process. This table will need to be updated as preferred options are developed.

Sharing Responsibilities: The Proposal

The 2014 Independent Library Report published by the Department of Culture Media and Sport emphasises that libraries are about much more than loaning books. The expectations are for a whole range of services and community activities for all ages. The case studies in the report highlight that the sharing of responsibility for library services and the wide range of activities can be part of the library offer.

Milton Keynes Council became a Co-operative Council in 2014 and is committed to services which nurture strong communities but recognises that no council can or should provide these alone, particularly in these very challenging financial times for local government. The Council is talking to a wide range of local bodies and individuals about sharing responsibilities and developing options together. This includes statutory partners, voluntary groups, clubs, societies and agencies.   This document reflects this approach and the future direction of Milton Keynes Libraries.

The Council's "Eight Point Core Council Library Offer"

To focus conversations, the Council has identified core services that it is committed to providing long term, in order to serve the community across the Borough in each of the nine libraries and the mobile library. This is about the fundamental provision of books and materials as well as access to information and information technology with the aim of contributing to the health and wellbeing of communities.

The following table identifies the Council's core offer along with ways in which help could be provided and the impact on services that might result should that help not be forthcoming.

The Core Library Offer	You can help your library by……..	Impact on services that might result

• **Access to ten library service points across the Borough :**
   o **Bletchley**
   o **Central**
   o **Kingston**
   o **Mobile**
   o **Newport Pagnell**
   o **Olney**
   o **Stony Stratford**
   o **Westcroft**
   o **Woburn Sands**
   o **Wolverton**
	Access available at all ten service points	Service points may shut at short notice due to unplanned staff leave and other absences

	Renting space in the library Sharing responsibility for the building including running costs perhaps by the co-location of services Sponsoring the Mobile Library or any of the nine library buildings Advertising opportunity through the branding of the mobile library	
	Organisations working together and sharing staff and spaces	
	Minimum customer facing staff across all MK libraries dependent upon local circumstances and partnerships established	Volunteers/organisations staffing the library for some of the core hours Paying for all or part of a Library Customer Assistant	Library opening hours may reduce or change at short notice
	Paying for library building running costs	
	Teams of volunteers supporting paid staff at all service points	Volunteering or supporting a "Friends of Library" group	Difficulties in recruiting, training and retaining large numbers of volunteers required to support paid staff at ten service points for 367.5 hours a week

The Core Library Offer		You can help your library by……..	Impact on services that might result
	Self-service kiosks available at all library buildings	Contribute to the annual maintenance of a self-service unit	Rising costs jeopardise Milton Keynes Libraries ability to pay for on-going maintenance, running and up grading costs of self-service kiosks
			Unable to maintain current level of buildings and vehicle going forward with continuing budget reductions
• **A professionally led library service across the Borough led by qualified Librarians, promoting literacy and engagement for adults and children through specialist departments**	Adult Librarian: promoting adult stock, events (local and national) and displays. Promoting health and wellbeing through a range of initiatives such as Books on prescription and home library service	Contributing to the cost of a Qualified Librarian. Cost: up to £17.50/hr	Minimum Librarians will result in limited delivery of specialisms is possible across the borough
	Children's Librarian: promoting literacy through stock, Storytime, Bookstart, events (local and national) and displays		
	Business & Information Librarian: providing online support for local businesses and research materials for enquiries		Future development of Milton Keynes Libraries will be at risk due to minimal staffing levels

The Core Library Offer		You can help your library by……..	Impact on services that might result
	Local Studies & Heritage Librarian: providing local historical and family history resources		
	Outreach & Library Development Librarian: promoting & marketing benefits of libraries across the borough working with partners. Targeting non-users, areas of deprivation, areas of low literacy and rural isolation. Mobile Library takes library services into the community and is a vehicle that provides library outreach services		Limited literacy, engagement and promotion possible due to low staff levels
	IT specialist supporting, developing and advising across all libraries and library systems: all staff trained to support basic IT enquiries		Support no longer available
• **Supporting literacy, lifelong learning as well as learning for early years and school age**	Access to new books for loan in a variety of formats and languages to meet diverse customers' needs at different literacy levels. Formats include: Fiction, Non Fiction,	Paying for library books - average of £20 for adult books, £10 for Children's books and £50 for Talking books	Continued commitment to the purchasing of online services at risk due to high costs and annual increases
		Paying for resources in alternative	Bookfund at risk of being reduced further

The Core Library Offer		You can help your library by……..	Impact on services that might result
	Large Print, Adult Literacy, audio books, DVDs, magazines. Languages include: European(French, German, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Polish) and Indic (Bengali, Punjabi, Urdu, Panjabi, Marathi)	formats or languages	to balance the overall Milton Keynes Libraries budget as the bookfund is one of the few remaining controllable budgets left
		Paying for subscriptions for newspapers, magazines, online services. Costs between £2000 and £9000/annum per subscription	Literacy development at risk due to future possible reductions in the bookfund leading to less books and other items being purchased
• **Support digital literacy and digital inclusion**	Access to the Milton Keynes Virtual Library 24 hours a day. This allows renewals, reservations, on line payments, room hire bookings and access to the full range of library facilities.	Paying for staff hours to support virtual library. Cost: up to £17.50/hr	Limit to future development of the Milton Keynes Libraries 24 hour virtual library due to the work only being carried out by 0.5 full time equivalent member of staff
	Library engagement through social media	Sponsor the Council's library webpage	

The Core Library Offer		You can help your library by……..	Impact on services that might result
	Access to digital databases, eBooks and digital audio books. (Ancestry, Times On line, Business databases, online encyclopaedias	Pay/sponsor for an annual subscription to a Library database - cost to go in	Risk of ability to offer access to digital databases due to high costs and withdrawal of databases for public access
• **Provide space and support infrastructure for people to work, study, research and engage their leisure time**		Pay/sponsor for library furniture - shelves, tables, chairs Sponsor room/area of a library	
		Rent a space to run your event/club/class	
• **Promoting digital access for all citizens**		Sponsoring the Wi-Fi systems	As existing PC fail they will not be replaced due to lack of resources depriving customers who cannot afford their own personal computer
• **Successful partnerships in place with stakeholders, communities and volunteers**		Renting a space to operate services	Current library opening hours (367.5 hours per week across the ten service points) may have to reviewed as budget impacts are felt
		Reducing the Management Fee/lease payment paid to Town Councils Volunteering services or fundraising and becoming actively involved in "Friends of Library" groups	Reduction in library provision may impact negatively on current and future partnerships Lack of library staff will limit amount of support able to be given to partners

The Core Library Offer		You can help your library by……..	Impact on services that might result
		Continuing to rent space and encouraging others to do likewise	Service level agreements with partners will be difficult to monitor and implement due to limited library staff
• Tackling social isolation by providing quality and welcoming community buildings and connecting citizens		Supporting outreach function allowing it to remain and expand to other isolated areas at a cost of £30/hr	Future breakdown of partnerships put asset retention at risk
		Sponsoring the Mobile Library or buying advertising space ensuring retention of service or its expansion	Loss of outreach service to deprived wards Mobile library limited to 37 hour service delivery due to currently only having 1FTE driver and therefore not always able to meet new demands

Developing Options Together

Given the scale of the financial challenge the Council cannot do this alone. It is seeking more collaborative models for the delivery of library services within localities across the Borough, which is very much in keeping with the Council's status as a Co-operative Council. This is an opportunity to look at what may be possible within our libraries.

This document sets out a number of proposed ideas that have been developed so far for both improving our libraries and also delivering savings and efficiencies. A number of these savings proposals not only build on some very successful relationships with Parish and Town Councils and the voluntary sector as well as local citizens, but also highlight how the use of some of the larger library buildings can be maximised.

It also provides information about how the building and non-core library services could be shared with others so that the Council can focus its financial and staff resources on the core library provision.

The Council are seeking ways in which they can further share responsibilities for library delivery across the Borough and would welcome ideas from businesses, charities, community groups, ward councillors, Parish and Town Councils and other stakeholders to enable greater local input and less Council resource.

Best Practice in Libraries

The last few years has seen an unprecedented demand for a change in the delivery of library services. Budgetary restrictions along with falling demand for book loans have resulted in Local Authorities examining the future of their library services. There is an acceptance that for libraries to survive they need to deliver services in different ways and to some extent reinvent themselves to today's world and lifestyles. This, in many instances, has resulted in libraries examining the development of partnerships to assist their survival.

DCMS in their Independent Library report for England stated:

"The library does more than simply loan books. It underpins every community. It is not just a place for self-improvement, but the supplier of an infrastructure for life and learning, from babies to old age, offering support, help, education, and encouraging a love of reading. Whether you wish to apply for a job, or seek housing benefit, or understand your pension rights or the health solutions available to you, or learn to read, the library can assist.

It is essential that all public libraries in England should be able to offer the public free access to Wi-Fi, computer facilities and sufficient workforce training to support its use."

The Arts Council for England in their "Community Libraries – Learning from Experience" report found the following:

- More than one in three library authorities now have at least one community supported or managed library operating within their area.

- CIPFA's survey of public libraries for 2010 /11 found over 21,000 volunteers involved in England's 3,300 public libraries.

- The total number of community supported and managed libraries which are either already operating or planned is presently over 425, which is approximately 12 per cent of all public libraries in England.

- Approximately one in six of the current and planned community supported or managed libraries involve the discounted transfer of assets to the community (either the freehold or a lease of 20 years or more).

- There is immense variation in practice on the ground. No two library authorities have followed exactly the same approach, so there is a broad spectrum in the nature of activities. Authorities also often use more than one model, accepting that even within one area, 'one size does not fit all'. The present situation is also dynamic, so may well change over time.

- Not all approaches are equally common. Independent community libraries are rare, accounting for only five per cent of community libraries. Community supported and community managed libraries account for 40 per cent each, and commissioned libraries account for 15 per cent.

A number of different models have been explored across the country and a few examples of these are included below. There is no best approach to take and this will be guided by local circumstances.

Model	Location	Description
Alternative Management	City of York	Establishment of a public service mutual organisation independent of the Council
	Suffolk County Council	Establishment of an Industrial and Provident Society to manage 44 libraries and mobile, school and prison library services. Communities are encouraged to develop locally focussed services
	Grappenhall Library, Warrington	Management of library by Friends of Grappenhall Library through a 50 strong volunteer workforce
	Primrose Hill Library, London	Transfer of library under Community Asset Transfer to new community group who also manage the library
	Farnham Community Library	Management of library by voluntary community group has seen a significant increase in opening hours
eLibrary	City of York	Services targeted at elderly housebound residents to become more digitally active
Integrated Services	Newcastle upon Tyne	Repositioned core library network as community hubs. Combined services such as customer service and leisure centres to deliver services.
	Society of Chief Librarians and the Publishers Association	Pilot to examine the impact of eLending

Model	Location	Description
Community hubs	Devon County Council	Galvanised local communities to support their local libraries and extended the library functions to include meeting spaces and cafes as well as co-locating services to encourage footfall and viability
	Barlby Library, N Yorks	Library managed by Parish Council funded by a parish precept of £6/annum and is now a community hub with space for exhibitions and events
Business centres	Enterprising Libraries – Exeter and Northampton	Turns library spaces into incubators for business ideas by providing coaching, advices, meeting spaces and IT for people wanting to develop business proposals
	Northants County Council	Provision of support to local businesses including sponsorship stimulating start-ups and self –employment
Co-location	Citizens Advice Bureau	Development of a national protocol to facilitate partnership between libraries and CAB
	Saxilby Library, Lincs	Relocation of library to a new community hub which includes leisure facilities and managed by the parish Council
	Telford and Wrekin Council	Co-location of library in theatre allowing longer opening hours
Automated Libraries	Woodsend and Lostock Libraries, Trafford	Use of automated libraries will see the opening hours increase from 31 to 43 hours per week
Community Management	Brighton	Using their own in-house system in two libraries starting at the end of May 2015
	Hammersmith and Fulham CAB	Delivering multiple services – advice, library and financial capability in an area of high deprivation
	Northants County Council	Development of volunteer workforce resulting in over 1000 volunteers being available for deployment. Volunteers are heavily supported
Topping up of services	Telford and Wrekin Council	Parish Councils top up the staffing budget of their local library

Figure 4 - Examples of Best Practice from across the UK

Some of the key lessons that have been learned from these alternative ways of managing libraries include:

- Support for community groups

- Clear objectives

- Effective consultation and communication

- Elected members being engaged with the process

- Core group of local people to champion the project

- Strong partnerships

Performance and Use

Stock and Issues

Milton Keynes Libraries carry a stock of over quarter of a million books, DVDs, CDs and audio books which are shared across all the libraries in Milton Keynes. These were issued over 850,000 times in 2014/15. This is a fall from over one million issues in 2012/13. Through our South East Library partners Milton Keynes Libraries have access to over 6 million items.

Nationally book lending is in decline and this is reflected in the book issues across all Milton Keynes Libraries.
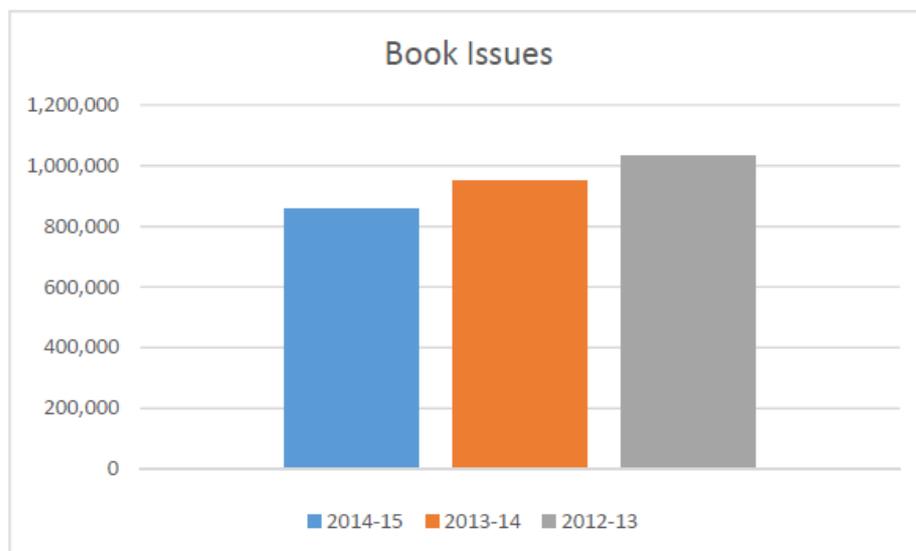
Figure 5 - Book Issues 2012 - 2015

In the year from April 2014 to March 2015:

- 1,100,515 people visited our libraries

- 1,103,013 borrowed books, CDs and DVDs

- 23,428 attended Storytimes

- 8,914 new borrowers joined the libraries

- Over 554,000 visits were made to the library website and social media

Digital Usage for Milton Keynes Libraries

All walks of life have been influenced by digital technology and it has become an important service provided by Milton Keynes Libraries. Digital technology has allowed libraries to be available 24/7 to people outside of the physical library buildings, regardless of where in the world they might be. Not only can people access services, but they can also renew and reserve books, DVDs and CDs as well as access the stock catalogue and make payments.

In general the digital use is growing, with an apparent fall in 2014/15 coinciding with the withdrawal of the very popular COIN (Community Information) database which is not currently available.

The biggest growth has been in the use of eAudio and eBooks, the figures would be higher if more stock was made available by the UK publishers. This is an issue facing all UK libraries and is being addressed at a national level and publishers will not permit the release of Kindle books and other similar products.

Digital services are a natural growth area and new services are being marketed each year. Milton Keynes Libraries have recently purchased a digital newspaper service, Press Reader, which allows 24/7 access to over 2,000 international newspapers from anywhere in the world to anyone with Milton Keynes Library membership.
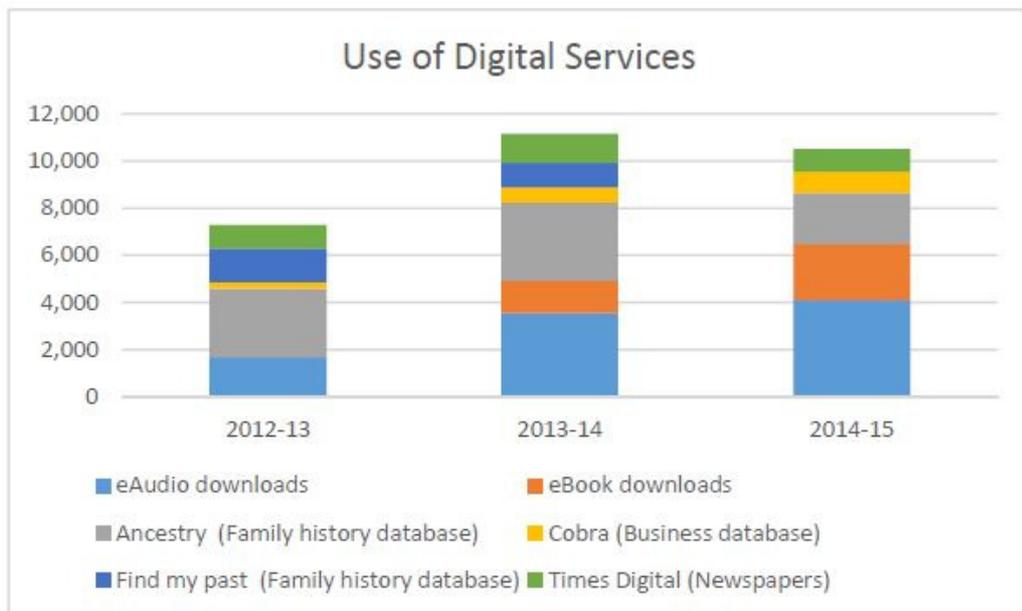

Figure 6 - Use of Digital Services

Correspondingly Milton Keynes Libraries have been active in the utilisation of social media with a massive increase in the number of hits on the Libraries' Facebook page from just under 20,000 in 2012/13 to almost quarter of a million hits in 2014/15. There has been a recent drop in hits to the website following recent changes.

Self Service Terminals

One of the early savings identified for the libraries is the introduction of self-service terminals in all of the libraries. This will save £78K in 2015/16 and £88K in 2016/17 across all the libraries and will replace some of the routine tasks currently carried out by front of house staff, such as issuing and returning items and managing customers' accounts. This then frees staff to

undertake other duties and improves both stock management and security. It has also resulted in a reduction of 8.5 full time equivalent posts.

Library staff and volunteers will play a key role in making the self-service project a success. They need to positively encourage use of the kiosks by customers, to achieve the target of 90% of transactions being through the kiosks. This will be achieved by floor walking and supporting customers to embrace the new technology.

The system has now been introduced into Westcroft, Central, Kingston, Woburn Sands, Bletchley and Olney Libraries and has rapidly been accepted by customers.

Once the project is complete there will be a target of 90% of issues being made through the new equipment.

The cost of the project is £300,000 and all libraries will be automated by July 2015 with the exception of Central, due to the redesign of the foyer area.

Knowledge about Customers

Central Library is the busiest of all of Milton Keynes libraries accounting for 59% of all visits in 2013/14. Visits to the other libraries varies from 2-9% of footfall. It is anticipated that the figure for Kingston Library will increase as a result of its recent relocation.
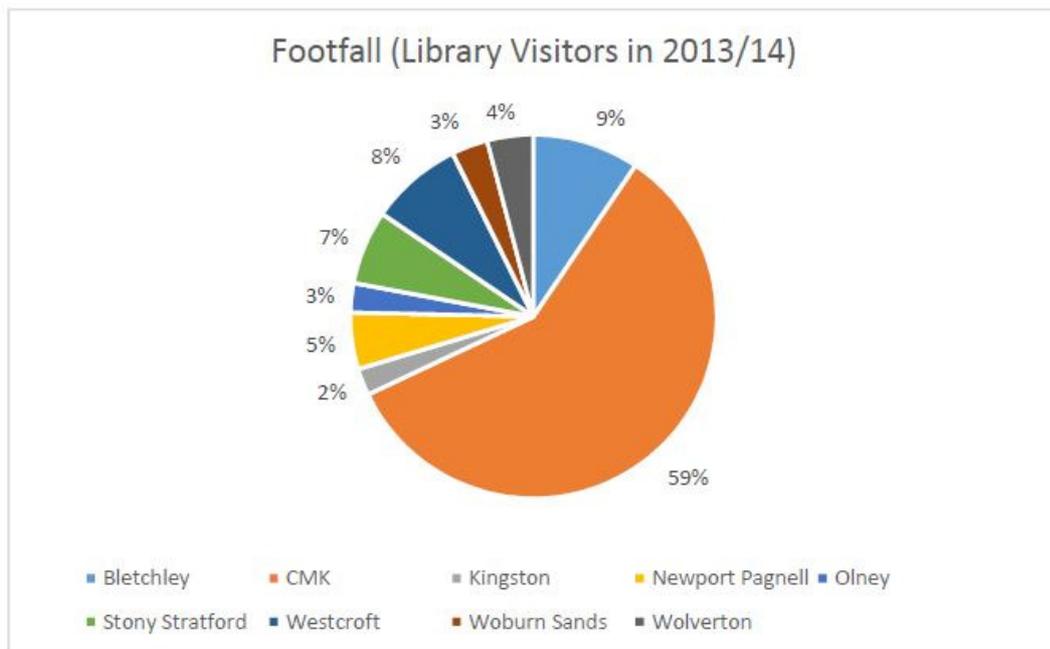

Figure 7 - Footfall in Milton Keynes Libraries 2013/14

There are some significant variations in the age profile of the visitors to each of the libraries with the following being significant:

- Issues to under 16s is high at Kingston Library
- Central Library is most popular with teenagers
- Woburn Sands Library attracts high numbers of people over 65
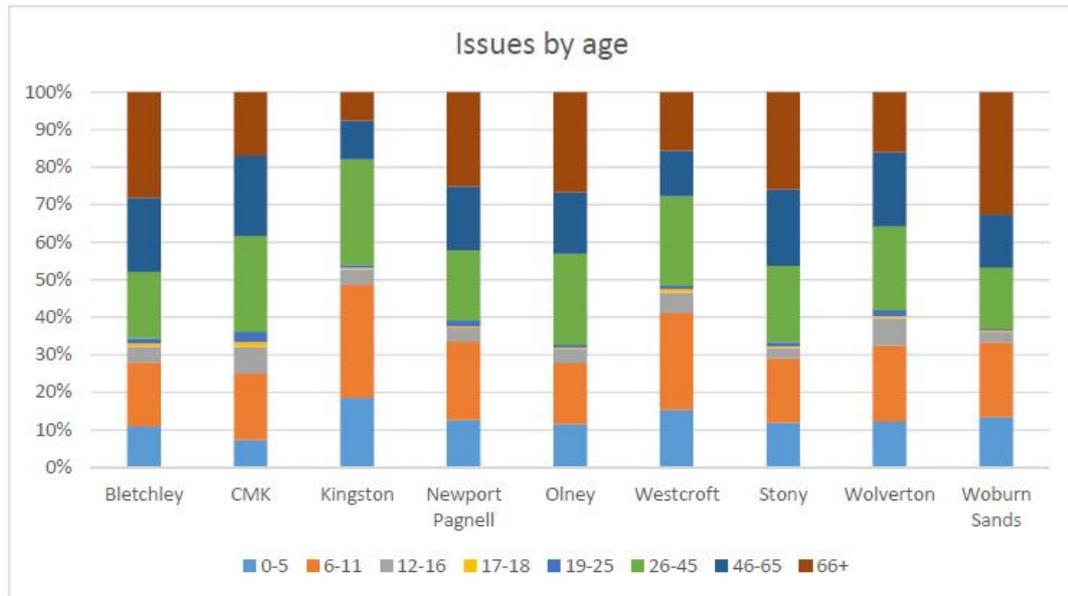- Olney Library attracts low numbers of people under 11

Figure 8 - Issues in Milton Keynes Libraries 2014/15

An analysis has been undertaken of the cost per visit at each library; it shows significant variations between libraries and compares similar costs in 2013/14 and 2014/15. In all cases, with the exception of Westcroft Library, the cost per visitor has dropped with the average cost now standing at £1.89 in comparison with £2.69 a year ago.

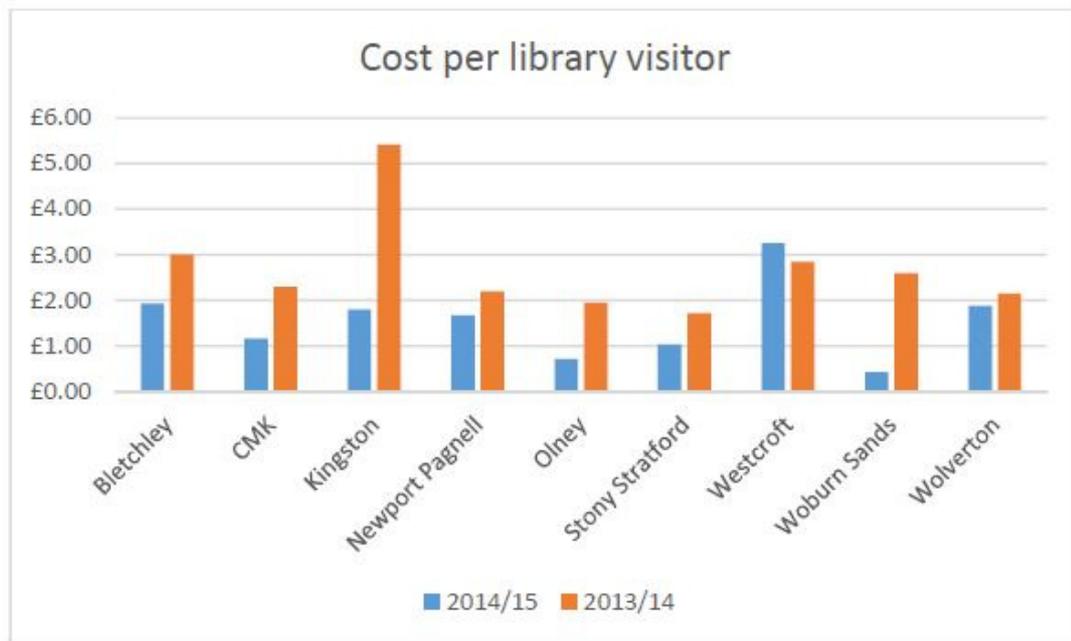Westcroft is now the most expensive library primarily due to the cost of the rent.

Figure 9 - Cost per Library Visitor 2013 - 2015

Staffing

Milton Keynes Libraries currently employs 54.89 full time equivalent staff across all the locations. The figure for Central Library includes many staff who provide functions for the entire service including management, stock, outreach and mobile services.

This number has reduced in recent years and this has been achieved by a combination of redundancies, rebalancing of back office and front of house staff and posts not being filled when a post holder leaves.

In addition to the Self Service staffing reductions, a staffing restructure is currently being developed which is looking across all the libraries to deliver a more operationally efficient and streamlined staffing team structure aligned to the Council's Core Offer whilst maintaining a staffing presence of a minimum of one staff member during the opening hours of each library. All staffing roles will be reviewed as part of this exercise with a new adaptable structure and management responsibility being in place by 1st January 2016. This task will deliver a saving of £126K and around 14 full time equivalent post reductions across the libraries.

	Full staffing	Current staffing
Central and Mobile	40.27	33.72
Bletchley	7.85	6.77
Kingston	1.8	1.8
Newport Pagnell	3.18	3.07
Olney	0.91	0.91
Stony Stratford	3.47	2.4
Westcroft	3.7	3.7
Woburn Sands	0.97	0.97
Wolverton	2.09	1.55
Total	64.24	54.89

Figure 10 – Staffing numbers for Milton Keynes Libraries

The restructuring takes staffing to minimum levels to maintain the delivery of services as they currently exist. Any further reductions will result in changes to those levels.

Volunteers

The deployment of volunteers has become increasingly important to the functioning of the libraries and currently there are 102 people volunteering their services. The volunteers are supported through a Volunteer Co-ordinator based at Central Library.

Volunteer roles have been created to support the services available and to complement and support, but not replace, paid staff. There are many benefits arising out of the volunteering service to both the libraries and more importantly to the volunteers themselves. These include:

• Finding friends and promoting happiness

• Increasing confidence

• Learning new workplace skills

• Advancing careers and offering work experience and practice and allowing people to try out a new career without making a long-term commitment

• Exposing them to professional organisations that could be of benefit to their careers

• Helping to protect mental and physical health

• Helping the community

The deployment of volunteers has been patchy with Central, Olney and Kingston Libraries reaching over 90% of their target volunteer numbers and Bletchley, Newport Pagnell and Wolverton Libraries proving less attractive to volunteers.

	Nos Volunteers	Target Nos Volunteers	+/-	%
Central Library	43	43	0	100%
Bletchley Library	5	13	-8	38%
Kingston Library	16	9	7	178%
Newport Pagnell Library	4	16	-12	25%
Olney Library	11	12	-1	92%
Stony Stratford Library	5	11	-6	45%
Westcroft Library	7	14	-7	50%
Woburn Sands Library	7	10	-3	70%
Wolverton Library	4	12	-8	33%
Total	102	140	-38	73%

Figure 11 - Numbers of Volunteers in Milton Keynes Libraries

There are a range of volunteer roles including:

- **General Library Support** - to assist library staff in delivering efficient frontline services to library users and supporting customers to use the library facilities.

- **Library Shelver** - to shelve library stock accurately and ensure it is easily accessible and assist in the tidying of items held in the libraries.

- **IT Buddies** - to support our customers with basic computer tuition and help them get online.

- **Home Library Service Volunteers** - to visit homebound library users and make regular deliveries and collections.

- **Greeters/Floorwalkers** - to greet and help visitors with any general queries, including the use of the self-service kiosks.

- **Storytime Helpers** - to assist library staff with Storytime and Rhymetime in the Children's Library.

- **Survey Volunteers** - to help with the administration at key times.

- **Duke of Edinburgh Volunteers** - a scheme for teenagers, nationally coordinated through schools. Information can be found on the official Duke of Edinburgh's Award website.

- **Reading Scheme Volunteers** - to help with particular schemes like the Summer Reading Challenge.

Community Action MK are currently redefining their role in partnership with the Council. They are co-ordinator and voice of the voluntary sector and they will have a very important role in developing the volunteer role in the libraries in the future.

Future Options

There can be no doubt that the face of public library services is changing. Public libraries provide a vital function in local communities and are valued by those who use them whether to borrow a book, find a quiet place to work, access Wi-Fi, meet people and so on. However, the way services are provided has to change, especially in the light of reducing finance. The communities of Milton Keynes have an exciting opportunity to shape that future and that will only happen through active engagement with all sectors of the community.

This will be done in a number of ways including:

- Face to face discussions
- Opportunities to contribute in writing
- Presentations
- Questionnaires

Sharing Responsibilities: Engagement

The Council will be running a series of Community Engagement sessions on the dates shown below and encourage anyone who is interested in their local library to come along and:

- Talk to Council officers

- Listen to and share ideas

- Explore opportunities about how to get further involved in libraries

- Contribute to how the libraries work

Do please promote these dates through your networks to facilitate and encourage the highest possible engagement.

Bletchley Library	6-7pm *	Tuesday 23rd June
Newport Pagnell Library	6-7pm	Wednesday 24th June
Olney Library	6-7pm	Thursday 25th June
Stony Stratford Library	6-7pm	Monday 29th June
Wolverton Library	6-7pm	Thursday 2nd July
Central Library	6-7pm	Monday 6th July
Kingston Library	6-7pm	Tuesday 7th July
Woburn Sands Library	6-7pm	Thursday 9th July
Westcroft Library	6-7pm *	Tuesday 14th July

* These engagement sessions will be held during normal opening hours

Figure 12 - Times and Dates for Community Engagement Sessions

The Community Engagement is a critical part in developing ideas and options for the future of Milton Keynes Libraries. The Council wants to hear your views, ideas and offers of help to share responsibility for these vital community resources.

Views can be made at the engagement sessions in late June/early July or online on the Council's website where you can find a questionnaire and email contact.

The Council would like to gather offers of help and proposed options/ideas as soon as possible so that models for each library can be developed in more detail. Do please contact the Council as soon as you can so that more detailed discussions about progressing ideas can be held. From 20th September 2015 onwards, the Council will finalise the proposals and options.
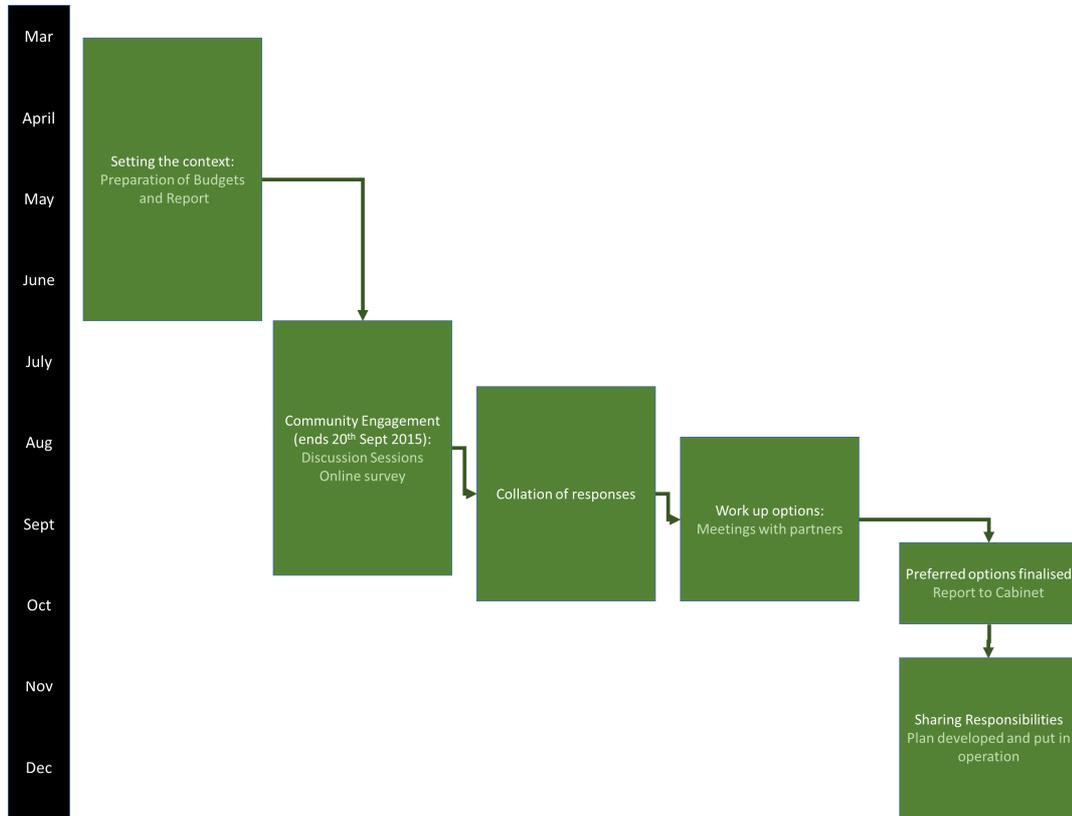

Figure 13 - Timeframes for implementation of Sharing Responsibilities for Libraries

Sharing Responsibilities: Questions for You!

Here are some general questions for you to consider. There are also specific questions tailored to each library.

1. Do you have any proposals or ideas for **additional uses** for the building(s)?

2. What **other services** could you bring in to use the libraries and contribute?

3. What can we do together to support **local people being involved with supporting** the library and activities?

4. What ideas do you have to involve more local people in the management of the building to help support community access and **possible use outside library opening hours** for new activities?

5. Would you be interested in **contributing to some of the costs** of running the library such as staffing, books or building-related costs?

6. Would you be interested in **setting up a Friends group** which could help raise funds for libraries and recruit **volunteers to help support library staff**?

7. Are you a community led organisation or cooperative entity which could take on additional responsibilities in your local library, perhaps **share a library building** or **help with the library day to day management**?

8. Could you help to **staff a library** outside of the core opening hours which could also release staff time for other tasks in libraries?