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| Report To: | EXECUTIVE CABINET |
| Date: | 23 January 2019 |
| Executive Member/Reporting Officer: | Cllr Leanne Feeley – Executive Member, Lifelong Learning, Emma Varnam – Assistant Director Operations and Neighbourhoods |
| Subject: | CULTURAL SERVICES – STRATEGIC VISION |
| Report Summary: | <p>Cultural Services consists of Libraries, Arts and Engagement, Museums and Galleries and the Local Studies and Archives Centre. Over recent years there have been changes to the way in which these services are delivered to meet the challenges of austerity faced by local government and to take into account changing ways in which people access services.</p> <p>Some of the changes include a 3 phased approach to the library offer. Phase 1 included closure of 5 libraries in October 2012 and relocating libraries to shared venues to release buildings for sale and subsequent capital receipt. The Council's strategy has been to reduce the number of buildings owned and operated by the Council before reducing services to communities. Relocating libraries to shared buildings secures the service for the future, makes full use of the Council's prestigious buildings, releases some buildings for sale and thereby the cost of maintaining those buildings going forward.</p> <p>Phase 2 consisted of Implementation of Open+ libraries and Executive Cabinet agreed the new operating hours on the 14 December 2016. All venues now operate an Open+ model with the exception of Ashton library. This has resulted in a reduction in the cost to run the library service but a substantial increase in opening hours from 276 to 495 per week across the estate.</p> <p>This report sets out the implementation of 3rd phase of the strategic vision for the service including consideration of the feasibility of relocation of both Dukinfield and Droylsden libraries.</p> <p>Relocation of Ashton Central Library to the Tameside One building would leave Central Art Gallery in an unviable position if it were to remain in the current location. This report therefore considers the opportunities to mitigate closure of this gallery and the medium and longer term opportunities alongside the possibility of re-development of the Museum of the Manchester Regiment previously located in Ashton Town Hall.</p> <p>Appropriate business cases with full costing will need to be developed where appropriate.</p> |
| Recommendations: | <p>That Executive Cabinet considers and supports the strategic direction of Cultural Services and in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The closure period of 1 month to facilitate the move of Ashton Library; • The opportunity to relocate Droylsden library to the Guardsman Tony Downes House; • The lack of opportunity to relocate Dukinfield library to the |

Town Hall;

- The closure of Central Art Gallery but the redevelopment of Astley Cheetham Art Gallery to expand the gallery offer at that venue and mitigate the closure;
- The opportunity to redevelop the Museum of the Manchester Regiment in Ashton Town Hall and include gallery space for the permanent Rutherford collection and temporary exhibitions.
- The development of fully costed business cases where appropriate and as detailed in the report.

Links to Community Strategy:

The Library Service and the wider Culture offer provide a range of services and activities that contribute to the aims of the Community Strategy 2012-22. In particular the services promote lifelong learning, health and wellbeing and employment skills whilst supporting communities.

Policy Implications:

It is essential that any proposals demonstrate value for money and make a clear contribution to Council priorities.

**Financial Implications:
(Authorised by the Section 151 Officer)**

The financial implications as a result of this report are included in section 8 and will depend in the main on the success of capital business cases.

**Legal Implications:
(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)**

A number of consultations have taken place since 2012 in relation to libraries, and its future offer, the provision of which is a statutory function. In the circumstances it would be wise to undertake a further equality Impact Assessment to ensure that we are meeting the aims of the vision for services.

Risk Management:

Opportunities in respect of relocation of Droylsden library and redeveloping the Museum of the Manchester Regiment depend on capital investment. Should capital investment not be available these projects will need to be reconsidered.

Following a condition survey of Astley Cheetham Art Gallery costs to repair the structural integrity of the building may be high.

Access to Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer, Mandy Kinder, Head of Cultural and Customer Services



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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Cultural Services consists of Libraries, Arts and Engagement, Museums and Galleries and the Local Studies and Archives Centre. Over recent years there have been changes to the way in which these services are delivered to meet the challenges of austerity faced by local government and to take into account changing ways in which people access services.
- 1.2 Some of the changes include a 3 phased approach to the library offer. Phase 1 included closure of 5 libraries in October 2015 and relocating libraries to shared venues to release buildings for sale and subsequent capital receipt. The Council's strategy has been to reduce the number of buildings owned and operated by the Council before reducing services to communities. Relocating libraries to shared buildings secures the service for the future, makes full use of the Council's prestigious buildings, releases some buildings for sale and thereby the cost of maintaining those buildings going forward.
- 1.3 Phase 2 consisted of Implementation of Open+ libraries and Executive Cabinet agreed the new operating hours on the 14 December 2016. All venues now operate an open+ model with the exception of Ashton library. This has resulted in a reduction in the cost to run the library service but a substantial increase in opening hours from 276 to 495 per week across the estate.
- 1.4 Some libraries remain in their original venues and this report sets out phase 3 of the strategic vision for libraries and considers the feasibility of relocation of both Dukinfield and Droylsden libraries.
- 1.5 Relocation of Ashton Central Library to the Tameside One building would leave Central Art Gallery in an unviable position if it were to remain in the current location. This report therefore considers the opportunities to mitigate closure of this gallery and the medium and longer term opportunities alongside the possibility of re-development of the Museum of the Manchester Regiment previously located in Ashton Town Hall.
- 1.6 The report also identifies where fully costed business cases will be required to take the strategic vision forward.

2. LIBRARY SERVICE

- 2.1 A 3 phased approach to the delivery of a modern fit for purpose library service has been implemented over recent years. Phase 1 of the approach followed an extensive consultation process and a decision made by Executive Cabinet on the 24 September 2012 to close 5 libraries. One of these libraries was taken over by the community and another by the local Housing Association. Alongside this 4 other libraries moved to new and more accessible locations. Mossley Library is now in the single level George Lawton Hall, only a very short walk from the old Wyre Street site. Hattersley Library has re-opened in the bright and modern Hub on Stockport Road. Denton Library has returned to its original venue within Denton Town Hall and Hyde Library has moved into the nearby Town Hall. This has released the Victorian Union Street building, which had become costly to maintain and at the same time is helping to secure the future of the Town Hall which dates back to the 1880s.
- 2.2 Phase 2 of the library vision was to implement technology which alongside staffed hours would allow customers to become Open+ members and use the library independently when there are no staff present. This served to significantly increase the opening hours and allows customers and communities more flexibility and choice as to when and how they engage with the library service and at the same time reduces the cost to run the service. All sites, with the exception of Ashton Library now operate on an Open+ model.

- 2.3 A review of other library venues and possibility of relocation has been undertaken as part of the 3rd and final phased approach to the future library service.

Ashton Library

- 2.4 The Council's largest library is located in a purpose built building on Old Street; the building was originally designed as a Technical School and Free Library and was formally opened on the 1 July 1893. The library has remained at this venue with the exception of a closure period of 4 years from August 1994 – June 1998 for a complete refurbishment of the Grade II listed building. Whilst the building façade is magnificent, it is not the most accessible for those with mobility issues and being out of the town centre the opportunity for people to stumble across it and be enticed inside is lost.
- 2.5 A decision was made in 2015 to re-develop Ashton Town Centre and create a public service centre where front facing services were located in one venue in the centre of the town. This vision included the Ashton Library alongside the Council's Customer Services, Cash Box Credit Union, CAB and also JobCentrePlus. Tameside One, as the building will be known, has brought a marvelous opportunity for the library to move into this fantastic modern building and be right in the heart of the town centre in close proximity to the college and other vital public services. The library will play a pivotal part of welcoming visitors to Tameside One not only for wider services but also those who have not used the library for many years or at all. The location of the library is right at the front of the building in a light, bright and airy double height space providing an ideal frontage to attract a wider audience to experience cultural activity that they may not previously have known was available.
- 2.6 It is envisaged that Ashton library in its current venue will close in mid-January 2019 for a month to allow books and equipment to be moved. The library will re-open mid-February 2019 in the new Tameside One building accessible from the Market Square and contain improved facilities, brand new computers including some tablets and multi-media PCs. The existing staff will be utilised during this period to undertake the move.
- 2.7 Once the library has been move the current building will form part of the wider Council relocation plan.

Droylsden Library

- 2.8 In December 2013 an Executive Cabinet agreed that Droylsden library should relocate to Guardsman Tony Downes House. This relocation has not yet taken place, but subject to the relevant business case, it is envisaged that this move could take place during 2019.
- 2.9 The current library has fallen into disrepair and needs considerable work to bring it up to a fit for purpose building. Some elements of the structure are unsafe and there has been much anti-social behavior and vandalism to the building over recent years.
- 2.10 The library provision is arranged over 3 floors making it difficult to access for those with mobility issues or with prams/push chairs. Whilst there is a passenger lift, it is over 40 years old and cumbersome to use. Guardsman Tony Downes House will provide a much more accessible venue for customers in a prominent place within Droylsden close to the shops and with a modern shop front setting allowing the service to be show cased and attract new visitors.
- 2.11 Relocating from the current site allows the building to be part of the wider economic development of the area and a market value capital receipt can be achieved.

Dukinfield Library

- 2.12 Dukinfield library is currently located in a standalone building in Concord Way, Dukinfield. As part of an overall library venue review consideration has been given to relocating this library to the prestigious Dukinfield Town Hall, in line with the Council's strategy to reduce the number of buildings owned and operated by the Council.

- 2.13 Dukinfield library operates on an Open+ model and when this is the case in a shared building there are certain factors that need to be considered. These include the specific location of the library within the building and the need to ensure the rest of the building is isolated and secure when the library is in Open+ mode – when no staff are present. In both Hyde and Denton Town Halls the library is in one side of the building and therefore can be isolated from the rest of the building which can be made secure with the doors that were already insitu. The same applies for both Hattersley Library which is the only service on the lower floor of the Hub and Mossley Library which is at one side of the George Lawton Hall.
- 2.14 Another important consideration is the load bearing capacity of the floors as Town Hall buildings have cellars and are therefore not built on solid structures. At both Denton and Hyde Town Halls work was undertaken to insert additional steel floor strengthening beams to allow for the weight of library books. Both these libraries are situated on the ground floor and therefore works were undertaken in the cellars.
- 2.15 When considering Dukinfield Town Hall the space available on the opposite side of the building to Registrars (Chapel Street) is insufficient to house an adequate sized library (185m²) as opposed to the current library facility which is 490.9m². But a further consideration is that the basement below this area is utilised for staff and therefore inserting steel floor strengthening beams would be an issue.
- 2.16 Consideration was given to the Lesser Halls, but again the size of the space is very small (173m²) and there is no opportunity to utilise other space in the same vicinity. The weight bearing capacity in this area would only support single lines of shelving at a maximum of 1200mm. Inserting floor strengthening beams in this listed building is unlikely to be accepted on conservation grounds as this would affect appearances on existing ground floor rooms at ceiling height. Typically free standing shelving in libraries is 1500mm high with wall shelving being 1800mm. Shelving would also be back to back to ensure sufficient capacity for stock. Single lines of shelving at 1200mm would provide insufficient space to house the stock levels required for a library.
- 2.17 Additionally Dukinfield Town Hall provides complexities in terms of securing the rest of the building when the library is in Open+ mode. On the Chapel Street side of the building access can be gained over the walkway to the stairs leading up to the main hall – there are no doors that could be used to secure this area. If the Lesser Halls were utilised the customer journey to that space is either up the main stairs from the front entrance, up the stairs from Chapel Hill or in the lift – these access arrangements pose an issue in terms of security of the rest of the building and the staff working 24 hours a day in the basement area.
- 2.18 A further consideration is that Dukinfield Town Hall has been identified as a building to be utilised as part of the Council wide recant when the Tameside One building is complete with staff identified for occupation of the office space on the Chapel Street side of the building.

3. GALLERIES

Central Art Gallery

- 3.1 The Central Art Gallery located above the library on Old Street, Ashton-under-Lyne is open to the public for 19.5 hours per week and received 15,946 visitors a year (2017/18 figure). The gallery spaces host a varied programme of temporary exhibitions and the permanent Rutherford Gallery.
- 3.2 The gallery opened in 1998 as a venue to exhibit works by local and regional artists. The gallery has exhibited paintings, textiles, sculptures, light and sound installations and local schools' artwork. Artists submit exhibition proposals, which are reviewed by curators and, if given the go ahead, are programmed into the gallery's exhibition plan. One of the most popular exhibitions is the annual Open Art exhibition. The borough's artists, both amateur

and professional, are invited to submit up to two artworks for display, and every picture gets a place on the wall. The exhibition has been running for around 60 years, having started life at Astley Cheetham Art Gallery, and features, on average, 200 artworks.

- 3.3 In 2012 the gallery became the permanent home for the borough's collection of Harry Rutherford artworks. Harry Rutherford was a nationally renowned artist who came from the Tameside area. His career was long and varied, working initially as a draughtsman and then training with the eminent artist Walter Sickert. The Rutherford Gallery is a celebration of a 20th century master, an artist whose talent allowed him to experience many avenues of artistic life. The works on display span his entire artistic career.
- 3.4 In 2014-16 the gallery partnered with three other northern galleries to commission artists to create interactive art installations aimed at a family audience. Funded by Arts Council England, the project brought a new audience to the gallery and raised the profile of service as a whole.
- 3.5 The gallery hosts children's theatre events, talks connected to the Local Studies and Archives Centre and has been a venue for community events. A Knit and Natter group meet at the gallery twice a month. The gallery also offers artist-led school workshops on a variety of topics, including textiles, landscapes, local artists and hatting.
- 3.6 When Ashton Central Library closes in January 2019 the art gallery will also close at the same time. Leaving the gallery in this space without the library is not a viable proposition both in terms of safely staffing the site but also the gallery would be left isolated in this area and visitor numbers would be adversely affected. A better option is to consider the longer term offer and sustainability for art gallery provision in Tameside.

Astley Cheetham Art Gallery

- 3.7 Astley Cheetham Art Gallery, situated above the library on Trinity Street, Stalybridge is the oldest gallery in Tameside.
- 3.8 The library was built in 1889 with money from the local industrialist and politician John Frederick Cheetham. The gallery originally opened as a lecture theatre and then the space was turned into a gallery to house the Astley Cheetham Art collection, bequeathed by J F Cheetham and his wife Beatrice Astley in 1932. The collection has grown to 540 art works with gifts and donations throughout the twentieth century and is one of the most interesting small regional collections.
- 3.9 The gallery is family friendly and visits from children are welcome. There is always a craft activity on offer, children's books about artists to read and an eye spy trail of things to spot in the paintings on display.
- 3.10 The gallery hosts children's theatre events during school holidays, which are always very well attended. Film screenings aimed at both children and adult audiences have been held at the gallery, with craft activities related to the children's films, such as the Gruffalo and Stick Man. 'I Made It' adult masterclasses have been held at the gallery, teaching skills such as lino cutting and screen printing.
- 3.11 The gallery was recently accredited by Visit England following a visit from a mystery shopper. The quality of the exhibitions, the impressiveness of the art collection and the high level of customer care were highlighted as strengths. This is an annual assessment and allows the gallery to display the Visit England logo, showing that it provides a quality visitor experience.
- 3.12 Opening hours are currently very limited (the first and third Saturday each month from 10am – 3pm and every Saturday in August from 10am – 3pm). There are 711 visitors to the gallery per annum (2017/18 figure).

- 3.13 Both galleries are part of the Accreditation scheme administered by Arts Council England. The Accreditation scheme sets out standards for museums and galleries in terms of collections care, collection documentation procedures, acquisitions, disposals and interpretation of collections. Tameside has retained Accreditation for both gallery sites in 2014 and will be reassessed in 2020.

4. MUSEUMS

Museum of the Manchester Regiment

- 4.1 The Manchester Regiment collection has been on loan to the Council and displayed in Ashton Town Hall since 1987. Prior to this the collection had been in the care of Manchester City Council since 1963.
- 4.2 The Museum tells the story of generations of Manchester Regiment soldiers through 200 years of service from 1756 until 1958 and up to today as part of the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment. The Manchester Regiment was formed in 1881 and had its headquarters at Ladysmith Barracks in Ashton-under-Lyne and as a result the majority of its recruits came from the surrounding towns that now make up the Tameside area. The displays centered on real life stories and utilised a diversity of display techniques and inter-actives to interpret the collections. It displayed over 2,200 service medals awarded to over 800 men. The medal collection covers a number of campaigns and includes both World Wars, Northern Ireland and Afghanistan. The Manchester Regiment saw active service in the First World War and the famous war poet Wilfred Owen was serving with the regiment when he was killed in action in 1918.
- 4.3 The museum collection consists of medals (including 6 Victoria Crosses), uniforms, weapons, equipment, silverware, memorials and personal souvenirs.
- 4.4 Due to the closure of Ashton Town Hall upon its separation from the previous Council office building the Museum has had to temporarily close. A funding application was submitted by the Council to the Heritage Lottery Fund in February 2018 to create a new museum in the ground floor space of Ashton Town Hall. If successful this new museum would have been developed alongside the refurbishment of the wider Town Hall building.
- 4.5 Unfortunately the bid failed at stage 1 of the HLF process with the reason being stated as an oversubscription to the fund and strong competition from other bids. Feedback was sought from the HLF and following a meeting with a representative from that organisation it was determined that re-submitting a bid was not a viable option and would be highly unlikely to succeed.
- 4.6 The museum remains part of the Arts Council England Accreditation scheme, with a Temporary Accreditation status being assessed on an annual basis while it remains closed.

Portland Basin Museum

- 4.7 Portland Basin Museum continues to be the borough's flagship museum, attracting 114,733 visitors per annum (2017/18 figures). The museum features a recreated old street, a changing exhibition space, and displays of local industrial history including cotton mills, coal mining, hatting and gloving. A range of school workshops are offered, including Home and Hearth, Victorian Schoolroom, Toys, Transport in the Past and Victorian Christmas, attracting schools both inside and outside the borough.
- 4.8 The museum offers a wide range of activities for families, such as the Nuts and Bolts play area for young children, trails, activity sheets, regular school holiday craft activities and 'Meet Tommy Atkins' sessions. In addition, regular event days are held throughout the year, often to tie in with national events such as Science Week.

- 4.9 To celebrate the museum's 20th birthday in March 2019 (the museum opened as Portland Basin Museum in 1999, having previously been a heritage centre) the museum is hosting an event day to bring the museum's past to life.
- 4.10 The museum runs a successful gift shop and there is an independently operated café on site.
- 4.11 In 2018, the museum entered the Trip Advisor 'Hall of Fame' having achieved an 'Excellent' rating from reviewers for more than five years in a row. The venue is also accredited by Visit England as providing a quality visitor experience. The museum is also part of the Arts Council England Accreditation scheme and will next be assessed along with the art galleries in 2020.

5.0 ARTS AND ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1 The Arts and Engagement Team are responsible for delivering and supporting a vibrant and affordable events programme which is generally free at the point of delivery. Through partners the service offers support to early years, formal arts education, families and a range of lifelong learning opportunities including theatrical productions, lectures, talks and workshops.

The Engagement and Events programme

- 5.2 Within the programme offered by the Arts and Engagement team there are heritage films and lectures / talks about the local area and through our Arts Award Programme we are keen to ensure that children can explore their local history and take pride in their local area.

Outdoor offer

- 5.3 The team's education offer ensures all schools have access an affordable programme of outdoor learning allowing pupils to explore our natural environment from geology to wildlife habitats across the borough. This theme is carried through into the outdoor events taking place across parks and green spaces during school holidays.
- 5.4 Central to the outdoor events programme is the outdoor theatre taking place across parks during August. The programme has a long track record for delivering high quality free family theatre for all.

Arts Award

- 5.5 The Arts and Engagement team is a nationally recognised centre for the delivery and accreditation of all aspects of Arts Award. Often delivered in partnership with national organisations such as National Theatre and the BBC.
- 5.6 Arts Award, a nationally recognised qualification supports children and young people aged 5 - 25 years old to enjoy the arts, develop creative and leadership skills. Arts Award reflects many different interests and ambitions, respects individual development and helps young people to define their creative futures.

Civic Events

- 5.7 The Council delivers and supports a number of key civic events annually: Whit Friday Brass Band Contests, Armed Forces Day, Remembrance Services and Christmas celebrations. These are all well attended, bring communities together and help foster a greater sense of belonging and community cohesion. The events bring investment into the borough as well as providing opportunities for local businesses to be involved.
- 5.8 Different years will occasionally have additional significant events which the Council wishes to celebrate or commemorate. 2018 marks the one hundred years since the First World War ended. This will have a national as well as local focus with the Council working together with partners to celebrate and commemorate Battles End on the 11 November 2018.

- 5.9 It is also the one hundred years since some women were given the right to vote. Known as 'Women's Suffrage' the Council and other organisations are marking this momentous occasion throughout the year.
- 5.10 Looking forward to 2019 the Peterloo Massacre is something the Council will be commemorating. These are expected events rooted in history; however there may also be significant events which arise out of the present and on such occasions, after agreement by the Council's Events Panel, the service will lead on the Council's response.

Event Support

- 5.11 A range of support is offered to many community based arts groups and to community groups undertaking events. Through partnership working, a wide range of quality arts provision is shared both regionally and nationally.
- 5.12 The Team provide advice and support for community event/festival organisers staging outdoor public events and festivals within the Borough.

6. LOCAL STUDIES AND ARCHIVE CENTRE (LSAC)

- 6.1 The Tameside Local Studies and Archive Centre is situated behind Ashton Central Library and is connected to the library via a glass atrium. The centre was purpose built in 2005 and collects, conserves and preserves material relating to the history of Tameside's 9 towns.
- 6.2 In addition to the records of the Borough Council and its predecessors, LSAC takes in a wide variety of archives and photographs from private donors, depositors and organisations and makes them available to the public. Records relating to places, organisations and people from the Tameside area, along with records relating to the Manchester Regiment are accepted. The regiment archive collection consists of photographs, letters, personal diaries, war diaries and regimental records.
- 6.3 Archives contain the original documents that tell the history of people, places and events that have shaped the world we live in today. They include written documents, printed materials, images, maps, sound recordings and other media that bring the past to life in a unique way.
- 6.4 Archives have the power to enrich our understanding of the present through an appreciation of the past. They connect us to our families and the places where we live, work and study. Archives sit at the heart of our collective understanding: who we are, where we came from, and, indeed, where we are going.
- 6.5 In July this year the service was awarded National Archive Service Accreditation which is the UK wide quality standard for archive services. Achieving Accreditation status demonstrates that the service has met clearly defined national standards relating to management and resourcing; the care of its unique collections and what the service offers to its entire range of users.
- 6.6 Whilst the LSAC is connected to Ashton Central Library via an atrium, there is a roller shutter in place which serves to completely separate access to the two buildings which can and do operate independently of each other.
- 6.7 As the LSAC is a purpose built facility with all the requirements of housing an archive including environmentally controlled storage, rolling stacks and search room, are in place and it would be financially prohibitive to relocate this facility. The LSAC will therefore remain in its current location.

7. FUTURE CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Short term

- 7.1 When Ashton Central Library closes in early in 2019 there will be a period of just 1 month before the brand new, modern library with updated IT facilities opens its doors to welcome people in. However assuming capital investment is allocated to a new Museum of the Manchester Regiment, incorporating gallery exhibition space, there will be a gap in provision following the closure of Central Art Gallery as it is estimated that the facility would not be complete until 2020/21.
- 7.2 With this in mind it is proposed to redevelop Astley Cheetham Art Gallery and make it an attractive, engaging must-see destination which attracts both a local audience and tourists to the town.
- 7.3 There are a number of improvements which will need to be implemented to achieve this aim which include:
- Investigate and remedy the cause of the damage to the walls on the staircase which is causing the plaster to crumble
 - Redecorate the entire space including the walls and the ceiling to transform the gallery into a modern, welcoming space.
 - Install moveable exhibition walls to allow more of the art collection to be on display at any one time and allow for different zones to be created. During events and film showings the walls can be removed to create space.
 - Investigate the feasibility of un-boarding some of the windows where possible. The windows are currently boarded to prevent UV damage to the artworks on display, but UV film is now available which would be applied to the windows thus enabling the gallery to be safely filled with natural light. Blackout blinds would be required to manage the lux levels.
 - Replace the reception desk with a much smaller desk. The current desk is too large and takes a significant amount of floor space. Replacing this would allow more artworks to be displayed and provide a less intimidating entrance for first time visitors.
 - Replace the current display boards with new ones that reach higher up the walls allowing more artworks to be displayed. The current boards have been in situ for many years and have uneven surfaces where screw holes have been filled multiple times.
 - Either replace the current dated carpet or revive the existing wooden flooring in the gallery.
 - Install a new lighting track enabling the art collection to be displayed at its best.
 - More appropriate seating which encourages people to spend time enjoying the artworks.
- 7.4 The gallery would remain predominantly a space to showcase the Astley Cheetham collection but could also be used for temporary exhibitions such as Open Art and for local artist exhibitions which would currently be displayed at Central Art Gallery. The installation of moveable walls would allow more than one theme to be displayed at a time.
- 7.5 Opening hours to the redeveloped gallery would match the staffed library hours and therefore be increased to 17 hours per week. This would allow the Museum service to offer school workshops in the gallery using facilitators in the same way as they currently operate in Central Art Gallery.
- 7.6 Relevant experts have been approached to discuss the scope of the works required with the important initial steps being the integrity of the building structure. Before moving forward with the proposals set out above a fully costed model will need to be developed. For that reason it is difficult to provide an accurate likely timescale, but with the closure of Central Art Gallery in early 2019 this project needs to move at pace to minimise the gap in art gallery provision.

Longer term

- 7.7 Following the failure of the HLF bid with regard to the Museum of the Manchester Regiment, a request for capital investment from the Council has been submitted as part of the wider Ashton Town Hall scheme in order to redevelop the museum as was planned in the HLF bid. Professional design experts had been used to develop the plans which are still relevant and would ideally be utilised if capital funding were to be granted.
- 7.8 Alongside the Museum of the Manchester Regiment, the plans include space for exhibiting art works – both the permanent Rutherford collection and temporary exhibitions.
- 7.9 Should capital investment be provided for the Museum of the Manchester Regiment and gallery space it is envisaged this venue would be open in 2020/21.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Ashton Library

- 8.1 The cost of the relocation of this service has been considered and approved as part of the wider Vision Tameside Scheme.

Droylsden Library

- 8.2 When Guardsman Tony Downes House was in the planning stages £1.4 million was the estimated cost for the ground floor to develop a new library and community space. This element of the plan was not undertaken at that time and therefore development of an up to date business case and detailed costings will be required. Approval of the new business case will be required before this project progresses.

Dukinfield Library

- 8.3 As the proposed move to Dukinfield Town Hall is not feasible, the cost to run this venue will remain and therefore the current budget provision for the running costs of this building will remain.

Central Art Gallery

- 8.4 This venue achieves very little income (approximately £600 per annum). The loss of this income will potentially be mitigated by redeveloping Astley Cheetham Art Gallery and increasing opportunities for school visits.

Astley Cheetham Art Gallery

- 8.5 A building condition survey has been commissioned to establish the works required to repair the fabric of the building. The cost of the condition survey is £3,498 which will be funded from the corporate landlord budget along with the subsequent repair costs.
- 8.6 For the redevelopment of the gallery space it was agreed that £160,000 from underspends from the Cultural and Customer Services budget in previous years could be set aside into a reserve to redevelop the gallery space. Once quotes have been received it will be determined if this amount is sufficient.

Museum of the Manchester Regiment

- 8.7 A request for £1m has been included in the wider Ashton Town Hall development capital funding bid. If the funding bid and business case is successful this would be utilised to fund a new Museum of the Manchester Regiment.

9. GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

- 9.1 The work of the GMCA has a direct bearing on supporting cultural activity delivered in the 10 GM partner authorities. The Mayor of Greater Manchester has appointed the leader of Bolton Council, Linda Thomas, as portfolio lead for Culture, Arts and Leisure.
- 9.2 The Culture Portfolio will oversee the development and delivery of an ambitious, over-arching GMCA strategy for Culture, Arts and Leisure which plays a pivotal role in delivering a range of GM Strategy priorities.
- 9.3 A draft strategy has been developed closely linked to the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS). The aim is to demonstrate the impact culture has in delivering wider outcomes and working within this framework, making the case for culture going forward. The strategy recognises culture as not just a “nice to have” but as a vital part of the lives of our residents and the vibrancy and distinctiveness of our places. Culture has a role to play in addressing some of Greater Manchester’s most pressing issues which is why the GM Culture Strategy reflects and will support successful delivery of the GM Strategy which sets out Greater Manchester’s ambitions.
- 9.4 The draft Culture strategy is based around three thematic areas:
People – Health, Ageing and Families
Economy – Education, Skills and Jobs
Place – Regeneration, Environment and Communities
- 9.5 The strategy is currently in the consultation phase with the aim of having a final version for sign off by GMCA in December 2018.
- 9.6 The GMCA Culture portfolio holder is also responsible for administration and monitoring of the Culture and Social Impact Fund (CSIF). The CSIF provides grant funding to properly constituted, not for profit, voluntary organisations, who are committed to providing excellent cultural experiences or work that has significant social impact across the ten boroughs in Greater Manchester.
- 9.7 The scheme builds on the success of the previous AGMA-run Section 48 grants fund and provides £7m funding over 2 years to successful organisations. The criteria for the scheme is shaped around 4 main objectives and successful applicants had to meet at least 2 of the priorities:
- Contribute to the recognition of GM locally, nationally and internationally to attract new investment, new visitors and new talent to Greater Manchester;
 - Make a positive contribution to improving skills and employability of residents in Greater Manchester, including the creative education, expression and ambition of young people across Greater Manchester;
 - Play a strong role in developing strong and inclusive communities and an improved quality of life for residents, particularly those residents at risk of disengagement or social isolation;
 - Be able to evidence how the project will make a positive contribution to improving residents’ health and well-being.
- 9.8 28 organisations will receive funding from 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2020 to work with and in communities across Greater Manchester, delivering the four main objectives of the fund. 89% of funding will be delivered across Greater Manchester, not just where the receiving organisation is based. As part of the monitoring process we will be keen to ensure that activity takes place in Tameside.

10. TAMESIDE CULTURAL STRATEGY

10.1 Currently there is a Cultural Plan in place for Tameside which is due to expire at the end of 2018. Following the finalisation and publication of the GM Culture Strategy it is intended to commence development of a new strategy which aligns with the aims and objectives of Greater Manchester but is specific to Tameside residents and the offer available in the Borough. It is estimated that this work will begin in the first quarter of 2019.

11. CONCLUSIONS

11.1 Much has been achieved over the past few years in the library service to significantly extend the opening hours with a mix of staffed and Open+ operating hours. Additionally, relocations have meant utilising underused prestigious building and securing their future whilst at the same time reducing the cost of the service and in some cases releasing a capital receipt for further investment in the Borough. Whilst this is not a feasible option due to the limitations within Dukinfield Town Hall, with capital investment the opportunity to provide a much more accessible and modern library whilst releasing a capital receipt does present itself with Droylsden library.

11.2 Redevelopment plans for Astley Cheetham Art Gallery will see a transformed space which is much more versatile, allowing more exhibition space and longer opening hours. This will mitigate the closure of Central Art Gallery which would be unviable in its current location.

11.3 There are exciting times ahead with the Tameside One building containing a bright, new, modern library right in the heart of the town centre with the potential to open up opportunities to far wider numbers of visitors. Adding to this, if capital investment is received, and the Museum of the Manchester Regiment is once again located in Ashton Town Hall, along with gallery space for the permanent Rutherford collection and temporary exhibition space for local artists to exhibit, there will be the creation of a true cultural corner for all to enjoy.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 As detailed on the front of this report