



EXECUTIVE DECISION NOTICE



SERVICE AREA:	PEOPLE DIRECTORATE Stronger Communities
SUBJECT MATTER:	NEW DELIVERY MODEL FOR TAMESIDE LIBRARY SERVICE
DECISION:	It is determined that: (1) public consultation be undertaken over a 6 week period from 4 July 2016 to 14 August 2016 to seek views of residents, customers and anyone with an interest regarding the future vision for the library service; (2) the consultation would be undertaken as set out in the report and the proposed consultation pack included at appendix 1.
DECISION TAKER(S):	Councillor Gerald Cooney
DESIGNATION OF DECISION TAKER(S):	Executive Member – Healthy and Working
DATE OF DECISION:	28 June 2016
REASON FOR DECISION:	<p>In September 2012 following a comprehensive review Executive Cabinet agreed a new library offer. The new offer included the closure of 5 libraries and a reduction in opening hours in the remaining 8 libraries. The new offer delivered full year revenue savings of £1m.</p> <p>Whilst the library service is highly valued by customers and the Council alike, usage has declined over the years due to many external factors including the development of digital technology, the internet and cheap broadband prices. A balance needs to be struck between retaining the service but in an affordable way that meets the needs of those wishing to use it.</p> <p>The council is faced with unprecedented cuts to budgets from central government and this is set to continue throughout the current spending review period. There is a need to reduce the library budget by £0.185m for an affordable position to be reached.</p> <p>Closure of more libraries or reducing opening hours is not the preferred option of the Council. Instead, implementing up to date technology to allow enhanced operating hours by a mixture of staffed and unstaffed opening hours is the preferred model. Implementing this model of service delivery will allow customers more choice and flexibility on when and how they engage with the service and enable schools and other trusted partners to make use of the library buildings when there are no staff present.</p> <p>Where this technology is implemented it will be possible for customers to access the library facilities on days when the service is currently closed thereby allowing much longer opening hours. An element of staffed hours will be retained at each venue for those customers who require it.</p>

	<p>It is proposed that specific public consultation is undertaken over a 6 week period to seek views of residents, customers and anyone with an interest about the future vision for the service.</p> <p>It is also important to seek views from groups or individuals that may be adversely affected by any changes so that these can be fully considered as part of an Equality Impact Assessment.</p>
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS REJECTED (if any):	<p>Further reduce opening hours Consideration was given to closing each library venue for another day each week. This option was discounted as the opening hours at venues would be extremely limited and the impact would be greater on customers and community groups wishing to access the service. This option would only save £0.107m therefore other savings would need to be found to achieve the £0.185m reduction.</p> <p>Close some library venues This option was discounted as it was felt that retaining 8 venues across the borough gave the widest access possible to those wishing to use the service. Fewer venues would mean greater travel distance which may pose problems for some customers.</p>
CONSULTEES:	The report recommends consultation with the public, staff and local elected Members.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: (Authorised by Borough Treasurer)	This is the next step in the process to improving the library offer and achieving savings.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS: (Authorised by Borough Solicitor)	Consultation with the public on the Council's proposals is key to ensure their views are fully taken into consideration when deciding on the most appropriate way forward in seeking to improve the service.
CONFLICT OF INTEREST:	None
DISPENSATION GRANTED BY STANDARDS COMMITTEE ATTACHED:	N/A
REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:	<p>The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the Report Writer, by:</p> <p> Telephone: 0161 342 2061</p> <p> E-mail: mandy.kinder@tameside.gov.uk</p>

Signed.....*Gerald P Cooney*..... Dated.....*28/6/16*.....
Councillor, Gerald Cooney – Executive Member (Healthy and Working)

EXECUTIVE DECISION NOTICE

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DESIGNATION OF DECISION TAKER(S):	Executive Member – Healthy and Working
DATE OF DECISION:	28 June 2016
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CONFLICT OF INTEREST:	None
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REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:	<p>The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the Report Writer, by:</p> <p> Telephone: 0161 342 2061</p> <p> E-mail: mandy.kinder@tameside.gov.uk</p>

Signed..... Dated.....
Councillor Gerald Cooney – Executive Member (Healthy and Working)

EXECUTIVE DECISION REPORT

SERVICE AREA:	PEOPLE DIRECTORATE Stronger Communities
SUBJECT MATTER:	NEW DELIVERY MODEL FOR TAMESIDE LIBRARY SERVICE
DATE OF DECISION:	28 June 2016
DECISION TAKER	Councillor Gerald Cooney
REPORTING OFFICER:	Emma Varnam
REPORT SUMMARY:	<p>On the 24 September 2012 following an extensive public consultation exercise Executive Cabinet agreed a new library offer for Tameside's Library Service. The new offer included the relocation of Mossley Library into George Lawton Hall, the closure of 5 libraries and a reduction in opening hours at the remaining 8 libraries. The new offer was fully implemented and delivered full year revenue savings of £1 million.</p> <p>The Council is facing unprecedented financial challenges with cuts to the budget totalling £130m from 2010 due to the Government's austerity measures. These challenges are set to continue through the current comprehensive spending review with a further £30m cuts to budgets by 2017/18.</p> <p>It is incumbent on all services, including the Library service, to continually review and refine the offer to ensure it is affordable in the current financial climate and achieves the required outcomes of those wishing to use the service.</p> <p>Under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 the Council is obliged to provide a comprehensive and efficient service for all individuals who live, work or study in the Borough and who are desirous of using the service. The challenge is to continue to deliver such a service within a financially sustainable framework. This will necessitate a refocus and review of the core offer to local communities; better exploitation of technology to make the service more effective and efficient whilst ensuring delivery of local and national priorities in a progressive way.</p> <p>On the 12 November 2014 an Executive Decision agreed that the Council should look at new ways of working and consider technology which would allow unstaffed opening hours alongside staffed hours at each library site and the increased use of volunteers to support paid library staff in the delivery of the service. Adopting this model would allow longer opening hours for library sites including where the library is now closed on certain days of the week. The outcome of this work was that it would be possible to adopt this model whilst considering the needs of each library venue individually.</p> <p>This report presents an option to implement unstaffed opening hours to achieve budget savings whilst continuing to maintain 8</p>

	<p>library venues and increase access to provision. It is recommended that public consultation is undertaken to ensure views and considerations of those wishing to use the service are taken into account when determining the construction of the service.</p>
<p>RECOMMENDATIONS:</p>	<p>It is determined that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) public consultation be undertaken over a 6 week period from 4 July 2016 to 14 August 2016 to seek views of residents, customers and anyone with an interest regarding the future vision for the library service; (2) the consultation would be undertaken as set out in the report and the proposed consultation pack included at appendix 1.
<p>JUSTIFICATION FOR DECISION:</p>	<p>In September 2012 following a comprehensive review Executive Cabinet agreed a new library offer. The new offer included the closure of 5 libraries and a reduction in opening hours in the remaining 8 libraries. The new offer delivered full year revenue savings of £1m.</p> <p>Whilst the library service is highly valued by customers and the Council alike, usage has declined over the years due to many external factors including the development of digital technology, the internet and cheap broadband prices. A balance needs to be struck between retaining the service but in an affordable way that meets the needs of those wishing to use it.</p> <p>The council is faced with unprecedented cuts to budgets from central government and this is set to continue throughout the current spending review period. There is a need to reduce the library budget by £0.185m for an affordable position to be reached.</p> <p>Closure of more libraries or reducing opening hours is not the preferred option of the Council. Instead, implementing up to date technology to allow enhanced operating hours by a mixture of staffed and unstaffed opening hours is the preferred model. Implementing this model of service delivery will allow customers more choice and flexibility on when and how they engage with the service and enable schools and other trusted partners to make use of the library buildings when there are no staff present.</p> <p>Where this technology is implemented it will be possible for customers to access the library facilities on days when the service is currently closed thereby allowing much longer opening hours. An element of staffed hours will be retained at each venue for those customers who require it.</p> <p>It is proposed that specific public consultation is undertaken over a 6 week period to seek views of residents, customers and anyone with an interest about the future vision for the service.</p> <p>It is also important to seek views from groups or individuals that may be adversely affected by any changes so that these can be fully considered as part of an Equality Impact Assessment.</p>

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS REJECTED (if any):	<p>Further reduce opening hours</p> <p>Consideration was given to closing each library venue for another day each week. This option was discounted as the opening hours at venues would be extremely limited and the impact would be greater on customers and community groups wishing to access the service. This option would only save £0.107m therefore other savings would need to be found to achieve the £0.185m reduction.</p> <p>Close some library venues</p> <p>This option was discounted as it was felt that retaining 8 venues across the borough gave the widest access possible to those wishing to use the service. Fewer venues would mean greater travel distance which may pose problems for some customers.</p>
CONSULTEES:	<p>The report recommends consultation with the public, staff and local elected Members.</p>
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: (Authorised by Borough Treasurer)	<p>This is the next step in the process to improving the library offer and achieving savings.</p>
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS: (Authorised by Borough Solicitor)	<p>Consultation with the public on the Council's proposals is key to ensure their views are fully taken into consideration when deciding on the most appropriate way forward in seeking to improve the service.</p>
RISK MANAGEMENT:	<p>It is necessary to fully understand the views of residents, customers and anyone with an interest in the library service prior to determining how staffed/unstaffed hours should be structured at each venue. Failing to take account of these views may result in a model being developed which doesn't best meet the needs of communities.</p>
LINKS TO COMMUNITY PLAN:	<p>The Tameside Library service provides a wide range of services that contribute to the aims of the Community Strategy 2012-22 in particular the service promotes lifelong learning, health and wellbeing and employment skills whilst supporting communities.</p>
REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:	<p>The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Head of Customer Care and Advocacy on:</p> <p> Telephone: 0161 342 2061</p> <p> E-mail: mandy.kinder@tameside.gov.uk</p>

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On the 24 September 2012 following an extensive public consultation exercise Executive Cabinet agreed a new library offer for Tameside's Library Service. The new offer included the relocation of Mossley Library into George Lawton Hall, the closure of 5 libraries and a reduction in opening hours at the remaining 8 libraries. The new offer was fully implemented and delivered full year revenue savings of £1 million.
- 1.2 The Council is facing unprecedented financial challenges with cuts to the budget totalling £130m from 2010 due to the Government's austerity measures. These challenges are set to continue through the current comprehensive spending review with a further £30m cuts to budgets by 2017/18.
- 1.3 It is incumbent on all services, including the Library service, to continually review and refine the offer to ensure it is affordable in the current financial climate and achieves the required outcomes of those wishing to use the service.
- 1.4 Under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 the Council is obliged to provide a comprehensive and efficient service for all individuals who live, work or study in the Borough and who are desirous of using the service. The challenge is to continue to deliver such a service within a financially sustainable framework. This will necessitate a refocus and review of the core offer to local communities; better exploitation of technology to make the service more effective and efficient whilst ensuring delivery of local and national priorities in a progressive way.
- 1.5 On the 12 November 2014 an Executive Decision agreed that the Council should look at new ways of working and consider technology which would allow unstaffed opening hours alongside staffed hours at each library site and the increased use of volunteers to support paid library staff in the delivery of the service. Adopting this model would allow longer opening hours for library sites including where the library is now closed on certain days of the week. The outcome of this work was that it would be possible to adopt this model whilst considering the needs of each library venue individually.
- 1.6 This report presents an option to implement unstaffed opening hours to achieve budget savings whilst continuing to maintain 8 library venues and increase access to provision. It is recommended that public consultation is undertaken to ensure views and considerations of those wishing to use the service are taken into account when determining the construction of the service. The proposed consultation pack is in **Appendix 1** of the report
- 1.7 An Equality Impact Assessment in **Appendix 2** explores the consultation proposals.

2. THE TAMESIDE LIBRARY SERVICE

- 2.1 The new Library offer implemented in 2012 defined the current library provision in Tameside. The service is delivered through:
 - A network of 8 libraries
 - 2 vans delivering the Home Library Service to individuals who cannot visit a static library due to long term health conditions
 - An unstaffed library access point at Ryecroft Hall
 - 3 library access points in Post Offices comprising of popular fiction books
 - Health Information Centre based at Tameside General Hospital
- 2.2 As part of the Council's policy to reduce the number of council owned buildings some libraries are now co-located in larger buildings with other services or a move is planned.

These moves have retained opening hours, but reduced floor space. Stalybridge and Dukinfield libraries remain in their original buildings, and at present there are no plans to relocate them. Ashton remains in its original building but there are plans to relocate to the new service centre upon completion in 2018. Droylsden remains in its original location but financial options are being explored to relocate to the new Greater Manchester Pension Building – Guardsman Tony Downes House.

2.3 The Tameside Library Service delivers a wide range of functions that contribute to the aims of the Community Strategy 2012-22, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and the Enterprising Economic Strategy for Tameside 2012-26. A range of services, other than simply books, are provided including targeted services, activities for children and families and an inclusion programme promoting access to IT and information, lifelong learning, social integration, health and wellbeing and employment skills.

2.4 **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Library Service is:

“To be a continually developing service that is responsive to the needs of the local community. At its heart is the promotion of reading, lifelong learning, health and wellbeing, access to digital skills and services, access to information, and the provision of facilities which play a significant part in establishing the local community identity and contribute to the priorities of Tameside Community Strategy 2012-22. We contribute to the priorities of Tameside Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and Enterprising Tameside Economic Strategy for Tameside 2012-26.”

2.5 **Service Aims**

Four key areas have been identified nationally by the Society of Chief Librarians as integral to a 21st century library service, and the Tameside Library Service is committed to these Universal Library Offers.

2.5.1 **Universal Reading Offer:**

The service promotes reading both as an activity in itself and one that supports other leisure, learning and cultural activities. The Universal Reading Offer framework is used to develop, deliver and promote engaging reading services. The offer includes:

- Free books and reading resources, including E-books, e.magazines and audio books,
- Reading groups, challenges, promotions and author events, alongside public engagement opportunities for specific audiences such as families and people who are blind and partially sighted.

2.5.2 **Universal Health Offer:**

The service contributes to the positive health and wellbeing of the local community by using the Universal Health Offer framework to provide a range of services including health information and promotion, sign posting and referrals, creative, learning and social activities. The offer will include:

- Books on Prescription and other national health information schemes,
- Community outreach and activities supporting vulnerable people,
- Network of local hubs offering non-clinical community space,
- Assisted online access,
- Health Information Service based at Tameside Hospital,
- Public health promotion activity.

2.5.3 **Universal Digital Offer**

Libraries play an important role in ensuring everyone has access to the digital world. The service uses the Universal Digital Offer framework to deliver and develop digital services, skills and access. The offer includes:

- Free access to the internet and Wi-Fi,
- Support for those who lack digital skills,
- 24/7 access to services and information through a virtual library presence. (This includes online library catalogue, library membership and account management, enquiry service and digital content such as e-books, e-magazines and online reference and learning resources)

2.5.4 **Universal Information Offer**

Libraries are a gateway to local, national and world knowledge and information. The Universal Information Offer framework is used to deliver and develop help to citizens' accessing information online and from other sources. The offer includes:

- Support for people to access information and services online particularly in life critical areas such as careers and job seeking; business; health; education; local information; personal financial information, and benefits,
- Bringing together government and non-governmental sources of information, which have been researched by information professionals, giving a level of quality assurance to users,
- Continually developing the skills of staff and volunteers to provide help to people accessing information and services,
- A specialist Information Service.

2.5.5 In addition to these universal offers we have local offers identified to address local priorities.

2.5.6 **Learning Offer**

Libraries play an important role in supporting learning throughout life, both formal and informal. The offer includes:

- Services and activities which contribute to the development of young children, and help them become "school ready",
- Work with schools, colleges and other agencies to improve literacy and other skills in Tameside,
- Services which facilitate learning, including provision of a wide range of resources, and study facilities,
- Courses, workshops and events in libraries,
- Support to access and learn about information technology.

2.5.7 **Business and Economy Offer**

The service contributes to supporting the local economy, helping to address poverty and unemployment by providing a range of services. The offer includes:

- Supporting job seekers; including working in partnership with other organisations to provide 1-2-1 support and advice, resources to help find opportunities and prepare for interview, and access to the internet and digital skills support,
- Supporting local businesses; through providing access to information and resources to help set up and develop small businesses, facilitating events and advice sessions by other agencies, and taking part in the Greater Manchester Start Up Engines Enterprising Libraries project,
- Supporting adults wishing to advance themselves.

2.5.8 **Neighbourhood/ Community facility Offer**

Libraries are important as neighbourhood social hubs, and are viewed as safe, neutral spaces within communities which can be used by anyone. They help to connect people, and reduce social isolation. They are also valued as an extension of homes, work or study places. The service is committed to their use as:

- Community spaces which can be used by local groups and organisations,

- Flexible spaces which can be used by other agencies alongside the library,
- Comfortable welcoming spaces, which anyone can use without prejudice or judgement.

2.5.9 Children and Young People Offer

Early engagement with reading and using the library service can help to bring benefits and improve opportunities throughout life. The service actively promotes enjoyment of reading and provides a wide range of inspiring, high quality books for children and young people. The offer includes:

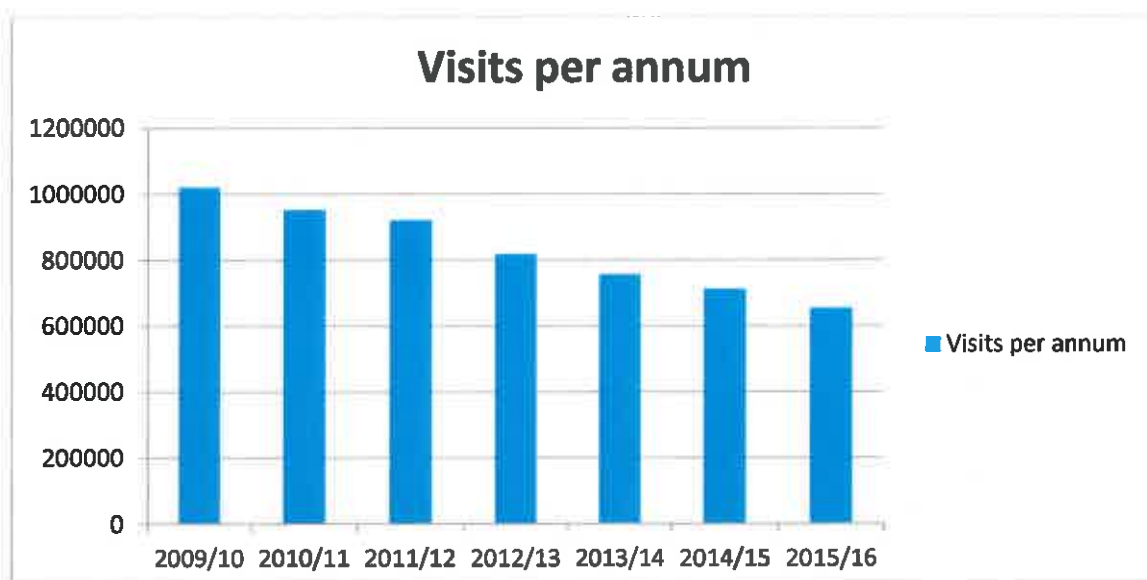
- Introducing babies to books from birth through weekly early year's activities in libraries and participation in the Bookstart scheme,
- Provision of creative activities for children and young people including a range of school holiday events and the opportunity for all children in Tameside to join the annual Summer Reading Challenge,
- Provision of reading resources tailored to learning needs, study support, and free access to the internet and online reference resources.
- Offer to early years' settings and schools in Tameside of a range of class visits that support the Early Years Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum.
- Offer young people volunteering opportunities.
- Early introduction to digital skills eg coder clubs

3. USAGE OF THE SERVICE

3.2 The Library service in Tameside is highly valued by residents, however there is no doubt that the pattern of usage of library services is changing and nationally there is a downward trend in visits and issues. In common with national statistics a downward trend in both visits and issues can be seen in Tameside Libraries over the years. Digital technology including the internet, competitive broadband prices, access to cheap smart phones/tablets, gaming and e.books have all played their part in this downward trend. It is clear that the service must adapt and develop to ensure it continues to be current and relevant to residents.

3.3 The graph below indicates the reduction in total visits to the Library service from 2009/10 to 2015/16. The graph only includes data for the current 8 library venues.

Graph 1

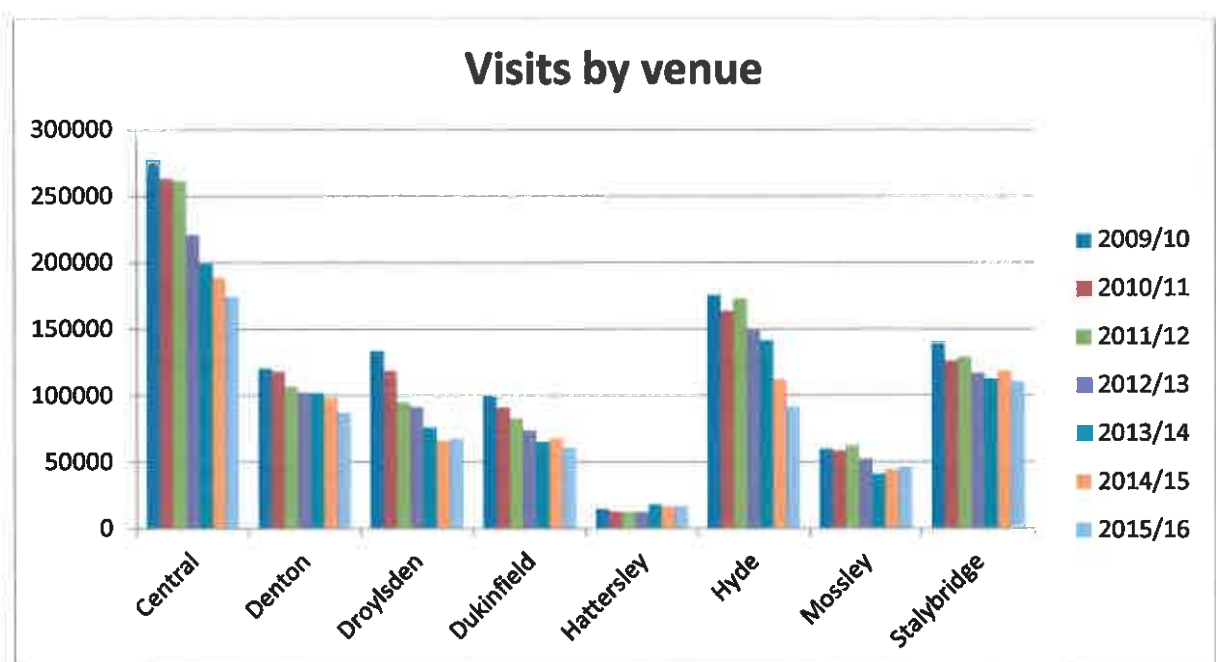


3.4 The graph below indicates the visits at each venue from 2009/10 – 2015/16. There have been changes to the service over the years which may account for some changes in visitor patterns and these are:

- Closure of 5 libraries in October 2012 and a reduction in opening hours across the remaining venues.
- Hattersley closed on 12 October 2015 and re-opened in a new venue on 3 December 2012
- Mossley closed on 31 January 2014 and re-opened in a new venue on 17 March 2014
- Denton Library closed on the 6 December 2014 and re-opened in a new venue on the 5 January 2015
- Hyde Library closed on the 12 January 2015 and re-opened in a new venue on the 2 February 2015

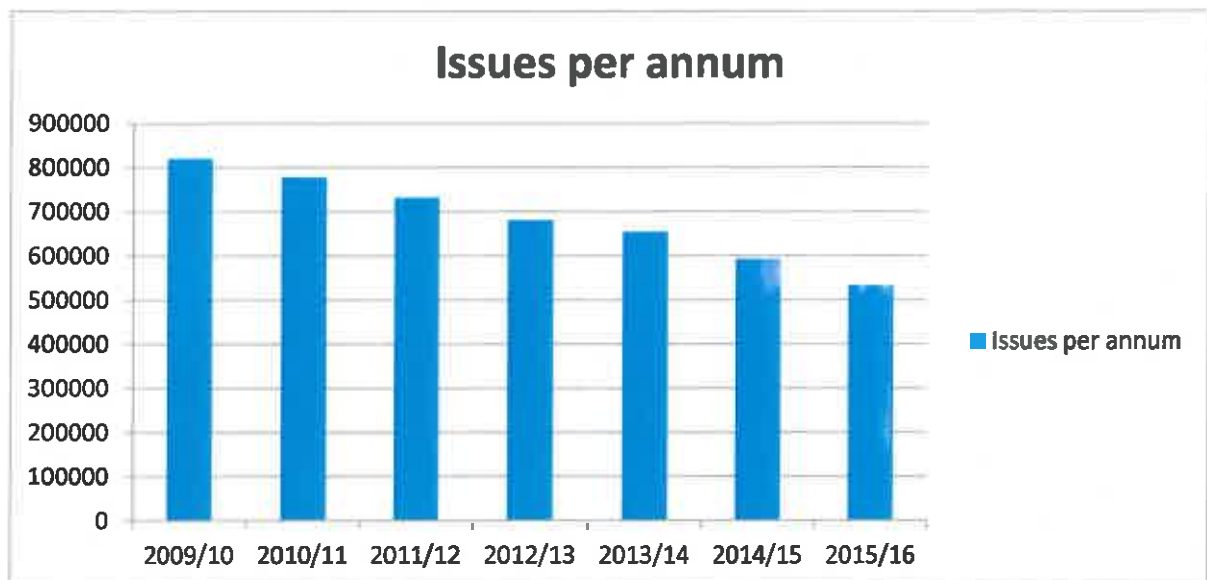
Whilst some changes may have initially been caused by a reduction in opening hours in 2012 this is not the whole picture as visits continue to fall at venues where no further changes have taken place since 2012.

Graph 2

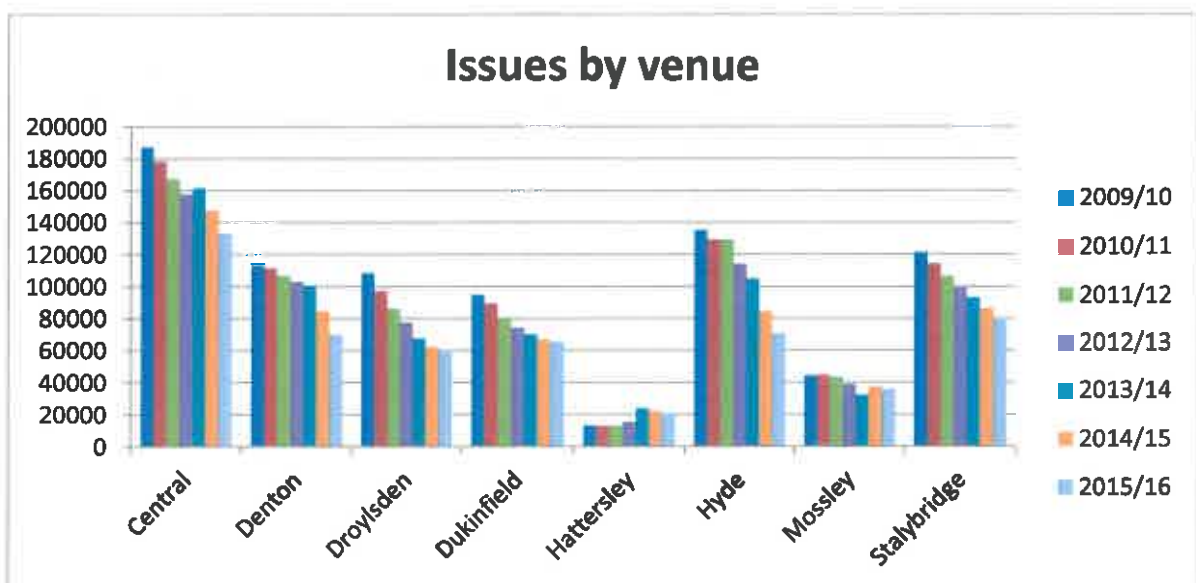


3.5 Issues of physical stock have also reduced over the years as is demonstrated in the graphs below.

Graph 3



Graph 4

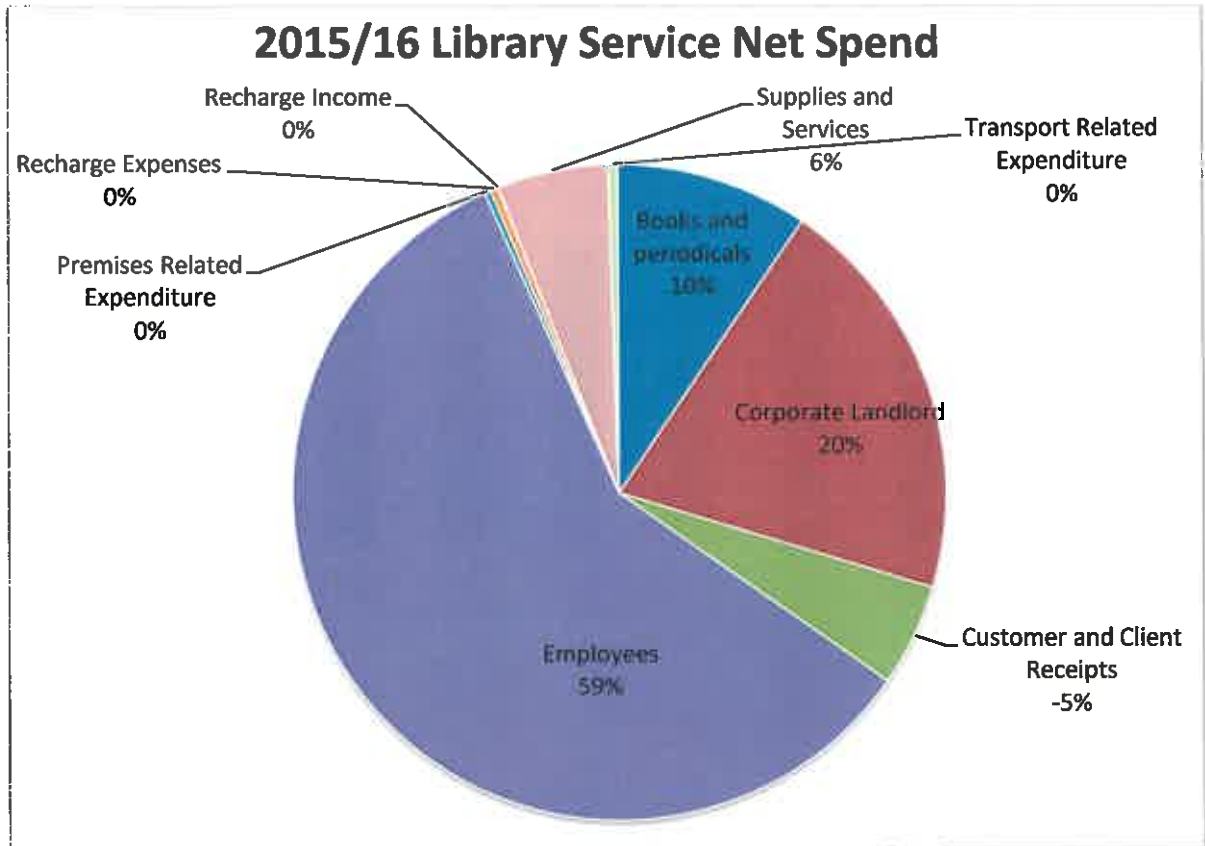


3.6 In June 2014 the service launched e.audio books and e.books and in October 2014 e.magazines were introduced. Whilst issues of these resources are increasing, from 5705 in 2014/15 to 12,498 in 2015/16, this does not equate to the reduction in the number of issues of physical stock.

4. COST OF THE SERVICE

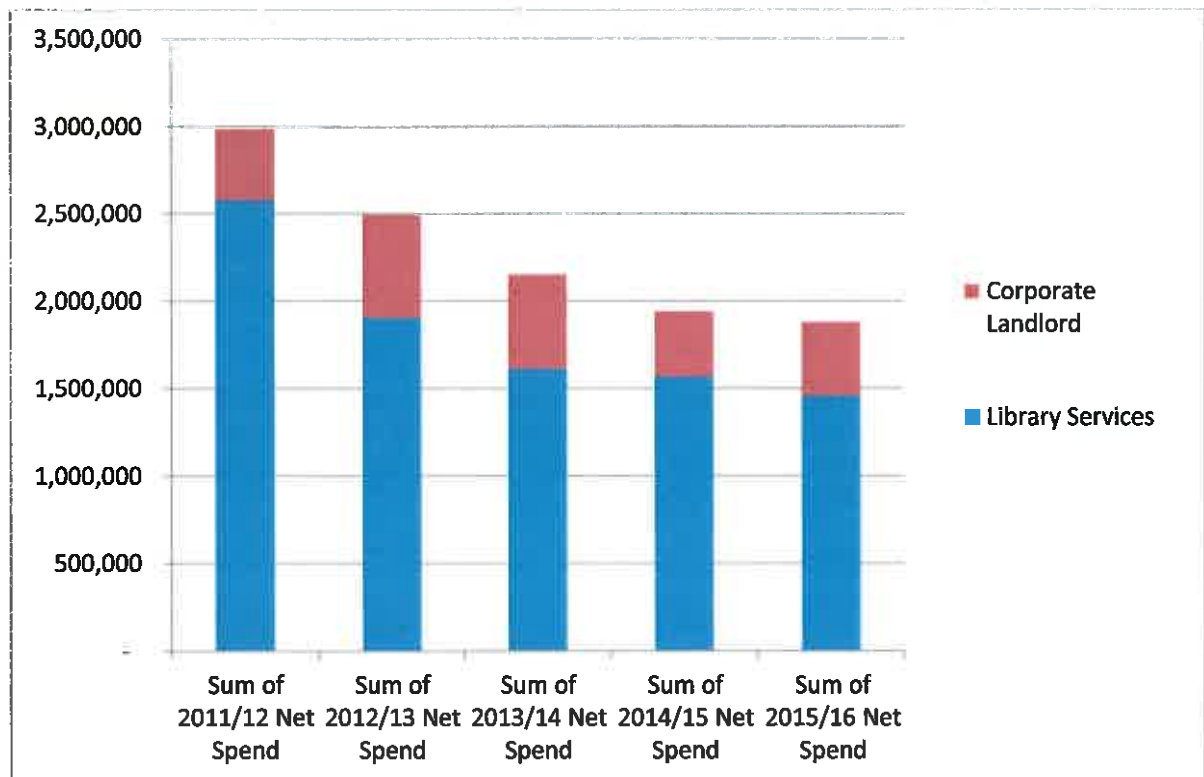
4.1 The annual spend on the Library service in 2015/16 was £1,880,656, broken down in Graph 5 below.

Graph 5 - Net spend on service in 2015/16



4.2 The amount spent on the service has reduced by 37% between 2011/12 and 2015/16 following a full review of the service in 2012 which saw the closure of 5 libraries.

Graph 6 – Libraries reduction in spend over the years



5. FUTURE FINANCIAL POSITION AND IMPACT ON BUDGET

- 5.1 The Council is facing unprecedented financial challenges with cuts to the budget totalling £130m from 2010 due to the Government's austerity measures. These challenges are set to continue through the current comprehensive spending review with a further £30m cuts to budgets by 2017/18.
- 5.2 It is necessary to reduce the libraries budget by £0.185m for an affordable position to be reached which represents 11.9% of the libraries budget.

6. THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS ACT 1964

- 6.1 The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 places the Council under a statutory legal duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient service for all individuals who live, work or study within the Borough who are desirous of using the service.
- 6.2 Determining what is required by a comprehensive and efficient service is not detailed in the Act; it is a matter for each Local Authority to determine what is comprehensive and efficient for their own area, taking into account the views of local people, and the needs of the wider public, to determine how much they spend on libraries and how to manage and deliver the service at a local level.
- 6.3 The Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport has powers to intervene when a library authority fails (or is suspected of failing) to provide the required service.
- 6.4 Libraries have changed considerably since 1964 particularly in terms of IT provision, range of stock offered, community engagement and access to digital resources. During the library review in 2012 a full needs assessment and public consultation was undertaken on the global library offer and each individual library. The outcome of the review was to offer the service from 8 static library points, along with a home library service for those with mobility or other limiting conditions, book access points in 3 post offices, an unstaffed library access point in Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw and a Health Information Centre within Tameside Hospital.

7. VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF TAMESIDE LIBRARIES

- 7.1 It is incumbent on all services, including the Library service, to continually review and refine the offer to ensure it is affordable in the current financial climate and achieves the required outcomes of those wishing to use the service. The Library service is a greatly valued resource within communities so closing more libraries is not something that the Council wants to do. However in order to retain 8 libraries around the Borough the service cannot continue in the current way without making changes to ensure it is financially sustainable in the future.
- 7.2 The 2012 New Library Offer provided a framework outlining the core service and the principles remain relevant today. However new technology is developing within the library sector and there is a need to consider how customers interact with the service.
- 7.3 Fundamental to this is the need to invest in digital technology to replace existing outdated systems and introduce new solutions. This will enable the financial challenges to be met whilst retaining 8 libraries around the Borough. The vision is a library service transformed by technology and new working practices.
- 7.4 Self-service should be readily available and of high quality allowing the majority of transactions such as issue and return of material and self-booking of public access PCs to

be undertaken independently by customers. The number of direct staff interactions will reduce as customers can easily self-serve for the majority of straight forward tasks.

- 7.5 The aim is to increase access to the library service by extending the opening hours at most libraries through the provision of unstaffed opening hours alongside staffed hours. Digital access will improve allowing customers to engage with the service from mobile devices. Customers will be encouraged to become confident, independent users, with targeted support to those who most need it.
- 7.6 Libraries play a valuable role in delivering Tameside's key priorities – health and wellbeing, digital capacity, employment and business support along with information, reading and learning. The vision will include floor walking, during staffed hours, to help customers with more complex needs e.g. digital assistance and enquiries, and to encourage customers to become independent users.
- 7.7 Provision of increased volunteering opportunities in libraries to assist staff to deliver services, activities and support customers is part of the future vision.

8. DIGITAL DEVELOPMENTS

- 8.1 To move forward with this progressive vision a fundamental requirement is to have the right building blocks in place to support new ways of working and exploit digital service delivery.

Library Management System (LMS)

- 8.2 Essential to the running of a modern library service is an up to date automated Library Management System. The current system has been in use for some years and the supplier has advised no further updates will be provided, and so it is becoming increasingly outdated and hard to maintain.
- 8.3 Renewal of the LMS will be a keystone on which to build other service developments, including remote access and greater customer engagement via an attractive public platform with increased emphasis on interactions in a social, on-demand and personalised context.
- 8.4 The LMS will be fully functional on a range of devices, including mobile devices via an app. A good stock collection management package will provide key performance data to help make best use of stock, thus maximizing budgets.
- 8.5 Further customer benefits will be derived from joining the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) Libraries LMS consortium, which is working towards the goal of all Greater Manchester Libraries using the same system, allowing some level of interoperability across boundaries, access to a single Greater Manchester library catalogue and achieving efficiencies through consortium purchase. Currently 7 of the 10 authorities are in this consortium.

Self-service for library transactions

- 8.6 Self-service through Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology will be an integral part of the enhanced library offer, allowing customers to issue and return stock, manage their library accounts and make library payments independently.
- 8.7 This technology will bring further benefits such as reducing queues at busiest periods, it can issue multiple items simultaneously thus offering a much speedier customer interaction, can be used for stock management purposes helping to target resources more efficiently, and can also be used as a security system for stock.

Self-booking of public PCs

- 8.8 The current management system requires staff to manage all transactions and is very labour intensive. In addition there are recurring technical problems which cause significant

inconvenience and disruption in service for customers. Investment in an upgrade would release staff time, and also provide a much better service. It is also a requirement to allow public use of computers during unstaffed library hours. Customers would be able to self-book onto PCs either in person or via the internet.

Unstaffed library opening hours

- 8.9 Technology is developing within the library sector and more recent additions to the market include the capability of the library building being available during times where there are no staff on site.
- 8.10 Customers who wish to use the library independently will be able to visit during advertised unstaffed hours by using their library card and a PIN number to activate a door release mechanism which allows them to gain access to the library. CCTV captures images of the customer for security purposes both at the door and various areas within the library. Customers are able to use public computers, borrow books and use library resources unaided. The technology is able to provide customised messages at certain times to alert customers to actions, for example when the library is due to close. Customers exit the library and the technology sets the intruder alarm to provide normal protection in the way staff would do when they leave at the end of the day.
- 8.11 This technology is in operation in many libraries in other countries, and increasingly in this country including in Greater Manchester – Stockport and Trafford. Peterborough City Council is using this technology across their library estate.
- 8.12 Utilising this technology provides the opportunity to extend the opening hours of libraries, provides customers with more choice and flexibility on when and how they engage with the service and at the same time achieves the required savings to support the budget cuts.
- 8.13 Alongside unstaffed operating hours a core of staffed hours would be retained at each library and where possible these would be matched to times when the library is busiest and highly valued activities take place eg Time for a Rhyme.
- 8.14 During unstaffed operating hours schools and trusted community groups would be able to make use of the library building in the same way as individual customers do.
- 8.15 An example of how unstaffed hours could be utilised is contained in the table below:

Day	Current Opening Hours		Proposed Overall Opening Times		Staffed Times	
	Open	Closed	Open	Closed	Open	Closed
Monday	9am	8pm	9am	8pm	1pm	7pm
Tuesday	CLOSED		9am	8pm	NONE	
Wednesday	CLOSED		9am	8pm	NONE	
Thursday	9am	8pm	9am	8pm	10am	2pm
Friday	9am	5pm	9am	8pm	1pm	5pm
Saturday	10am	3pm	10am	3pm	10am	1pm
	Overall opening hours	35 hours per week	Overall opening hours	60 hours per week	Overall staffed hours	17 hours per week

If this option were implemented it would allow for a reduction of 18 hours per week in staffed times and therefore achieve savings whilst increasing overall availability of the facility by 25 hours per week from the current opening times.

9. LIBRARY VOLUNTEER NETWORK

- 9.1 The benefits of volunteering are well documented and include offering people the opportunity to give something back to the community or develop skills for their Curriculum Vitae to achieve paid employment. For the Council the benefits include showing our commitment to volunteers and ensuring the experience is positive and meets the requirements of the volunteer. Additionally having assistance from people with other skills and ideas can enhance the service to customers.
- 9.2 A range of volunteer opportunities will be developed to assist and support paid library staff to deliver services and activities.

10 INVEST TO SAVE

- 10.1 There will be a cost associated with implementing the new vision as detailed in the table below. A report was presented at the Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel on the 30 November 2015 to consider and approve the libraries future vision and support capital investment to enable technology to be put in place to achieve the ambition. The minutes of this meeting were subsequently approved by Executive Cabinet on 16 December 2015.

Summary of capital implementation costs.

Capital Expenditure		Estimated Annual Staff Savings	Estimated payback period
GM consortium LMS	£ 77,415		
Suite of technology to allow new vision	£496,200		
TOTAL	£573,615		
Remaining capital funding from 2012	(£180,000)		
Contribution from Digital Tameside	(£ 60,000)		
ADDITIONAL CAPITAL FUNDING REQUIRED	£333,615	£185,000	Commences in year 4

- 10.2 Following implementation of the required technology and a staffing review, a return on investment will be seen in year 4 and this will then be recurring.

11. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 11.1 The Council has considered but discounted alternative options for delivery of the library service in Tameside that would achieve a budget reduction.

Further reduce opening hours

- 11.1.1 Consideration was given to closing each library venue for another day each week. This option was discounted as the opening hours at venues would be extremely limited and the impact would be greater on customers and community groups wishing to access the service. This option would only save £0.107m therefore other savings would need to be found to achieve the £0.185m reduction.

Close some library venues

- 11.1.2 This option was discounted as it was felt that retaining the 8 venues across the borough gave the widest access possible to those wishing to use the service. Fewer venues would mean greater travel distance which may pose problems for some customers.

12. CONSULTATION ON THE NEW VISION FOR LIBRARIES

- 12.1 The 2016/17 budget for the library service and its buildings is £1,965,570 and this will need to reduce by £185,000 if an affordable position is to be reached. The library service is much valued by residents and the Council is keen to protect and retain the 8 library facilities around the Borough but in order to achieve that aim changes to how the service operates are essential.
- 12.2 It is the Council's intention to implement the vision detailed above and provide a modern progressive library service supported by high quality technology to allow enhanced opening hours, increased customer choice around when and how to access the service whilst still retaining the ethos of a traditional library service with staff available to support those customers who require it.
- 12.3 However, it is proposed that specific public consultation is undertaken about the vision for the service to seek views of residents, customers and anyone with an interest in the library service.
- 12.4 Such consultation would be in the form of a standard questionnaire with an introduction to explain the reason for the changes followed by a series of questions. Additionally there would be a free format text box to allow for people to provide any comments, views and suggestions they wish to be taken into account.
- 12.5 It is proposed that the survey forms part of the Council's Big Conversation on-line consultation process to enable the results to be evaluated in a consistent manner and would be available for a 6 week period. The consultation would open on Monday 4 July 2016 and close on Sunday 14 August 2016. The consultation pack is included at **appendix 1**.
- 12.6 Alongside being available on-line the consultation would be available in paper format at all Libraries and Ashton Customer Service Centre where staff would be available to assist people in completion if required.
- 12.7 Views of elected Members would also be sought as part of the consultation process.
- 12.8 The consultation process will be promoted in all libraries and relevant groups including those who can represent the needs of users; this could include groups representing physically disabled users, children or elderly users.
- 12.9 Consultation would also be undertaken with staff in Libraries to ensure that they are kept fully updated on the vision and also to gain their views.
- 12.10 The results of the consultation would be used in understanding how the vision will affect people and developing the model prior to implementation.

13. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

- 13.1 Before implementing the future library vision the Council will need to fully understand the impact on communities and in particular the impact on those groups with a recognised protected characteristic. For this purpose a full equality impact assessment would need to be developed which includes full analysis of the consultation responses.
- 13.2 An equality impact assessment has been undertaken to ensure the public consultation is robust and takes into account the views of all who wish to have their views heard but particularly those groups with a protected characteristic. The EIA is included at **Appendix 2**.

- 13.3 The consultation would be by way of a questionnaire which would be available on-line and in paper form, along with personal assistance in completing the questionnaire at any of our libraries and customer service centre at Ashton. The personal assistance is essential in aiding some of our residents in their completion of the consultation.
- 13.4 The returns being received will be monitored regularly throughout the consultation to ensure that returns are being received from groups with a protected characteristic. If further actions need to be taken during the consultation period to increase returns from these groups they will be implemented accordingly.

14. STAFF IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 When unstaffed hours are implemented savings will come through a reduction in the staffing requirement.
- 14.2 A new staffing structure would be developed and there may be a competition process for some posts. However, some officers within the service requested voluntary severance/early retirement when the offer was available in November 2015 but were unable to exit the authority as their posts were required at that time. With a reduction in the staffing requirement the opportunity for staff to opt for voluntary severance would present itself again.
- 14.3 To date staff have been made aware of the vision for the future service and it is an agenda item on team meetings, some are involved in the implementation of the new Library Management System, and regular briefings are sent to the whole service and Union representatives from the Head of Service.

15. CONCLUSIONS

- 15.1 The library service in Tameside is highly valued by residents, however, there is no doubt that usage is declining due to many external factors including the development of digital technology, the internet and cheap broadband prices. A balance needs to be struck between retaining the service but in an affordable way that meets the needs of those wishing to use it.
- 15.2 The council is faced with unprecedented cuts to budgets from central government and this is set to continue throughout the current spending review period. There is a need to reduce the library budget by £0.185m for an affordable position to be reached.
- 15.3 Closure of more libraries or reducing opening hours is not the preferred option of the Council. Instead, implementing up to date technology to allow enhanced operating hours by a mixture of staffed and unstaffed opening hours is the preferred model.
- 15.3 It is proposed that specific public consultation is undertaken about the future vision for the service to seek views of residents, customers and anyone with an interest.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 16.1 As detailed on the front of this report

YOUR VIEWS ON THE VISION OF A LIBRARY SERVICE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

INTRODUCTION

Tameside Council is facing unprecedented financial challenges with cuts to the budget totalling £130m from 2010 due to the Government's austerity measures. These challenges are set to continue through the current comprehensive spending review with a further £30m cuts to budgets by 2017/18.

Whilst we are committed to taking every possible action to protect services for local residents in these challenging times, we have to make some very tough choices affecting spending across all services.

The Library service in Tameside is highly valued by residents, however there is no doubt that the pattern of usage of library services is changing and nationally there is a downward trend in visits and issues. This downward trend in both visits and issues has also been experienced in Tameside Libraries over recent years. Digital technology including the internet, competitive broadband prices, access to low cost smart phones / tablets, gaming and e-books have all played their part in this downward trend. It is clear that the service must adapt and develop to ensure it continues to be current and relevant to residents.

THE VISION OF A LIBRARY SERVICE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

We are very passionate about the important and much valued library service within our communities, so closing more libraries is not something that we want to do. However in order to retain eight libraries across the Borough we cannot continue to run the service as it is currently without making changes to ensure it is financially sustainable in the future.

We have developed an option which should protect our library services. Our vision for the future is a library service transformed by technology and new working practices, with customers able to access our services independently during longer opening hours than are currently available. This technology includes:

Self- service for library transactions

Self-service technology will be an integral part of the enhanced library offer, allowing customers to issue and return stock, manage their library accounts and make library payments independently.

This technology will bring further benefits such as reducing queues at busiest periods. It can issue multiple items simultaneously thus offering a much speedier customer interaction, can be used for stock management purposes helping to target resources more efficiently, and can also be used as a security system for stock.

Self-booking of public PCs

We are looking to implement a system that will allow customers to self-book onto a computer in person or via the internet, and provide a means for customers to self- service print release and payment.

Unstaffed library hours

Technology will play a fundamental part in our vision of the future library service. Investment in a technical system will allow use of some libraries by customers without staff being present. This is pivotal to our plans to achieve savings whilst retaining all eight libraries across the Borough.

Customers who wish to use the library independently will be able to visit during advertised unstaffed hours by using their library card and a PIN number to activate a door release mechanism which allows them to gain access to the library. CCTV captures images of the customer for

security purposes both at the door and various areas within the library. Customers are able to use public computers, borrow books and use library resources unaided. The technology is able to provide customised messages at certain times to alert customers to actions, for example when the library is due to close. Customers exit the library and the technology sets the intruder alarm to provide normal protection in the way staff would do when they leave at the end of the day.

This technology is in operation in many libraries in other countries, and increasingly in this country including in other boroughs within Greater Manchester.

Utilising this technology provides the opportunity to extend the opening hours of libraries, provides customers with more choice and flexibility on when and how they engage with the service and at the same time achieves the required savings to support the budget cuts.

Alongside unstaffed operating hours a core of staffed hours would be retained at each library.

An **example** of how unstaffed hours may work at a Tameside library in future is detailed in the table below. Please note that the current number of opening hours and proposed opening hours may vary from library to library.

Day	Current opening hours (No.)	Proposed overall opening hours (including self-service hours) (No.)	Proposed opening hours with staff present (No.)
Monday	11	11	6
Tuesday	CLOSED	11	N/A
Wednesday	CLOSED	11	N/A
Thursday	11	11	4
Friday	8	11	4
Saturday	5	5	3
Available weekly hours	35	60	17

In this example, introducing self-service technology will allow library users to access services at this particular library for an additional **25** hours in a week.

Volunteering

In addition to the introduction of new technology we would like to increase our use of volunteers to support staff in delivering the service. The benefits of volunteering are well documented and include offering people the opportunity to give something back to the community or develop skills for their CV to achieve paid employment. Additionally having assistance from people with other skills and ideas can enhance the service to customers.

HOW DO YOU HAVE YOUR SAY

To allow everyone to have their say and get as many views as possible on our vision for the future library service, we have developed a questionnaire that asks for your views.

You are invited to make comments on our proposals here <http://www.tameside.gov.uk/tbc/ALibraryServiceforthe21stCentury>. Copies of the questionnaire can also be found at any of our Libraries or at our Customer Service Centre in Clarence Arcade in Ashton-under-Lyne. If you need help to complete the questionnaire you can ask for this at any of our libraries or through customer services.

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 1

The consultation will start on Monday 4 July 2016 and the deadline for comments is Sunday 14 August 2016. All responses will be considered alongside existing evidence when implementing our vision.



LIBRARIES CONSULTATION

1. We want to hear your views. This information will only be used as part of the consultation and will not be used or processed for any other purpose. Thank you for joining in our Big Conversation.

Name:

Address 1:

Address 2:

Town:

Postcode:

Email Address:

SECTION 1 – USE OF CURRENT LIBRARY SERVICE

2. Are you a registered member of a Tameside Library? (Please tick one box only)

Yes

No

3. Have you used a Tameside Library within the last 12 months? (Please tick one box only)

Yes (Go to Q4)

No (Go to Q12)

4. Which Tameside Library do you use most often? (Please tick one box only)

Ashton

Hattersley

Hyde

Denton

Mossley

Droylsden

Stalybridge

Dukinfield

5. What do you use the Library for? (Please tick all that apply)

- To borrow books
- To attend an activity, class or reading group
- To use Library computers
- To borrow audio books
- To read magazines / newspapers
- To use a meeting room
- To ask for information / advice / support from library staff
- To seek information independently without support from Library staff
- To borrow CDs / DVDs
- To study
- To use free Wi-Fi
- To use a photocopier or fax machine
- To search for jobs
- To supply documents for other services within the Council e.g. Housing Benefit forms
- To use Information Services at Ashton Library
- Other (Please state below)

6. Of the services you have indicated you use at Q5, which of these is MOST important to you? (Please tick one box only)

- To borrow books
- To attend an activity, class or reading group
- To use Library computers
- To borrow audio books
- To read magazines / newspapers

- To use a meeting room
- To ask for information / advice / support from library staff
- To seek information independently without support from Library staff
- To borrow CDs / DVDs
- To study
- To use free Wi-Fi
- To use a photocopier or fax machine
- To search for jobs
- To supply documents for other services within the Council e.g. Housing Benefit forms
- To use Information Services at Ashton Library
- Other (please state below)

**7. Which of the following digital services, if any, do you use when visiting the Library?
(Please tick all that apply)**

- Search and request book titles
- Renew loans
- Check library account
- Download e-books, e-audio or e-magazines
- Use e-resources e.g. encyclopaedias, theory test material, newspapers, business information, citizenship etc
- To find out about events and activities taking place in libraries
- I do not use any digital services when visiting the library
- Other (please state below)

8. Approximately how often do you use this Library? (Please tick one box only)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> More than once a week | <input type="checkbox"/> About once every six months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At least once a week | <input type="checkbox"/> At least once a year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Two or three times a month | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than once a year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At least once a month | |

9. Who do you usually go to the Library with? (Please tick one box only)

- I go alone
- With children
- With partner / spouse
- With friends
- Other (please state below)

10. How do you usually travel to the library you use most often? (Please tick the main form of transport you use to get to the library)

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walk | <input type="checkbox"/> Train | <input type="checkbox"/> Bike |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car | <input type="checkbox"/> Bus | <input type="checkbox"/> Tram |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state below) | |

11. Do you use any other libraries either in Tameside or elsewhere? (Please tick all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ashton (Go to Q13) | <input type="checkbox"/> Hattersley (Go to Q13) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hyde (Go to Q13) | <input type="checkbox"/> Denton (Go to Q13) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mossley (Go to Q13) | <input type="checkbox"/> Droylsden (Go to Q13) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stalybridge (Go to Q13) | <input type="checkbox"/> Dukinfield (Go to Q13) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library outside of Tameside (Go to Q13) | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not use another library (Go to Q13) |

12. If you do not use the library service in Tameside, what stops you from doing so? (Please tick all that apply)

- Lack of time
- I use e-books from another source
- I prefer to buy books
- Due to overdue charges and fines
- The library opening times are not convenient for me
- I find everything I need on-line
- I'm not interested in using the library
- I use a library in another area
- Other (please state below)

SECTION 2 – FUTURE LIBRARY SERVICE

We would like you to think about Tameside Library Service over the next few years and how the Council can meet the needs of those wishing to use it within a reduced budget.

13. Given that the Council will have less money to spend on services in future, do you agree or disagree that our proposal to implement self-issue technology into libraries thereby increasing opening hours and reducing staffing hours is preferable to closing more libraries? (Please tick one box only)

- Agree
- Disagree

14. How convenient would it be for you to be able to access library buildings outside of the current opening hours? (Please tick one box only)

- Very convenient
- Convenient
- Not convenient
- Not at all convenient

15. Self-issue technology is similar to that used in supermarkets where customers are able to scan their own purchases. We intend to support users of our libraries to operate the self-issue technology initially to ensure they are comfortable with using it. Please can you indicate....

a) How often you currently use self-service technology (e.g. at the supermarket)? (Please tick one box only)

- Regularly
- Occasionally
- Used it once or twice
- Never used it but I would do if I felt comfortable using it
- I would not use self-service technology

b) How confident you currently are in using self-service technology? (Please tick one box only)

- Very confident
- Fairly confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not at all confident

16. When scheduling staffed hours across the library service we will give consideration to our busiest periods, including when activities are taking place, to ensure a spread of hours across the borough. However, we would welcome your views on which of the following time periods you would most prefer for staff to be available in the libraries you use? (Please select one time period per library you use)

Library	Morning (between 9am and 12noon)	Afternoon (between 12noon and 5pm)	Evening (between 5pm and 8pm)	No preference / I do not use this library
Ashton				
Denton				
Droylsden				
Dukinfield				
Hattersley				
Hyde				
Mossley				
Stalybridge				

We would like to recruit volunteers to support library staff in delivering the service. Our vision would be that all volunteers will be able to do “counter basics” such as issue and discharge of stock and be familiar with the shelving process, which is returning items of stock to the shelves in the correct place. Additionally there would be opportunities to undertake other duties.

17. Would you be interested in volunteering with Tameside’s library service? (Please tick one box only)

Yes (Go to Q18)

No (Go to Q20)

18. What type of activities would you be interested in getting involved in? (Please tick all that apply)

Rhyme time and story time sessions with children

Helping with children’s activities

Helping people with computers

Helping people use the library

Helping with adult’s activities

19. As you have indicated an interest in volunteering please leave your contact details below so we can get in touch with you in the future as we develop this initiative (Please complete details below)

Name:

Address 1:

Address 2:

Town:

Postcode:

Email Address:

Contact Number:

SECTION 4 – OTHER COMMENTS

20. If you have an alternative option on how the service could be delivered please tell us in the box below. Please explain how your approach would reflect the need to make savings whilst providing, wherever possible, an extended but still local library offer. If you have any other comments you would like to make about Tameside's Library Service please also include these in the box below.

ABOUT YOU

21. Please tick the box that best describes your interest in this issue? (Please tick one box only)

A member of the public

A Tameside Council employee

A community or voluntary group

A partner organisation

A business /private organisation

Other (please specify below)

22. Are you.....?

Male

Female

23. What is your age? (Please state)

24. What is your ethnic group? (Please tick one box only)

White

English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British

Irish

Gypsy or Irish Traveller

Any other White background (Please specify)

Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background (Please specify)

Black / African / Caribbean / Black British

African

Caribbean

Any other Black / African / Caribbean background (Please specify)

Asian / Asian British

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Chinese

Any other Asian background (Please specify)

Other ethnic group

Arab

Any other ethnic group (Please specify)

25. Are your day-to day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? This may include problems related to old age. (Please tick one box only)

Yes, limited a lot

Yes, limited a little

No

26. Do you look after, or give any help or support to family members, friends, neighbours or others because of either: (Please tick one box only)

- Long term physical or mental ill-health / disability?
- Problems due to old age?

No

Yes, 1-19 hours a week

Yes, 20-49 hours a week

Yes, 50 or more a week

Tameside Council Equality Impact Assessment Form

Subject / Title	New Delivery Model for Tameside Library Service
------------------------	---

Service Unit	Service Area	Directorate
Customer Care and Advocacy	Libraries	People

Start Date	Completion Date
15 October 2015	31 May 2016

Lead Officer	Mandy Kinder
Service Unit Manager	Mandy Kinder
Interim Assistant Executive Director	Emma Varnam

EIA Group (lead contact first)	Job title	Service
Mandy Kinder	Head of Customer Care and Advocacy	Customer Care and Advocacy
Denise Lockyer	Libraries and Customer Services Manager	Customer Care and Advocacy
Karen Heathcote	Service Delivery Manager	Customer Care and Advocacy

PART 1 – INITIAL SCREENING

1a.	What is the project, policy or proposal?	To undertake public consultation on the future library vision to implement self-service technology for issuing/returning items and self-booking on public computers, also to implement unstaffed hours alongside staffed hours provision and increase the availability of the library service to its customers.
1b.	What are the main aims of the project, policy or proposal?	To seek views of residents, customers and those with an interest in the service on the new vision. The consultation needs to be accessible to all who wish to express their views

1c. Will the project, policy or proposal have either a direct or indirect impact on any groups of people with protected equality characteristics?

Where a direct or indirect impact will occur as a result of the policy, project or proposal, please explain why and how that group of people will be affected.

Protected Characteristic	Direct Impact	Indirect Impact	Little / No Impact	Explanation
Age		x		People of all ages need to be able to access the consultation in order to have their views taken into account. Young people under the age of 16 may

Tameside Council Equality Impact Assessment Form

				potentially be affected by the new delivery model. Older people may not be confident using the technology required to allow unstaffed hours.
Disability		x		Those with a disability and therefore possibly affected by the new delivery model for the service need to have their views taken into account.
Ethnicity		x		Those with English as a second language may struggle to understand the consultation questionnaire.
Sex / Gender			x	
Religion or Belief			x	
Sexual Orientation			x	
Gender Reassignment			x	
Pregnancy & Maternity		x		People who attend events such as time for a rhyme must be able to access the consultation as the new delivery model may have an impact on them.
Marriage & Civil Partnership			x	
Are there any other groups who you feel may be impacted, directly or indirectly, by this project, policy or proposal? (e.g. carers, vulnerable residents, isolated residents)				
Group (please state)	Direct Impact	Indirect Impact	Little / No Impact	Explanation

1d.	Does the project, policy or proposal require a full EIA?	Yes	No
		x	
1e.	What are your reasons for the decision made at 1d?	It is essential that those with a protected characteristic are made aware of and can access the public consultation in order that their views are taken into account when implementing the new service delivery model.	

PART 2 – FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2a. Summary
A review of the library service was undertaken in 2012 which resulted in the closure of 5 libraries and a reduction in opening hours at the remaining 8 libraries.

Tameside Council Equality Impact Assessment Form

Whilst the library service is highly valued by customers and the Council alike, usage has declined over the years due to many external factors including the development of digital technology, the internet and low cost broadband prices. A balance needs to be struck between retaining the service but in an affordable way that meets the changing needs of those wishing to use it.

The council is faced with unprecedented cuts to budgets from central government and this is set to continue throughout the current spending review period. There is a need to reduce the library budget by £0.185m for an affordable position to be reached.

Closure of more libraries or reducing opening hours is not the preferred option of the Council. The preferred option is to implement up to date technology to allow enhanced operation of the service whilst making the required savings. This will be achieved through a mixture of staffed and unstaffed opening hours.

It is proposed that specific public consultation is undertaken about the future vision for the service to seek views of residents, customers and anyone with an interest.

This EIA concentrates on ensuring that the consultation process is accessible to the diverse population within the Borough and that all who wish their views to be considered, including those with a protected characteristic are able to access the consultation.

Such consultation would be in the form of a standard questionnaire with an introduction to explain the reason for the new service delivery model followed by a series of questions to seek relevant views which would be considered in the implementation of the future provision. Additionally there would be a free format text box to allow for people to provide any comments, views and suggestions in their own words they wish to be taken into account. It is proposed that the survey forms part of the Council's Big Conversation consultation process to enable the results to be evaluated in a consistent manner and would be available for a 6 week period. Alongside being available on-line the consultation would be available in paper format at any library or Ashton Customer Service Centre where staff would be available to assist people in completion if required. It is proposed that the consultation would open on Monday the 4 July 2016 and close on Sunday 14 August 2016. Library staff would actively promote the survey and encourage people to complete it to have their say.

The EIA highlighted a possible issue around ensuring consultation responses are representative of the community/customers who use libraries. To ensure this is the case monitoring of responses throughout the consultation period will be undertaken. If groups within the community are under-represented Action Together will be enlisted to assist in further promotion to all groups. Additionally customer service and library staff will actively promote the consultation to customers using the service and will be on hand to assist customers to complete the consultation if required, particularly if there are issues around visual impairment, learning disabilities etc. Support is available from customer service officers in Urdu, Gujarati, Punjabi and Hindi where language is a barrier. Additionally access to a telephone interpreting service for other languages is available.

2b. Issues to Consider

On the 24 September 2012 following an extensive public consultation exercise Executive Cabinet agreed a new library offer for Tameside's Library Service. The new offer included the relocation of Mossley Library into George Lawton Hall, the closure of 5 libraries and a reduction in opening hours at the remaining 8 libraries. The new offer was fully implemented and delivered full year revenue savings of £1 million.

The Council is facing unprecedented financial challenges with cuts to the budget totalling £130m

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from 2010 due to the Government's austerity measures. These challenges are set to continue through the current comprehensive spending review with a further £30m cuts to budgets by 2017/18.

It is incumbent on all services, including the Library service, to continually review and refine the offer to ensure it is affordable in the current financial climate and achieves the required outcomes of those wishing to use the service whose needs continue to change as new technology becomes available.

Under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 the Council is obliged to provide a comprehensive and efficient service for all individuals who live, work or study in the Borough and who are desirous of using the service. The challenge is to continue to deliver such a service within a financially sustainable framework. This will necessitate a refocus and review of the core offer to local communities; better exploitation of technology to make the service more effective and efficient whilst ensuring delivery of local and national priorities in a progressive way. In December 2015 the Government issued guidance on delivery of this statutory service – "Libraries as a Statutory Service". Whilst not a statement of government policy, the guidance is intended to help guide local authorities in delivering a comprehensive and efficient service.

On the 12 November 2014 an Executive Decision was made to undertake a feasibility study for new ways of working and to consider technology which would allow unstaffed opening hours alongside staffed hours at each library site and the increased use of volunteers to support paid library staff in the delivery of the service. Adopting this model would allow longer opening hours for library sites including where the library is now closed on certain days of the week. This feasibility study has been undertaken and whilst each library venue needs to be considered individually it would be possible to adopt this model.

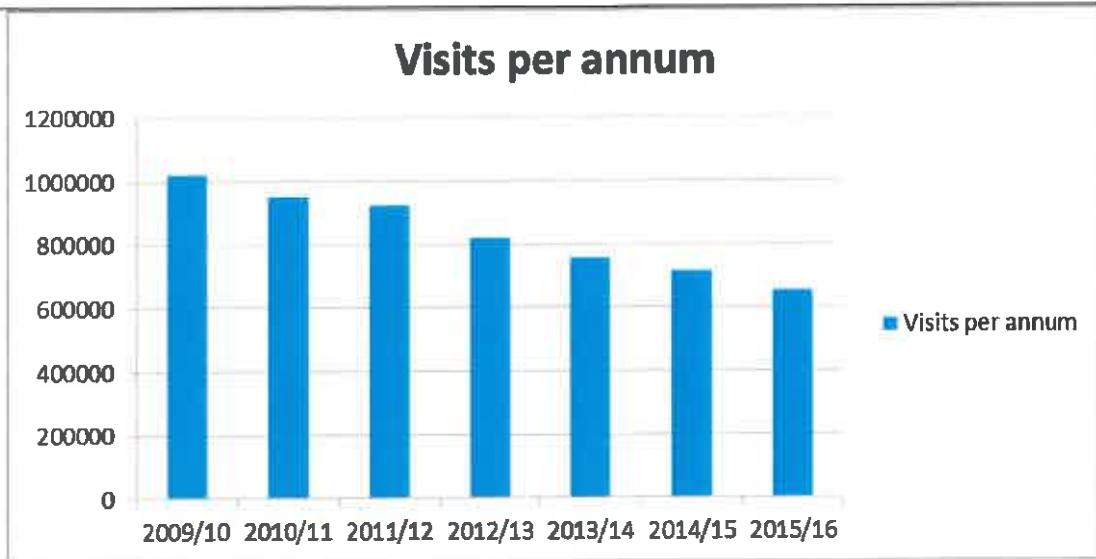
USAGE OF THE SERVICE

The Library service in Tameside is highly valued by residents, however there is no doubt that the pattern of usage of library services is changing and nationally there is a downward trend in visits and issues. In common with national statistics a downward trend in both visits and issues can be seen in Tameside Libraries over the years. Digital technology including the internet, competitive broadband prices, access to cheap smart phones/tablets, gaming and e.books have all played their part in this downward trend. It is clear that the service must adapt and develop to ensure it continues to be current and relevant to residents.

The graph below indicates the reduction in total visits to the Library service from 2009/10 to 2015/16. The graph only includes data for the current 8 library venues.

Graph 1

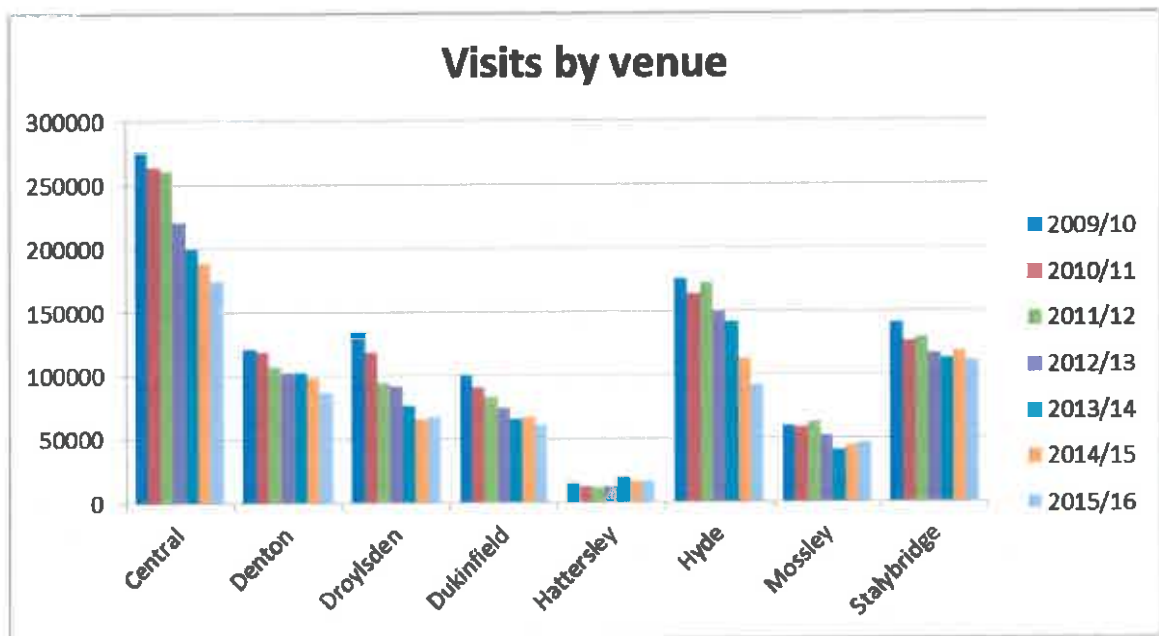
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The graph below indicates the visits at each venue from 2009/10 – 2015/16.

Whilst some changes may have initially been caused by a reduction in opening hours in 2012 this is not the whole picture as visits continue to fall at venues were no further changes have taken place since 2012.

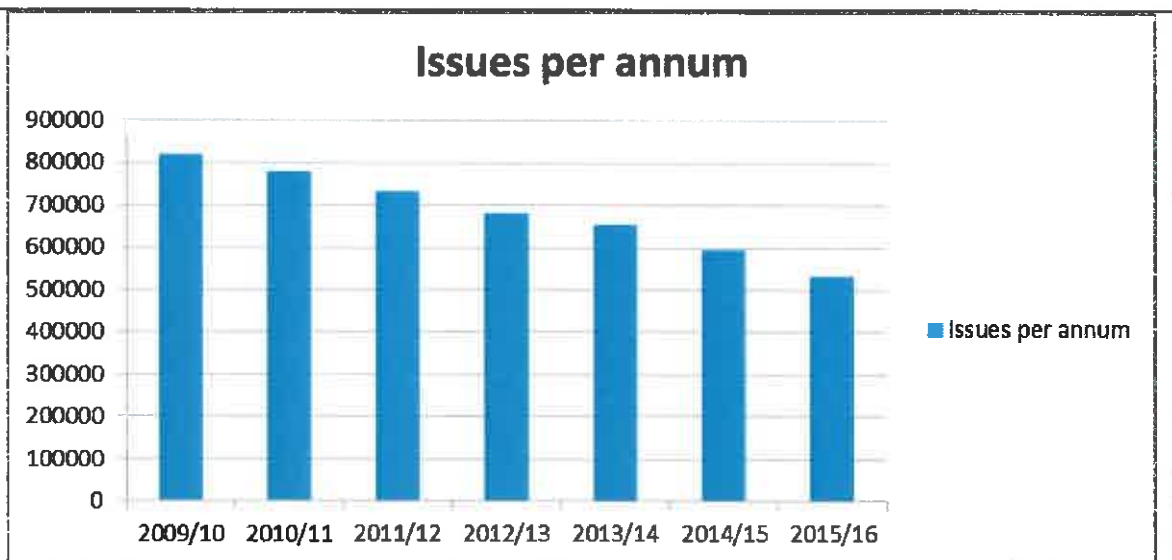
Graph 2



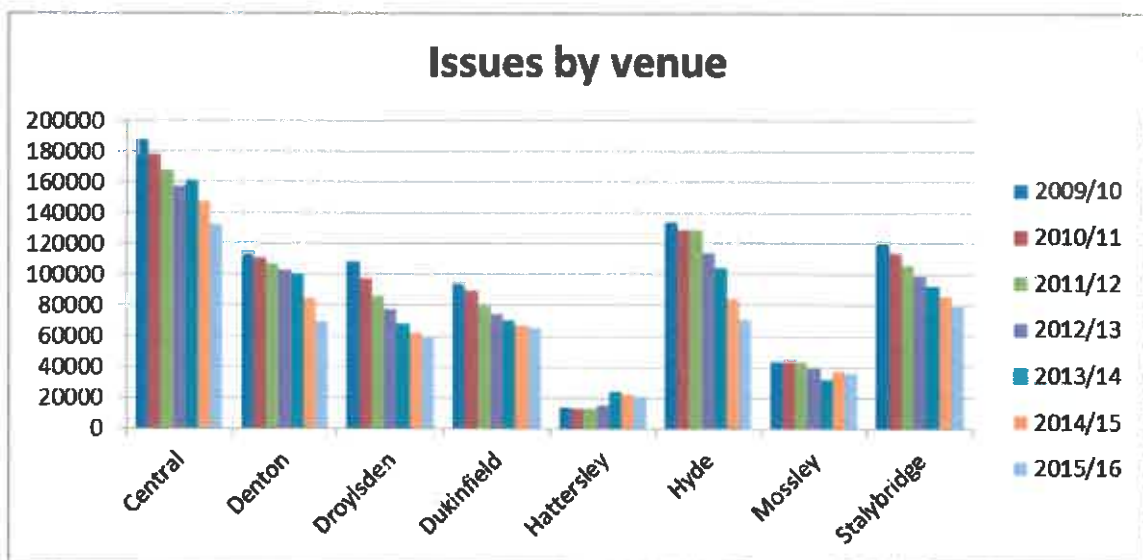
Issues of physical stock have also reduced over the years as is demonstrated in the graphs below.

Graph 3

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Graph 4



In June 2014 the service launched e.audio books and e.books and in October 2014 e.magazines were introduced. Whilst issues of these resources are increasing, from 5705 in 2014/15 to 12,498 in 2015/16, this does not equate to the reduction in the number of issues of physical stock.

FUTURE FINANCIAL POSITION AND IMPACT ON BUDGET

The Council is facing unprecedented financial challenges with cuts to the budget totalling £130m from 2010 due to the Government's austerity measures. These challenges are set to continue through the current comprehensive spending review with a further £30m cuts to budgets by 2017/18.

It is necessary to reduce the libraries budget by £0.185m for an affordable position to be reached which represents 11.9% of the libraries budget.

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THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS ACT 1964

The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 places the Council under a statutory legal duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient service for all individuals who live, work or study within the Borough who are desirous of using the service.

Determining what is required by a comprehensive and efficient service is not detailed in the Act; it is a matter for each Local Authority to determine what is comprehensive and efficient for their own area, to determine how much they spend on libraries and how to manage and deliver the service at a local level. However, in December 2015 the Government issued guidance on delivery of this statutory service – “Libraries as a Statutory Service”. Whilst not a statement of government policy, the guidance is intended to help guide local authorities in delivering a comprehensive and efficient service.

The Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport has powers to intervene when a library authority fails (or is suspected of failing) to provide the required service.

Libraries have changed considerably since 1964 particularly in terms of IT provision, range of stock offered, community engagement and access to digital resources. During the library review in 2012 a full needs assessment and public consultation was undertaken on the global library offer and each individual library. The outcome of the review was to offer the service from 8 static library points, along with a home library service for those with mobility or other limiting conditions, book access points in 3 post offices, an unstaffed library access point in Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw and a Health Information Centre within Tameside Hospital.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF TAMESIDE LIBRARIES

It is incumbent on all services, including the Library service, to continually review and refine the offer to ensure it is affordable in the current financial climate and achieves the required outcomes of those wishing to use the service. The Library service is a greatly valued resource within communities so closing more libraries is not something that the Council wants to do. However in order to retain 8 libraries around the Borough the service cannot continue in the current way without making changes to ensure it is financially sustainable in the future.

The 2012 New Library Offer provided a framework outlining the core service and the principles remain relevant today. However new technology is developing within the library sector and there is a need to consider how customers interact with the service.

Fundamental to this is the need to invest in digital technology to replace existing outdated systems and introduce new solutions. This will enable the financial challenges to be met whilst retaining 8 libraries across the Borough. The vision is a library service transformed by technology and new working practices.

Self-service should be readily available and of high quality allowing the majority of transactions such as issue and return of material and self-booking of public access PCs to be undertaken independently by customers. The number of direct staff interactions will reduce as customers can easily self-serve for the majority of straight forward tasks.

The aim is to increase access to the library service by extending the opening hours at most libraries through the provision of unstaffed opening hours alongside staffed hours. Digital access will improve allowing customers to engage with the service from mobile devices. Customers will be encouraged to become confident, independent users, with targeted support to those who most need

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it.

Libraries play a valuable role in delivering Tameside's key priorities – health and wellbeing, digital capacity, employment and business support along with information, reading and learning. The vision will include floor walking, during staffed hours, to help customers with more complex needs e.g. digital assistance and enquiries, and to encourage customers to become independent users.

Provision of increased volunteering opportunities in libraries to assist staff to deliver services, activities and support customers is part of the future vision.

DIGITAL DEVELOPMENTS

To move forward with this progressive vision a fundamental requirement is to have the right building blocks in place to support new ways of working and exploit digital service delivery.

Library Management System (LMS)

Essential to the running of a modern library service is an up to date automated Library Management System. The current system has been in use for some years and the supplier has advised no further updates will be provided, and so it is becoming increasingly outdated and hard to maintain.

Renewal of the LMS will be a keystone on which to build other service developments, including remote access, and greater customer engagement via an attractive public platform with increased emphasis on interactions in a social, on-demand and personalised context.

The LMS will be fully functional on a range of devices, including mobile devices via an app. A good stock collection management package will provide key performance data to help make best use of stock, thus maximizing budgets.

Further customer benefits will be derived from joining the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) Libraries LMS consortium, which is working towards the goal of all Greater Manchester Libraries using the same system, allowing some level of interoperability across boundaries, access to a single Greater Manchester library catalogue and achieving efficiencies through consortium purchase. Currently 7 of the 10 authorities are in this consortium.

Self-service for library transactions

Self-service through Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology will be an integral part of the enhanced library offer, allowing customers to issue and return stock, manage their library accounts and make library payments independently.

This technology will bring further benefits such as reducing queues at busiest periods, it can issue multiple items simultaneously thus offering a much speedier customer interaction, can be used for stock management purposes helping to target resources more efficiently, and can also be used as a security system for stock.

Self-booking of public PCs

The current management system requires staff to manage all transactions and is very labour intensive. In addition there are recurring technical problems which cause significant inconvenience and disruption in service for customers. Investment in an upgrade would release staff time, and also provide a much better service. It is also a requirement to allow public use of computers during unstaffed library hours. Customers would be able to self-book onto to PCs either in person or via the internet.

Unstaffed library opening hours

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Technology is developing within the library sector and more recent additions to the market include the capability of the library building being available during times where there are no staff on site.

Customers who wish to use the library independently will be able to visit during advertised unstaffed hours by using their library card and a PIN number to activate a door release mechanism which allows them to gain access to the library. CCTV captures images of the customer for security purposes both at the door and various areas within the library. Customers are able to use public computers, borrow books and use library resources unaided. The technology is able to provide customised messages at certain times to alert customers to actions, for example when the library is due to close. Customers exit the library and the technology sets the intruder alarm to provide normal protection in the way staff would do when they leave at the end of the day.

This technology is in operation in many libraries in other countries, and increasingly in this country including in Greater Manchester – Stockport and Trafford. Peterborough City Council are using this technology across their library estate.

Utilising this technology provides the opportunity to extend the opening hours of libraries, provides customers with more choice and flexibility on when and how they engage with the service and at the same time achieves the required savings to support the budget cuts.

Alongside unstaffed operating hours a core of staffed hours would be retained at each library and where possible these would be matched to times when the library is busiest and highly valued activities take place eg Time for a Rhyme.

During unstaffed operating hours schools and trusted community groups would be able to make use of the library building in the same way as individual customers do.

An example of how unstaffed hours could be utilised is contained in the table below:

Day	Current Opening Hours		Proposed Overall Opening Times		Staffed Times	
	Open	Closed	Open	Closed	Open	Closed
Monday	9am	8pm	9am	8pm	1pm	7pm
Tuesday	CLOSED		9am	8pm	NONE	
Wednesday	CLOSED		9am	8pm	NONE	
Thursday	9am	8pm	9am	8pm	10am	2pm
Friday	9am	5pm	9am	8pm	1pm	5pm
Saturday	10am	3pm	10am	3pm	10am	1pm
	Overall opening hours	35 hours per week	Overall opening hours	60 hours per week	Overall staffed hours	17 hours per week

If this option were implemented it would allow for a reduction of 18 hours per week in staffed times and therefore achieve savings whilst increasing overall availability of the facility by 25 hours per week from the current opening times.

LIBRARY VOLUNTEER NETWORK

The benefits of volunteering are well documented and include offering people the opportunity to give something back to the community or develop skills for their Curriculum Vitae to achieve paid employment. For the Council the benefits include showing our commitment to volunteers and ensuring the experience is positive and meets the requirements of the volunteer. Additionally having

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assistance from people with other skills and ideas can enhance the service to customers.

A range of volunteer opportunities will be developed to assist and support paid library staff to deliver services and activities.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Council has considered but discounted alternative options for delivery of the library service in Tameside that would achieve a budget reduction.

Further reduce opening hours

Consideration was given to closing each library venue for another day each week. This option was discounted as the opening hours at venues would be more limited and the impact would be greater on customers and community groups wishing to access the service.

Close some library venues

This option was discounted as it was felt that retaining the 8 venues across the borough gave the widest access possible to those wishing to use the service. Fewer venues would mean greater travel distance which may pose problems for some customers.

The annual spend on the Library service in 2015/16 was £1,880,656 and this will need to reduce by £0.185m if an affordable position is to be reached. The library service is much valued by residents and the Council is keen to protect and retain the 8 library facilities across the Borough but in order to achieve that aim changes to how the service operates are essential.

It is the Council's intention to implement the vision detailed above and provide a modern progressive library service supported by high quality technology to allow enhanced opening hours, increased customer choice around when and how to access the service whilst still retaining the ethos of a traditional library service with staff available to support those customers who require it.

However, it is proposed that specific public consultation is undertaken about the vision for the service to seek views of residents, customers and anyone with an interest in the library service.

Such consultation would be in the form of a standard questionnaire with an introduction to explain the reason for the changes followed by a series of questions. Additionally there would be a free format text box to allow for people to provide any comments, views and suggestions they wish to be taken into account.

It is proposed that the survey forms part of the Council's Big Conversation on-line consultation process to enable the results to be evaluated in a consistent manner and would be available for a 6 week period. The consultation would open on Monday the 4 July 2016 and close on Sunday 14 August 2016.

Alongside being available on-line the consultation would be available in paper format at all Libraries and Ashton Customer Service Centre where staff would be available to assist people in completion if required, particularly if there are issues around visual impairment, learning disabilities etc. Support is available from customer service officers in Urdu, Gujarati, Punjabi and Hindi where language is a barrier. Additionally access to a telephone interpreting service for other languages is available.

Views of elected Members would also be sought as part of the consultation process.

The consultation process will be promoted in all libraries and relevant groups including those who can represent the needs of users; this could include groups representing physically disabled users, children or elderly users.

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Consultation would also be undertaken with staff in Libraries to ensure that they are kept fully updated on the vision and also to gain their views.

The results of the consultation would be used in understanding how the vision will affect people and developing the model prior to implementation.

The issues to consider at this stage in the EIA are that during the consultation process the diverse population within the Borough can access the consultation and have their views taken into account and to give due regard to the requirements of the Equalities Act.

Consideration needs to be given to equality issues relating to ability to complete the questionnaire (it being primarily on on-line tool) which could impact upon protected characteristic groups such as disability (it being a visual tool); age (issues relating to elderly having access to the internet, ethnicity (it being in English, and the need to ensure the full range of participation from all Tameside's communities); and the need to access the full range of views and opinions from Tameside's communities to reflect the impact of the changes to the library service delivery model on protected characteristic groups.

Following the consultation and prior to implementation of the new model a full EIA will be carried out to ensure that the impact of any change is understood and managed effectively. User data regarding customers of the library service is held and where customers are willing this includes demographic data. This data will be analysed and considered along with the results of the consultation when implementing the new delivery model.

2c. Impact

At this point in the EIA the impact of any change to the service is not known. This EIA concentrates on ensuring that the consultation process is accessible to the diverse population within the Borough and that all who wish their views to be considered, including those with a protected characteristic are able to access the consultation.

During the consultation process returns will be monitored to ensure that they are representative of customers who use the service and the demographic of the Borough. Should it become apparent that the results are not representative of the community additional actions will need to be implemented to increase returns from any under-represented groups particularly those with a protected characteristic.

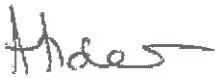

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2d. Mitigations	
Those with English not as a first language may require additional support	Staff in Customer Services can assist with Urdu, Gujarati, Hind and Punjabi speakers. Additionally access is available to a telephone interpreting service for other languages.
Those with a learning disability may require support to complete the questionnaire	Staff in customer services and libraries will be available to assist users in completing the questionnaire
Those without access to a PC may not be able to complete online questionnaire	Copies will be made available in all libraries and at Customer Services in Clarence Arcade. Staff will be available to assist service users in completing the questionnaire.
If an under representative sample is identified	Work with Action Together to further promote consultation

2e. Evidence Sources
<p>Library user demographic data</p> <p>Demographic data of residents of the Borough</p> <p>Results of the public consultation on the new service delivery model will be used to update this EIA.</p> <p>Libraries as a Statutory Service – published in December 2015 by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport</p> <p>The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964</p> <p>Key Decision report, Equalities Impact Assessment/needs assessment undertaken in 2012</p>

2f. Monitoring progress		
Issue / Action	Lead officer	Timescale
Identify if consultation returns are representative of the community/customers who use customer service centres	Mandy Kinder	Throughout the consultation period
If groups within the community are under-represented consult with Action Together to enlist their help in cascading the consultation to all groups	Mandy Kinder	Throughout the consultation period
If some residents are unable to complete the survey library staff and customer service officers in Ashton will be on hand to assist where necessary	Denise Lockyer	Throughout the consultation period

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Signature of Service Unit Manager	Date
	31 May 2016
Signature of Assistant Executive Director	Date
	22.06.2016

