

JOINT OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29 JUNE 2022

Present: Cllrs Mike Parkes (Chairman), Tony Alford, Beryl Ezzard, Sherry Jespersen, Carole Jones, Stella Jones, Rebecca Knox (attended remotely), Cathy Lugg and Andrew Starr

Apologies:

Also present: Cllr Laura Beddow and Cllr Les Fry

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Lisa Cotton (Head of Customer Services, Libraries & Archives), Liz Crocker (Service Manager for Libraries), Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and John Miles (Democratic Services Officer Apprentice)

1. Appointment of Chairman for the meeting

It was proposed by C Jones seconded by S Jespersen

Decision

That M Parkes be appointed as Chairman for the meeting of the committee.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Public Participation

There were no questions or statements from members of the public or local organisations.

4. Questions from Members

There were no questions from councillors.

5. Library Strategy Development

The committee received and considered a report of the Service Manager for Libraries, with regard to the development of a Library Strategy for Dorset Council. In addition, a presentation was provided to the committee, which gave an overview of the strategy development process and headline findings to date.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Customer and Community Services noted that when a new library strategy was adopted (anticipated in Spring 2023), a short public facing summary (a strategy on one page) would also be produced to ensure accessibility.

The committee considered the issues arising from the report and during discussion, the following areas were covered:

- The need for flexibility in the way services could be provided
- Discussion around the information included in the Strategic Needs Assessment and the suggestion to weight different categories of need
- There was a need to understand what the core library offer was and how the assessment of need would affect the services to be provided at a location
- The next phase of consultation would help to shape future services and explore the core library offer. It was recognised that there could be different approaches for different areas
- Reference to the creation of customer access points within libraries for provision of wider council information
- How libraries linked to and worked with the family and community hubs agenda
- How libraries could attract more children and younger people, including work through schools and youth centres
- The need to update service marketing to present a modern library service and set out what it could offer to communities, helping the service to engage with the widest range of people possible
- Library workforce development was considered including career development and progression within the service and the Council, apprenticeships and development of specialisms and use of the kickstart programme as an inclusive employer
- Links with the council's review of assets
- Links with Dorset Council's best start in life priority and proposals for Adult Care
- Further understanding would be gained from public, partners and employees as part of the phase 2 Let's Talk Libraries consultation
- The need for continued wide engagement during the second consultation phase including library users and non-users.

The Chairman thanked officers for their work in this area.

Decision

That the Joint Overview Committee:

1. Notes strong engagement and consultation with our communities during our phase one consultation, involving residents, partners, businesses, Councillors, our workforce and all council services. (Appendix 2, 3, 4, 5)

2. Recognise the benefits of having worked together to co-create our draft strategy by listening to views and feedback in addition to reflecting on community needs.
3. Supports and agrees that the draft library strategy and accompanying Strategic Needs Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment are publicly consulted on, as part of the phase two Let's Talk Libraries consultation. (Appendix 1, 6 & 7)
4. Supports and agrees with our strategy mission to “inspire, connect and enable our communities through our services”; strengthening our service to provide modern, sustainable and inclusive access to our services that are relevant, make a difference to people’s lives and improve future outcomes.
5. Agree a further report is brought back to Joint Overview Committee following phase two consultation. The report will present: phase two consultation feedback, recommended refinements to the library strategy, implementation plans, updated EqIA and associated financial implications.

6. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

7. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.40 am

Chairman

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