
Report to
Cabinet

31 October 2006

Report of
Director of Community Services

Title
Review of Library Buildings

1 Purpose of the Report

To inform the Cabinet on the progress made towards achieving Government targets which stipulate the level of service provision which Local Authorities should provide through the use of Public Library Service Standards (PLSS). For some time Coventry has had an overprovision of libraries and this Report seeks to begin the process of bringing Coventry into line with Government recommendations on the level of service provision.

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval to institute proceedings to close Holbrook Library.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the closure of Holbrooks Library.

3 Information/Background

3.1 Areas of overprovision

The Audit Commission judgement of 2001, "Poor service; unlikely to improve" recommended that we should "Review all libraries by the end of 2001 and determine whether they meet community need." Following this, the City Council agreed a Development Programme of a £5m Capital Programme to increase the number of libraries to ensure all parts of the city had provision or to begin to refurbish existing libraries. Increased Revenue to fund these new libraries and introduce Sunday opening was also provided.

Prior to 2003 when additional libraries were opened, Coventry had insufficient libraries per 1,000 head of population to meet Public Library Service Standards 1 & 2 with only 13 libraries. Government guidance stipulated that for a population of 304,000 the city should have 16 libraries. Since 2003, the City Council has increased the number of libraries to 18. (Appendix 1 shows the 1 mile catchment area of libraries in the city).

Cheylesmore, Whoberley and Wyken were developed to fill in the gaps in the City's provision to meet the Public Library Service Standards. Whoberley is a temporary library for which Capital funding has been granted to build a permanent library alongside a rebuilding of Tile Hill as a Library, One Stop Shop, Adult Education Centre and Neighbourhood Wardens base approved by Cabinet in August 2008. The interim library at Wyken was

opened, pending transfer to a dual use facility at Caludon Castle School in Spring 2007. The addition of the innovative Arena Park Library based in a retail shopping outlet which serves Holbrook and Longford Wards has been monitored and evaluated and is judged nationally as an exemplar of a successful innovative location for a library. Additionally the opportunity was taken to seek external funding to pilot a library in Hillfields which is ERDF funded until December 2008. In addition the City has significantly improved the quality of accommodation in a number of libraries with refurbishments at Stoke, Bell Green, Foleshill and Earlsdon. The overall approach has been to introduce new libraries where required and refurbish others to ensure adequate provision across the city while reviewing those which are in poor condition or are poor performing. (Appendix 2 shows the performance of all libraries across the city and see 3.4 below).

- 3.2 This development of libraries has resulted in an excess of two libraries in the City compared to Government targets in relation to population, which needs to be addressed. A number of libraries have been identified as contributing to this overprovision as their catchment areas overlap significantly with other libraries and are poor performing in relation to the rest of the City's libraries.
- 3.3 The catchment area of Holbrook Library overlaps with Arena Park Library, Foleshill Library and Jubilee Crescent Library. Holbrook Library is located in a residential area away from the retail centre. People in the area now benefit from the Arena Park Library (opened in January 2005), which contains many new and innovative facilities for children as well as adults and has produced some very encouraging user statistics. Innovations include a CD Listening Station, Self Issue terminals and a bookshop style interior.
- 3.4 Arena Park issued 98,221 books in 2005/06 and is now the 6th busiest library in the city. There is evidence that Arena Park Library has brought new users into the Service and existing users of Holbrook Library have switched to Arena Park Library which is only 0.6 miles from Holbrook Library. Annual book issues at Holbrook Library have fallen from 22,566 in 2004/05 to 18,826 in 2005/06, comparing poorly with both Arena Park and Foleshill Libraries. Holbrook is only open 43.5 hours per week over 5 days while Arena Park is open 60 hours over 7 days and Foleshill is open 66 hours over 7 days. Holbrook is 13th out of 19 in visits per annum, 11th in costs per visit, 15th in issues per annum and 15th in costs per issue whereas Arena Park is 6th in visitors, 2nd in costs per visit, 5th in issues per annum and 3rd in costs per issue.
- 3.5 It costs £1.13 to issue a book at Arena Park compared with £3.45 at Holbrook. A recent Access Survey for the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) has indicated a need for £16,000 of works to make the library DDA compliant. (Appendix 3 illustrates the usage of Arena Park Library including usage from the Holbrook Library area).
- 3.6 Libraries Management will conduct a further ongoing review of library premises over the next 2 years to determine the priorities for the Service.
- 3.7 **Proposals**
- 3.8 It is proposed that Holbrook Library be closed at Christmas 2006 to begin the process of bringing the City into line with Public Library Service Standards.
- 3.9 The current staffing establishment at Holbrook of 2.68 FTE – 3 people, be relocated to other vacant posts in libraries in the City, following consultation with the affected staff and Human Resources.

- 3.10 The Home Reader Service operated in partnership with Age Concern will be promoted to residents of all ages who would benefit from it together with a publicity campaign which will be developed to notify people of the changes in library provision in the Holbrook area.
- 3.11 Closure of Holbrook will end over-provision of library services in this part of the city which will free up staff, book-stock, ICT equipment and releasing pc's for utilization elsewhere.
- 3.12 The Collection Development Unit Review recommended the transfer of the Multicultural Services Team and relocation of the City bookstore from Holbrook to the Central Library where it can be more readily accessed for use across the whole city. This is already underway and will both integrate selection and processing of all books more effectively and make books in the bookstore more accessible when requested by borrowers.

4 Attainment of Public Library Service Standards

4.1 Public Library Service Standard 1 - Distance from static library or mobile stop

The closure of Holbrook Library will bring us towards the recommended number of libraries in the City. Holbrook's catchment area is almost entirely within the Arena Park, Foleshill and Jubilee Crescent catchments.

4.2 Public Library Service Standard 2 - Aggregate opening Hours per 1000 of the population

The standard is 128 hours per thousand. The closure of Holbrook Library would reduce aggregate opening hours by 1846 hours per year from 149/1000 to 143/1000 still 11.7% above the standard and in the current upper quartile for opening hours.

4.3 Public Library Service Standard 3 – Internet access

No effect. Access measured by network available at time of measurement.

4.4 Public Library Service Standard 4 – Electronic workstations available to users

No effect. Workstations redeployed to other libraries

4.5 Public Library Service Standard 5 - % of requests supplied in x days

No effect. Standard based on performance of network of libraries available at time of measurement.

4.6 Public Library Service Standard 6 – Library visits per 1000 population

Holbrook library currently contributes 34,122 visits per year. Closure would reduce overall visits from 6,929 per 1000 (target 6,000) to 6,817. This is still above the current Standard and still over 10% above that level which continues to place us in the upper quartile of performance. Visits should be recouped by visits to mobile library stops, use of the Home Reader Service and other libraries.

4.7 Public Library Service Standard 7 – User satisfaction

No effect. Holbrook Library only achieves the average customer satisfaction rating and will therefore not impact on our overall performance.

4.8 Public Library Service Standard 8 – Customer Satisfaction – Children

No effect.

4.9 Public Library Service Standard 9 – Annual number of items purchased per 1000

No effect. No alteration in materials purchased.

4.10 Public Library Service Standard 10 – stock replacement rate.

No effect. Existing resources redeployed to other libraries.

5 Other specific implications

5.1

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Neighbourhood Management		✓
Best Value	✓	
Children and Young People		✓
Comparable Benchmark Data		✓
Corporate Parenting		✓
Coventry Community Plan		✓
Crime and Disorder		✓
Equal Opportunities		✓
Finance	✓	
Health and Safety		✓
Human Resources	✓	
Human Rights Act		✓
Impact on Partner Organisations		✓
Information and Communications Technology		✓
Legal Implications		✓
Property Implications	✓	
Race Equality Scheme		✓
Risk Management		✓
Sustainable Development		✓
Trade Union Consultation	✓	
Voluntary Sector – The Coventry Compact	✓	

5.2 Closure will enable the Service to operate more cost-effectively by providing services in a more strategic way reflecting Government Standards and Value for Money criteria

- 5.3. The closure proposal is an adjustment to service provision to achieve Best Value while still meeting Public Library Service Standards and Impact Measures.

The annual revenue cost of Holbrook Library is £53,000. Closure of the Library will result in a saving within the current Libraries & Information Services budget. There is a possible impact on other Directorate's budgets in terms of property management and security.

Any associated costs will come from within the CLIS Revenue Budget

- 5.4 **Human Resources** The current staff at Holbrook Library will be offered alternative locations within Libraries & Information Services. Staff will be supported by Human Resources and options discussed with them.
- 5.5 The property will be declared surplus to the requirements of Community Services and 'handed back' to City Development to determine future use.
- 5.6 **Trade Union Consultation** A copy of this report has been sent to the Trade Unions. The Trade Unions will also be involved in consultation over staff relocations.
- 5.7 **Voluntary sector-Coventry Compact** Negotiation will be undertaken with Age Concern to increase the availability of the Home Reader Service in the area.

6 Monitoring

- 6.1 The progress of the closure will be monitored through the regular management processes and reported to the Cabinet Member at a later date.

7 Timescale and expected outcomes

- 7.1 Closure of the library is to be achieved by 31 December 2006.
- 7.2 Work will be carried out before the end of December to relocate staff, materials, ICT and furniture and equipment and to accommodate Multi-Cultural Services staff and bookstock in Central Library.
- 7.3 Work will be undertaken to make the building secure.
- 7.4 Alternative library and information services will be provided by promotion of Arena Park, Foleshill and Jubilee Crescent libraries and access to the Home Reader Service.
- 7.5

	Yes	No
Key Decision		√
Scrutiny Consideration (if yes, which Scrutiny meeting and date)		x
Council Consideration (if yes, date of Council meeting)		x

List of background papers

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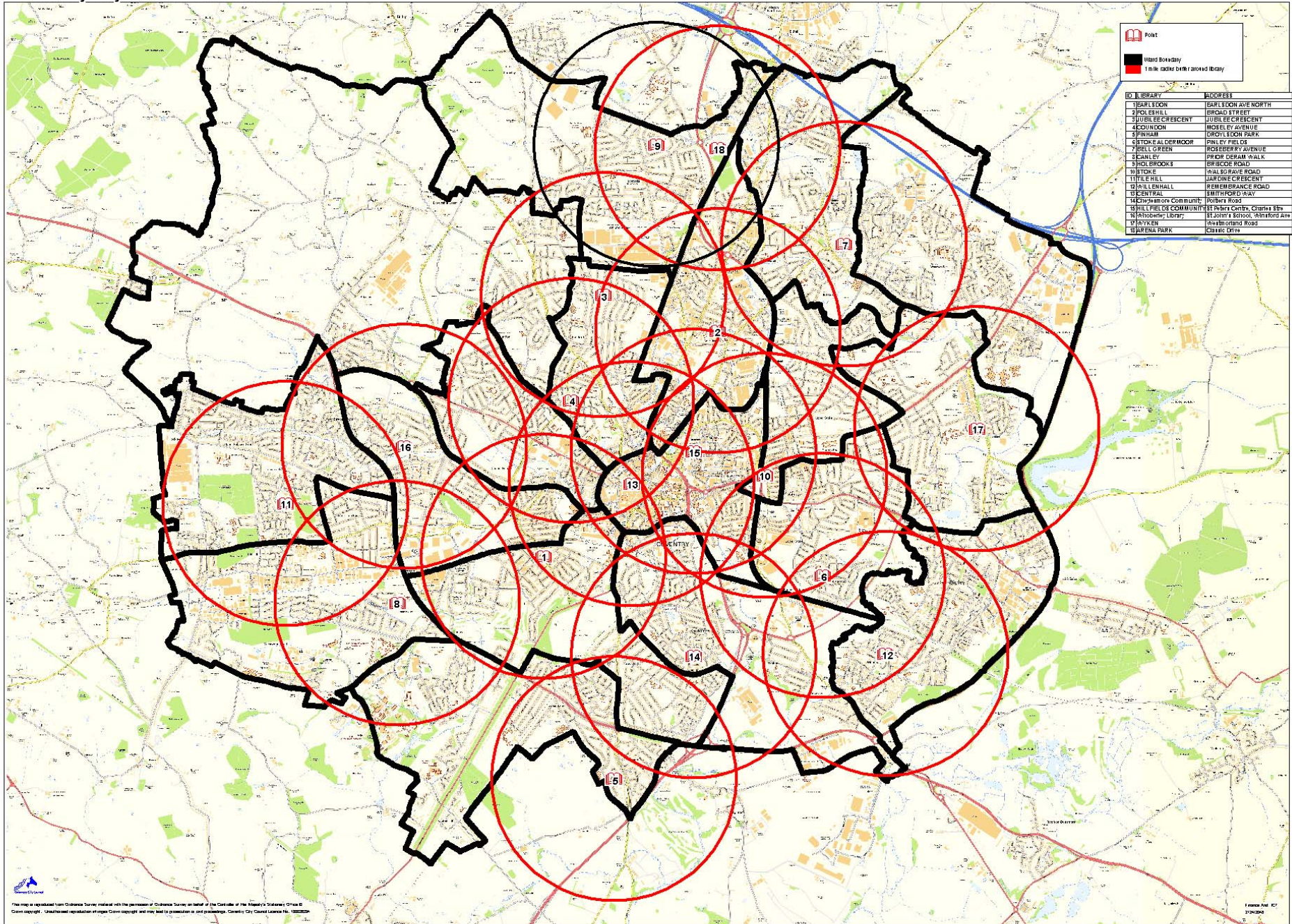
Papers open to Public Inspection

Description of paper

Location

None

Coventry City Libraries with Wards



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Libraries and Information Services

Performance Table

Library	Visits pa	Cost per visit £	Visits/hr	Issues pa	Cost per issue £	Issue Hr	Issue per item pa	Enquiry pa	PC use hrs pa	Overall Ranking
Central	712868 (1)	1.10 (6)	206.1 (1)	480306 (1)	1.63 (9)	139 (1)	4.4 (10)	97795 (1)	113429(1)	1
Earlsdon^{1*}	272207 (2)	0.92 (3)	78.7 (2)	162602(2)	1.55 (7)	47.0 (2)	5.3 (6)	25421 (3)	19499(4)	2
Stoke*	200179 (3)	0.77 (1)	74.7 (3)	101794(4)	1.51 (6)	38.0(4)	3.7 (11=)	18866 (5)	28331(3)	3
Tile Hill	114320 (8)	1.38 (10)	42.7 (6)	114442(3)	1.38 (5)	42.7(3)	4.6 (8)	16674 (6)	15138(5)	4
Foleshill*	136727 (5)	1.37 (9)	39.5 (9)	79235 (9)	2.37 (14)	23(12)	2.5 (15=)	13126 (9)	33120(2)	5
Arena Park*	125036 (6)	0.89 (2)	40.1 (7=)	98221 (5)	1.13 (3)	31.5(7)	8.9 (2)	14073 (7)	6936 (9)	6
Bell Green*	172424 (4)	1.00 (5)	55.7 (4)	92549 (7)	1.86 (12)	29.9(8=)	6.3 (4)	9648 (11)	14471(6)	7
Coundon	60802 (10)	1.79 (12)	22.7 (11)	94236 (6)	1.15 (4)	35.2(5)	4.5 (9)	9302 (12)	5129(10)	8=
Jubilee	120790 (7)	1.17 (7)	45.1 (5)	85467 (8)	1.66 (10)	31.9(6)	3.7 (11=)	13887 (8)	9628(8)	8=
Willenhall	95329 (9)	0.97 (4)	40.1 (7=)	58140 (11)	1.59 (8)	24.5(10)	3.4 (14)	28167 (2)	12294(7)	10
Finham	59583 (11)	1.24 (8)	24.1 (10)	73756 (10)	1.01 (2)	29.9(8=)	5.5 (5)	9952 (10)	3992(11)	11
Cheylesmore*	36334 (12)	2.08 (15)	17.7 (13)	39223 (13)	1.93 (13)	19.0(13)	6.5 (3)	6014 (13)	3564(12)	12
Mobile*	16499 (15)	1.94 (13)	10.1 (16)	41773 (12)	0.77 (1)	25.5(10)	15.2 (1)	850 (19)	N/a	13
Aldermoor	10359 (17)	2.54 (16)	11.7 (15)	6126(18)	4.31 (18)	6.9 (18)	0.6 (19)	20962 (4)	1730 (16)	14
Canley	30665 (14)	2.74 (17)	17.1 (14)	23023 (14)	3.65 (16)	12.8(14)	2.5 (15=)	2681 (16)	2888(14)	15
Holbrook	34122 (13)	1.64 (11)	18.4 (12)	18826 (15)	3.45 (15)	10.2(15)	1.9 (17)	3757 (15)	3150(13)	16
Whoberley* **	10734 (16)	6.01 (18)	5.9 (17)	14459 (17)	4.47 (19)	7.9(17)	4.8 (7)	5221 (14)	N/a	17
Wyken* ***	8382 (18)	7.75 (19)	4.2 (18=)	16409(16)	3.96 (17)	9.8(16)	3.6 (13)	1689(18)	316(17)	18
Hillfields*	4569 (19)	2.03 (14)	4.2 (18=)	5219 (19)	1.78 (11)	4.8(19)	1.5 (18)	1769 (17)	1795(15)	19

*Refurbished or new libraries during past 5 years.

** Capital approved for permanent library to open 2007/08.

*** Due to relocate to Caludon Castle School spring 2007.

¹ 2004/5 figures (last full year before refurbishment and operation from mobile)

Appendix Three

Map of Arena Park usage
Arena Park Library - Origin of Borrowers -

