
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee
Cabinet

3 March 2017
7 March 2017

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills – Councillor Maton
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People – Councillor Ruane

Director Approving Submission of the report:
Executive Director People

Ward(s) affected:
All

Title:
Connecting Communities Phase 2

Is this a key decision?

Yes – the proposals in the report will affect the whole city and involve financial implications in excess of £1m.

Executive Summary:

Connecting Communities is an ambitious approach to redesigning services through collaboration with local communities. Phase 1 of Connecting Communities focused on ten specific proposals. These proposals are on track to deliver the £1m savings target set for 2016/17 and £1.2m ongoing.

Phase 2 of Connecting Communities focuses on how services and support can be delivered differently in local communities with the greatest need, within the resources that are available. As a consequence of cuts a target of £3.8m is set for this work. Across all phases of Connecting Communities a total of £5m savings must be achieved, in line with the total requirement set for the original City Centre First programme, which has now been incorporated into the wider Connecting Communities change programme.

Phase 2 comprises of two overarching proposals to reshape the way that support is delivered to children and young people aged 0 to 19 years and the provision of library services in the city.

The grant Coventry received from central Government has reduced by 49% from 2010/11 to 2017/18 and by 2020 this is estimated to reduce further to a 55% reduction. Due to the increase

in the city's population this equates to a 51% reduction per person from 2010/11 to 2017/18. The budget for the People Directorate is 70% of the Council's net budget and so the services provided by the People Directorate need to contribute significantly towards those savings.

The scale of grant cuts means the current way in which we deliver services is no longer sustainable. The financial position and the needs of residents needs to be balanced alongside making radical changes in the delivery of services. This means working closely with residents and partners in new ways to maximise the total public funding that remains to support the most vulnerable in the city. Part of the Council's strategy is also to work with organisations that can draw upon resources that the Council cannot access and to enable this to happen as far as possible. The delivery of the savings programme described in this report contributes to the total savings required of £35m by 2017/18.

Coventry's long-term strategy is to focus on avoiding crude cuts through closer partnership working with statutory and voluntary agencies, and communities. The Connecting Communities approach is to work with others to redesign services that can be delivered within the resources available, focusing on supporting those areas that are most in need. Connecting Communities is the overarching transformational change programme for the Council's People Directorate which delivers a wide range of key frontline services to Coventry residents and as such further phases are likely to be forthcoming at a later point.

In August 2016, Cabinet approved public consultation on two proposals, with a number of key elements from 12 September 2016 to 12 December 2016.

This report provides an update on consultation feedback and the outcome of engagement with local communities to explore how services might be delivered differently in the future.

A number of council services are included within the scope of Connecting Communities including libraries, children's centres, nurseries and the youth service. This list is by no means exhaustive and is expected to eventually comprise of all elements of People Directorate, and possibly wider service transformation to deliver broader savings targets.

Recommendations:

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee is recommended to:

1. Consider the proposals contained within the report.
2. Forward any comments and/or recommendations to the Cabinet for consideration.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note that 10 petitions were considered by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People in relation to the proposals at their respective meetings on 28th February 2017 and 6th March 2017 and have been considered as part of the consultation process and outcomes.
2. Consider the outcomes of the consultation and the resulting equality impacts and the updated Equality Consultation Analyses in **Appendix A** of this report.

3. Approve the implementation of the proposals detailed in **Appendix B:-**

I - Family Hubs

- i) To develop eight integrated family hubs for 0 to 19 year olds from the current children's centres and youth services, located in areas of highest need, specifically at the following current children's centres: Bell Green, Foleshill, Tile Hill, Radford, Moat House (Wood End), Middle Ride (Willenhall), Gosford Park and Hillfields by September 2017.
- ii) For the Council to end children's centre provision from the following six children's centres: Barley Lea (Stoke Aldermoor), Canley, St Augustine (Radford), Stoke Heath, Richard Lee (Wyken) and Spon Gate (Spon End) by September 2017.
- iii) To end children's centre contracts with private, voluntary and independent providers at Tommies, Flutterbies and Valley House by May 2017.
- iv) To end all Council directly provided term-time nursery provision in 9 children's centres (Foleshill, Tile Hill, Radford, Moat House (Wood End), Middle Ride, Bell Green, Barley Lea (Stoke Aldermoor), Canley and Stoke Heath) by September 2017.
- v) To proceed to implementation of a new operational model for delivery of nursery provision by the Private, Voluntary and Independent sector, for two, three and four year olds in current children's centre buildings by September 2017.
- vi) To retain Council delivery of a targeted and specialist youth offer focused on young people who are hardest to reach and most vulnerable as part of the family hub model.
- vii) To end Council provided universal youth work provision in the following 16 locations: Youth Centres: African Caribbean Centre for Young People (Freehold Street, Hillfields), Hillfields Young People's Centre (Yardley Street, Hillfields), Jardine Crescent Young People's Centre, On Target Youth Centre (Doe Bank Lane, Spon End), People's Place (Acorn Street, Stoke Aldermoor), Stoke Park Youth Centre, Whoberley Youth Centre, Wood End Youth Centre (The Venny); and Community venues at Bell Green Community Centre, Cheylesmore Community Centre, Hagard Community Centre, Henley Green Community Centre, Jubilee Crescent Community Centre, Stoke Heath Community Centre, Xcel Leisure Centre (Canley) and Baginton Fields School by September 2017.
- viii) To retain Hillfields Young People's Centre as a Children's Resource Centre and to retain On Target Youth Centre but further explore the transfer of this building to the voluntary youth sector.

II - Libraries

- i) To develop sustainable, modern and comprehensive libraries as community hubs in three broad categories: core libraries, partnership libraries and community libraries.
- ii) To retain five core library services; Central Library, Bell Green, Foleshill, Stoke and Tile Hill with a reduced budget and increased self-service and volunteering opportunities as well as seeking to share space with partners wherever possible with the development of Stoke Library as a Library and Learning Centre as part of Connecting Communities.

- iii) To retain Alder Moor library and Allesley Park as partnership libraries in their existing locations with reduced budgets by September 2017.
 - iv) To retain Canley library as a partnership library and continue developments to relocate to the Charter Primary School site as part of the existing children's centre space by September 2017.
 - v) To retain Hillfields as a partnership library and relocate to the WATCH building with a reduced budget from October 2017.
 - vi) To retain Jubilee Crescent library as a partnership library with a reduced budget by September 2017 and take forward plans to redevelop the site including library provision with a reduced budget.
 - vii) To work with community groups to enable the transition of Cheylesmore, Earlsdon and Finham libraries to become community-led by September 2017.
 - viii) To work with Caludon Castle School to enable the transition to a community-led library by September 2017.
 - ix) To defer and develop options for the future delivery of a library service in Coundon as part of Connecting Communities to be included in Phase 3 plans.
4. Approve the following recommendations for the Transition Fund:
- i) The award of up to £20k to Cheylesmore Community Association limited to enable the transition to become a community-led library service.
 - ii) The award of up to £20k to WATCH Ltd to enable the delivery of a partnership library in Hillfields.
 - iii) The outline process for award of Transition Fund to enable further development of youth sector universal youth services, including identification of a lead voluntary sector organisation to provide infrastructure support for future provision (**Appendix C**).
 - iv) To agree that future awards under the Transition Fund be approved by the Director of Finance and Corporate Services as S151 officer, following consultation with relevant Cabinet Members.
5. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, as appropriate, to approve subsequent variations to the proposals outlined in **Appendix B** of this report.

List of Appendices included:

- Appendix A** – Equality Consultation Analyses (post consultation)
- Appendix B** – Proposals (Connecting Communities Phase 2)
- Appendix C** – Transition Fund Process Outline for Youth Services
- Appendix D** – Programme Impact Analysis (post consultation)
- Appendix E** – Petition Information

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents

Connecting Communities – Cabinet Report – 26 November 2015

Connecting Communities – Cabinet Report – 23 February 2016

Connecting Communities Phase 2 – Cabinet Report – 30 August 2016

All available from the Council’s website:

<http://democraticservices.coventry.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteId=124>

Connecting Communities Phase 2 – Consultation and Emerging Themes – November 2016

<http://democraticservices.coventry.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=151&MId=11216&Ver=4>

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

Yes, Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee – 3 March 2017

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

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Report title: Connecting Communities Phase 2

1. Context (or background)

1.1 Connecting Communities is a wide ranging programme of transformational change to enable City Council resources to be prioritised in areas where there is most need, focusing on making the best use of statutory and voluntary sector organisations, groups and local communities.

1.2 To reflect the importance of delivering services effectively in neighbourhoods, Connecting Communities aims to:

- Transform the provision of public services by identifying existing community strengths, resources and aspirations in communities to deliver services differently;
- Work with and support communities and organisations who want to develop and deliver alternative support and services in their communities;
- Invest in ways of delivering high quality services;
- Focus key services in areas of highest need; and
- Deliver better services at lower cost.

1.3 The Council's budget setting report for 2016/17 includes a savings target for Connecting Communities (the original City Centre First programme first included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2015/16 budget setting) of £1 million in 2016/17, rising to £5 million in 2017/18.

1.4 This report and appendices describe the outcome of public consultation and the progress made to engage with local communities on proposals made as part of Phase 2 of the Connecting Communities programme. The original proposals that were consulted on would deliver the remaining MTFS target of £3.8 million savings needed. This report identifies proposals that deliver £3.5m ongoing savings. The remaining £0.3m will need to be addressed in Phase 3 of Connecting Communities.

1.5 Phase 3 of Connecting Communities will initially focus on addressing the shortfall in delivery of Phase 2 but further activity and change proposals may be added to the scope of this phase in the future. Phase 3 will enable the extension of current engagement with some groups and for other ways to deliver services and support differently to be explored.

1.6 The report further updates on interest in the Transition Fund and makes recommendations on specific awards as well as changes to the process for the provision of youth support, as a result of engagement to date with the youth sector in Coventry.

1.7 Connecting Communities – Phase 2

1.7.1 In early July 2016, outline proposals for Phase 2 were published to proactively seek feedback and suggestions from key stakeholders on how the proposals could be developed or improved. This engagement was the start of a process to enter into open dialogue with the public about the future of key areas of service delivery.

1.7.2 In August 2016, feedback from this engagement activity was used to inform recommendations to Cabinet on public consultation on two overarching proposals with a number of components.

- 1.7.3** The proposals are described in detail in this report and focus on key changes to models of delivery of library services and support to children and young people aged 0 – 19 years and their families.
- 1.7.4** Public consultation took place from 12th September to 12th December 2016. As early engagement started in July 2016, this resulted in circa 6 months of ongoing discussion with people and groups who have an interest in the future of the service areas directly affected by the proposed changes, including library provision, children’s centres, nursery provision and youth services.
- 1.7.5** This report takes into account all feedback to date and recommendations have been directly influenced by engagement and consultation activity. The report also takes into account any learning from Connecting Communities Phase 1.
- 1.7.6** There has been a positive shift in the response from local communities to the proposals that were originally outlined, with both communities and organisations beginning to connect with the Council in a different way that will enable us to work together to identify real transformational solutions. Partners, community and residents groups and others are actively exploring how they might play a role in supporting or delivering services and support in local communities.
- 1.7.7** In order to support groups and organisations to deliver differently and play a more active role in their local communities, Council officers are working alongside them to identify funding opportunities from sources other than the Council. There has been significant partnership working to develop proposals including working with the multi-agency Early Help Board.
- 1.7.8** Service Leads for Community Development and Youth Service established and facilitated an early engagement workshop with the Big Lottery Fund to explore additional funding into the city.
- 1.7.9** A bid for £750k was submitted to the Big Lottery Youth Investment Fund as part of a collaborative initiative involving 7 local youth organisations by the YMCA. YMCA are the lead organisation with Coventry Boys and Girls Club, Coventry Blaze, Positive Youth Foundation, Sky Blues in the Community and Grapevine also part of the bid. (A 7th organisation, Valley House is part of the collaboration but not of the Big Lottery application). The bid requests funding for providing universal (open access) youth activities for young people aged 11 to 19 (25 for those with special needs) and the outcome of the bidding process is expected by the end of March 2017.
- 1.7.10** Should this bid be successful this will provide an injection of funding into the sector to further support universal youth provision in the city and will, in part, mitigate the Connecting Communities proposals for the Youth Service.
- 1.7.11** A bid for £70,000 has also been submitted for funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Communities Fund. If successful, this will provide resource to Moat House Community Trust to work proactively with the local family hub to support individuals and families to get involved in supportive networks and activities in the area. It would allow a city-wide Learning Partnership to be established to share lessons and good practice with other community based organisations and public sector organisations. This would help to establish a much more collaborative way of working within neighbourhoods and aim to grow a network of sustainable community ‘anchor’ organisations across the city. The bid also requests funding to help establish a co-worker approach to service delivery in each of the proposed family hubs, drawing upon learning from the Ignite Programme pilot in Willenhall.

1.8 Emerging messages from the consultation

1.8.1 There are a number of emerging messages from engagement and consultation feedback activity to date that are not specific to individual proposals but relate to the overall Connecting Communities programme and approach being taken. These are outlined below:

- This new way of working is complex and a different type of support and resource is required from the Council to enable delivery. This includes supporting groups to develop business models, access funding from sources other than the Council, understand the responsibilities that they will be taking on in the delivery of services/support and in forming new groups that are not yet constituted.
- There has been significant positive development of relationships between the Council and some local communities with a big shift in mutual understanding and expectation and a real appetite for involvement.
- Detailed information has been needed by community groups, from the Council, in order for them to make informed decisions about how they might play an active role in future service delivery. This information has been, and continues to be, provided. In return, local communities are rising to the challenges that have been set, as described in this report.
- There has been some criticism of the consultation process and communication, including a view that some of the proposals lacked detail. The proposals were shared at a formative stage in order for people to inform the future shape of services.
- There is an ongoing perception that the Council could and should reduce its spending in other ways, to avoid progressing the Connecting Communities programme, including not investing in other Council projects.

1.9 Scope of Connecting Communities – Phase 2

1.9.1 The scope of Connecting Communities Phase 2 includes:

- Seventeen libraries (including those within Phase 1);
- Eight youth centres and youth services provided in seven community venues and one special school;
- Thirteen children’s centres managed by the Council, one commissioned internally and three operated by the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector; and
- Nursery provision in nine Council-managed children’s centres.

2. Options considered and recommended proposals

Option 1 – Do Nothing

2.1 The Council has considered the do nothing option, which would involve not making the planned savings from those services included within the scope of the programme and plugging the resultant gap from other sources. However, it has come to the conclusion that this is not a viable option for the reasons covered below.

2.2 If all the Council’s planned savings are delivered, the Council will have a balanced budget over the medium term. By rejecting the proposals considered in this report, this would unbalance the budget by adding funding pressures for the 2017/18 budget and beyond.

The Council has already implemented a large number of proposals to make cuts across a wide range of its services and will continue to do this as part of its ongoing and future budget setting processes.

- 2.3 There have been tight Government imposed limits on the amount that the Council has been able to raise through council tax and the Council has approved rises very near to the maximum allowed in recent years. The Council's preference is not to use reserves to meet this saving target because reserves represent a one-off resource and all the Council's reserve balances are earmarked for existing purposes. Similarly, the Council is seeking to minimise the application of one-off capital receipts to replace revenue funding of the Capital Programme.
- 2.4 The Council's 2017/18 budget was set following a reduction in its main Government grant from 2016/17 levels of £12m (9%). In overall terms, the level of Government funding has reduced by around £842 for every Coventry household between 2010/11 and 2017/18. By 2018, the Council is expecting to have suffered nearly a 50% cut in its grant from Government since 2010 and an equivalent fall in its net budget of around 25%. These circumstances have made it increasingly difficult for the Council to balance its budget and it has to consider all areas of expenditure to do this. These include reviewing the Council Tax support scheme, reviewing voluntary sector grant funding and re-designing its refuse collection service in order to deliver savings. As a result of these overall measures implemented by the Council it will have seen a reduction of its work-force of approximately one-third since 2010.
- 2.5 Connecting Communities principles reflect the need to transform the provision of public services by identifying existing community strengths, resources and aspirations in communities to deliver services differently and this is important irrespective of the financial demands.
- 2.6 Taking all this into consideration, the Council's view is that a do nothing option is not appropriate and that it is reasonable to seek ways to rationalise those services included within the programme. This option would require greater reduction in resources in other areas where there are already significant budget pressures and increasing demand.

Option 2 – Implementation of pre-consultation proposals

This option involves implementing the pre-consultation proposals in their entirety as outlined in the Cabinet report of August 30th and in **Appendix B** of this Cabinet report.

Option 3 – Implementation of revised proposals following consultation period (recommended option)

- 2.7 The consultation analysis for each individual proposal is contained within the appendices to this report along with the Equality Consultation Analysis. Cabinet is required to read all of this material when making their decision. The summaries below do not provide a comprehensive treatment of all of the issues raised during the consultation but highlight those considered to be most significant.
- 2.8 During and following conclusion of the consultation, the comments received in respect of each proposal were collated and analysed. The impact of each proposal was considered as well as the overall impact of the proposed change. An overarching impact analysis has been completed to illustrate this and is included in **Appendix D** of this report.

2.9 Consideration has been given to the consultation feedback and equality analysis to inform a view on whether the existing proposals should proceed as originally described, be varied in light of consultation feedback and impacts or withdrawn. The following sections summarise this for each proposal with full information included in the appendices.

2.10 Detailed proposal documents are provided in **Appendix B**. These include the proposals that were consulted on and proposals that form the recommendations contained within this report that have been updated to reflect consultation feedback. Detailed information for each service that falls within the scope of Connecting Communities Phase 2 was included in the August 2016 Cabinet Report, which can be found [here](#). An outline of this information is provided below.

2.11 When reading these sections of this report, please refer to:

Appendix A – Equality Consultation Analysis

Appendix B - Proposals

2.12 Proposal 1 – Family Hubs

Current Service description

2.12.1 Children’s Centres

2.12.1.1 Children’s centres in Coventry provide children’s centre activities as part of the core offer for children aged 0 – 5 years old, five days a week (Monday to Friday) at a gross cost of £3.5m per year including property. As at December 2016, a total of 13,264 children were registered.

2.12.2 Nurseries

2.12.2.1 Nurseries in Coventry children’s centres provide 284 places for 2, 3 and 4 year old funded children, five days a week (Monday to Friday) at a gross cost of £0.9m per year. As at October 2016, a total of 189 children were registered at these nurseries.

2.12.3 Youth Service

2.12.3.1 The Youth Service provides youth work support in a number of ways and locations to young people, six days a week with universal (open access) provision generally in the evenings and more targeted support during the day at a gross cost of £1.4m including property. As at July 2016, circa. 2,700 young people were registered at the 16 youth centres and community venues and around 30 to 100 young people attend each of the 65 sessions per week. In addition detached youth work is carried out in other locations.

2.12.4 Proposal summary

2.12.4.1 The original proposal was for the Council to develop an integrated model of family support through the development of a series of family hubs that will support people earlier and provide interventions that prevent the need for more intensive involvement by the City Council or other statutory agencies.

2.12.4.2 This approach requires that some existing services will cease to be provided by the City Council in order to ensure that the Family Hub model is appropriately resourced and effectively targeted. This includes 6 Council operated children’s centres, 3 commissioned children’s centres, 9 Council operated nurseries and the Council’s

universal youth service. It was also proposed that engagement with local provider markets took place to check and encourage interest in how services and support might be delivered differently.

2.12.4.3 A summary of consultation responses is provided in the proposal document, **Appendix B**.

2.12.4.4 Four petitions have been submitted against ending Council provided children's centres and youth services (in addition to 1 petition relating to youth services, children's centres and public libraries). In accordance with the City Council's procedure for dealing with petitions, these petitions were submitted for consideration by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People on 28th February 2017.

2.12.4.5 Further detail on the petitions can be found in **Appendix E**.

2.12.5 Summary of impact analysis

2.12.5.1 Within the population that would be affected by this proposal there are protected groups of age, race and disability.

2.12.5.2 The proposal would specifically impact on children and young people who access existing children's centres, nurseries and youth services and their families.

2.12.5.3 Of the 238 children receiving a service at the start of consultation who accessed provision within the 9 Local Authority children's centres, 6 children had an education, health and care plan and 25 were receiving SEND support.

2.12.5.4 The proposals would mean the Youth Service would no longer support the two youth clubs located at Baginton Fields and Whoberley with a potential negative impact on approximately 50 individual disabled young people who regularly attend. The consultation has highlighted that the proposed locations of family hubs were felt to be situated too far away for disabled people to attend. However, the mitigation work being undertaken includes investigating the possibility of Baginton Fields School continuing to run provision for disabled young people. In addition, one of the partners indicating an interest in transition funding already provides special needs activities at Whoberley and this could continue if their Expression of Interest is taken forward. Through the Youth Service transitional support process we will encourage groups and organisations to ensure their proposed provision would be accessible to young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

2.12.5.5 The African Caribbean Centre for Young People (ACCYP) in Freehold Street, Hillfields has a specific target group. Attendance at this youth centre has also been impacted by the local population which has more recently been predominantly eastern European. These ethnic groups will therefore be impacted negatively by the closure of this youth centre. However, again the positive response received from the Private, Voluntary and Independent sector may offer mitigation for this impact.

2.12.6 Consideration of the consultation

2.12.7 The responses from the Private, Voluntary and Independent sector have been positive. Expressions of interest from PVI sector organisations in providing both nursery provision and universal youth services indicate that this will provide support to children and young people in different and more collaborative ways in the future.

2.12.8 Although there are some concerns about the ability of those most in need to access services easily in the future, the needs of children and young people will remain paramount as part of proposal implementation plans. Ongoing collaboration with partners will help to ensure the needs of children, young people and families who are most in need are met by targeted services as part of the Family Hub model.

2.12.9 Proposal following consultation

2.12.9.1 The proposal is to progress with the development of 8 family hubs in existing children's centre locations in Foleshill, Hillfields, Tile Hill, Radford, Moat House, Middleride, Bell Green and Gosford Park to enable the provision of targeted support to those children, young people and families who are most in need.

2.12.9.2 In progressing with this model, it is also proposed that 6 Council operated children's centres, 3 commissioned children's centres, 9 Council operated nurseries and the Council's universal youth service will cease to be provided.

2.12.9.3 The response from the provider market, to consider how they might contribute to the mitigation of the impact of Council proposals by providing additional support directly, has been good.

2.12.9.4 The Council would not directly commission or commit to ongoing funding of either nursery or youth services but instead will enable groups, through other means of support, to step up and fill some of the gaps that the ending of Council services will create. Detailed implementation plans will be developed to enable existing services to end and new provision to be in place by September 2017. Improvement work may be necessary to make the buildings suitable for family hubs, including improvements to the ICT provision in the buildings. Wherever possible, work will be completed to avoid gaps in provision. This activity will also all be subject to staff consultation and will be carefully managed in line with the Council's Policies and Procedures.

2.13 Proposal 2 – Libraries

2.13.1 Service description

2.13.2 The City Council has a duty to provide "a comprehensive and efficient library service" to the people of Coventry. It is for the Council to determine what constitutes a comprehensive and efficient service, whilst having regard to the relevant legislation and guidance.

2.13.3 Currently Coventry discharges this responsibility through the provision of 17 libraries (including Phase 1 libraries) located across the city. Total service usage figures for 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 are as follows: visitors: 1.59m; issues: 0.96m; computer sessions: 291k; registered users: 80k. More details are available in **Appendix A** of this report.

2.13.4 With the advent of new technology and people accessing libraries for much more than book loans, the opportunity exists to consider how library services within the city can be modernised and provide an appropriate service with a reduced budget.

2.13.5 "Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England" was published during the Consultation period. This document has been produced by the Libraries Taskforce, set up by Government with the support of the LGA and the Libraries sector with a view to mapping out a future for Public Libraries. Coventry libraries are quoted in the document

as an example of good practice and the document highlights the wider outcomes libraries deliver as:

- Cultural and creative enrichment;
- Increased reading and literacy;
- Improved digital access and literacy;
- Healthier and happier lives;
- Stronger, more resilient communities;
- Helping everyone achieve their full potential;
- Greater prosperity.

“Libraries Deliver” highlights the contribution communities and other partners can play in supporting libraries to achieve outcomes that are needed for individuals and communities to flourish and the Connecting Communities agenda is consistent with the radical thinking called for to sustain library spaces at the same time as managing reducing budgets.

2.13.6 Proposal summary

2.13.6.1 The original proposal was for the Council to develop sustainable, modern and comprehensive libraries as community hubs in three broad categories: core libraries, partnership libraries and community-led libraries.

2.13.6.2 This approach requires community groups and individuals in local communities to work differently with the Council and to take responsibility for service delivery in some areas. This could potentially result in the Council retaining 5 core libraries, 5 library services being delivered in partnership with community organisations and 5 library services being delivered by community groups.

2.13.6.3 It was agreed that engagement with local communities and community groups should take place to check and encourage interest in how services might be delivered differently.

2.13.6.4 A summary of consultation responses is provided in the proposal document, **Appendix B**.

2.13.6.5 Five petitions have been submitted to save Coventry libraries (in addition to 1 petition relating to youth services, children’s centres and public libraries). In accordance with the City Council’s procedure for dealing with petitions, these petitions were submitted for consideration by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on 6th March 2017.

2.13.6.6 Further detail on the petitions can be found in **Appendix E**.

2.13.7 Summary of impact analysis

Core

- The consultation highlighted that the increased use of self service would impact on older people due to digital exclusion and the loss of assistance currently provided by staff.
- The importance of internet access and support with homework and learning, access to quality reading material and activities that currently take place within libraries designed for children and their parents, such as Rhymetime, were also highlighted as important for children's development.
- The project team will continue to develop the offer within the core libraries and take these concerns into account.

Partnership

- The consultation highlighted that the potential of library services being co-located with other community organisations could impact on older people due to the loss of assistance currently provided by staff.
- The importance of internet access and support with homework and learning, access to quality reading material and activities that currently take place within libraries designed for children and their parents, such as Rhymetime, were also highlighted as important for children's development.
- A positive impact has been identified as a result of the proposed relocation of Hillfields library – particularly on older people and minority ethnic groups – with the WATCH Centre described as being more convenient and accessible.
- A number of groups have expressed their interest in working with Coventry City Council and the programme team will continue to work with these interested parties.

Community-led

- The consultation highlighted concerns relating to deprivation if the community-led libraries were to close: for example, the loss of a safe place for homeless people to go; loss of IT access for people without a computer at home or to enable unemployed people to search for jobs; costs of transport to alternative libraries; and the value of reference and study material as a “gateway for people from disadvantaged backgrounds”.
- A further concern was raised that if community groups were to run libraries in an exclusive way there could be a danger of the environment not admitting or welcoming people with protected characteristics.
- The concerns highlighted in the feedback for the Core and Partnership libraries around the impact that the loss of services would have on older people, children and parents also carry across to the community-led libraries.
- A number of groups have expressed their interest in working with Coventry City Council and the programme team will continue to work with these interested parties.
- However, as a result of positive engagement from groups throughout the consultation, the recommended proposals are for no libraries to close at this stage. The impact on service users will therefore be minimised through the development of community-led libraries.

2.13.8 Consideration of the consultation

2.13.8.1 Feedback from the consultation has indicated an appetite from local communities and the voluntary and community sectors to consider how they might play a more active role in the delivery of library services in the future.

2.13.8.2 Although there are some concerns about the sustainability of proposed future models, given the level of interest to date, a new model for the delivery of library services in Coventry is proposed.

2.13.9 Proposal following consultation

2.13.9.1 The proposal is to progress with the vision to create a new library service that is sustainable, modern and comprehensive.

2.13.9.2 In progressing with this model, it is proposed that:

- Five core libraries are provided by the Council;
- Five partnership libraries are developed (in addition to the two Phase 1 partnership libraries);
- Three community-led libraries are progressed;

- The Council works with Caludon Castle School to enable the transition to a community-led library;
- The Council defers and develops options for the future delivery of a library service in Coundon as part of Connecting Communities to be included in Phase 3 plans.

2.13.9.3 The response from local communities and community groups, to consider how they might take on more responsibility for active delivery of library services, has been good.

2.13.9.4 The Council will support the delivery of partnership libraries by working in partnership with groups and organisations as appropriate.

2.13.9.5 The long-term aim of community-led libraries is for community groups to take full responsibility for delivery and operation of the services and buildings but this will take time and, in the meantime, the Council will work collaboratively with community groups. The proposed Council support and commitments needed from community groups are set out in **Appendix B**. Detailed implementation plans will be developed to enable existing services to end and new provision to be in place by September 2017 for core and partnership libraries and through a phased approach for community-led libraries. Wherever possible, any necessary work to make improvements to existing buildings in order to enable delivery of the proposals and provide a suitable digital offer will be completed to avoid gaps in provision. This activity will also all be subject to staff consultation and will be carefully managed in line with the Council's Policies and Procedures.

2.14 Use of Transition Fund

2.14.1 As part of the 2015/16 budget setting process the Council agreed to establish a one-off £500,000 Transition Fund to support work with residents and communities in developing new approaches to delivering Council services. This fund was increased to £525,000 following a merger with the Community Grant Fund.

2.14.2 Initial expressions of interest (EOI) in the fund were invited from groups and organisations during Phase 1 of Connecting Communities and 37 were received in total. To date only two awards have been made from the fund. This is for a number of reasons, including some EOIs not relating to Connecting Communities Phase 1 and/or not demonstrating how long-term cost savings could be delivered or how the proposal mitigated the impact of service reductions.

2.14.3 Prior to the Phase 2 consultation period, there was a lack of clarity from the Council to communities about what would be included within the scope of Phase 2.

2.14.4 Groups or organisations that expressed an interest in the Transition Fund relating to Phase 2 proposals were invited to engage with the Council at the beginning of the engagement and consultation process.

2.14.5 As a result of feedback from community and voluntary sector groups, changes were made to the process for expressing an interest in the Transition Fund for Phase 2. The process is more collaborative, involving officers working with groups and organisations at an early stage to help develop proposals and facilitate linkages where there are complementary ideas, with the aim of encouraging innovative and viable proposals from local communities.

2.14.6 The updated process has worked well for the library service proposals but the overwhelming and unexpected interest from the youth sector in providing universal youth support has resulted in the need to reconsider the process for awards to that area.

- 2.14.7** The Transition Fund process was reopened at the start of the consultation period and two recommendations for award of transition funding are included within this report to enable the progression of libraries proposals. Further expressions of interest in the fund to support library service changes are expected to be finalised during the next few months and recommendations are included in this report to deal with these. It is also possible that future expressions of interest are received from nursery providers, although these organisations will be encouraged to access other available funding sources wherever possible.
- 2.14.8** For the Youth Service, **Appendix C** of this report describes the current position and recommends a specific process for accessing transitional support in relation to youth services. The proposal also includes a recommendation that a lead voluntary sector partner organisation is identified to provide infrastructure support to the youth sector in Coventry and to work closely with the Council to inform additional Transition Fund awards.
- 2.14.9** Whichever approach is used, the Transition Fund award process will be rigorous and ensure that a clear process of due diligence is applied prior to making any recommendations to inform decisions on award.
- 2.14.10** As at 17th February 2017, there have been a total of 25 Expressions of Interest in the Transition Fund as part of Phase 2, to the value of circa £500k. The award of transition funding will support the mitigation of the impact of budget reductions.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1** The consultation undertaken from 12 September 2016 to 12 December 2016 was extensive and covered two key proposals, each with a number of components.
- 3.2** The consultation was public. In order to ensure that stakeholders were able to share their views with the Council, the consultation was undertaken in a variety of ways and all responses were encouraged, regardless of format.
- 3.3** A combination of methods was used to consult including online surveys, with paper copies available on request, with a generic set of questions for each proposal. The survey was available throughout the twelve week consultation period, on the City Council website. The consultation was also made available in ten different languages including Punjabi, Gujarati, Mandarin and others.
- 3.4** Staff, Trade Unions, service users, voluntary sector organisations and local communities were encouraged to take part in and had the opportunity to take part in the consultation through the methods outlined above.
- 3.5** Consultation responses were received in a variety of formats including meeting discussion, letters, e-mails, telephone conversations, videos, “walls” of comments and there were also a number of protests.
- 3.6** A range of consultation meetings were held for different communities and groups, some of these offering the opportunity to discuss all proposals. These discussions focused on understanding the potential impact of implementation of the proposals but also how local communities might play a role in the delivery of services in the future. During consultation meetings people were asked to encourage other interested parties to participate in the consultation and share their views. People were also reminded that they could contribute to the consultation on as many occasions as they wanted to.

- 3.7** Paper copies of the consultation proposal documents and the consultation survey were made available on request. Pre-paid envelopes were made available if required.
- 3.8** An easy read leaflet was also developed to provide an overview of all ten proposals and described how people could get involved in the consultation.
- 3.9** Social Media was used to promote the consultation, reminding people about the consultation meeting dates via the Council's Facebook and Twitter accounts.
- 3.10** Over the period of the consultation, approximately 75 consultation meetings were held, 680 people were spoken to as part of a consultation meeting or in response to individual feedback and approximately 8,000 people were directly contacted using mailing and distribution lists. Furthermore, more than 1300 survey responses were recorded, with many of these responses representing feedback from a number of people rather than an individual and more than 3,000 website visits were registered. 18 letters, 38 posters/drawings, posters and photographs and 123 comments from children, young people and professionals were received.
- 3.11** Specific responses were also received from 2 Trade Unions (Unison and Unite).
- 3.12** An interim consultation report was developed and discussed by the Council's Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on 9th November 2016; as part of the consultation process.
- 3.13** All feedback from the consultation was recorded and analysed throughout the process.
- 3.14** While it is clear from the consultation that many people who responded are not in support of the proposals, there has been a positive response from those consulted in relation to how they might play a more active role in service delivery. There has been a clear change in opinion on this from the start of engagement on initial proposals in July 2016 to date.
- 3.15** During the consultation people were given the opportunity to put forward alternative options for how savings could be made. Although some alternative proposals were received, these would not achieve the level of savings required by the financial target for 2017/18.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1** If decisions are made to implement any or all of the proposals they will be implemented as early as possible in 2017/18.
- 4.2** Due to the range and complexity of proposals identified, implementation will begin from 1 April 2017 and will be achieved across all proposals during 2017/18. The full year effect of these proposals will be £3.5m, however, the timing of the implementation of some proposals will mean that a part year saving of £2.4m is anticipated to be achieved during 17/18.
- 4.3** Clear transition plans will be developed across service areas impacted by proposals to ensure that any disruption to service provision is minimised as far as possible.
- 4.4** The total savings target remaining for Connecting Communities is £3.8m. The proposals recommended in this report will achieve £3.5m and the remaining £0.3m will be addressed as part of Phase 3 for Connecting Communities.

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services

5.1 Financial implications

5.1.1 The financial implications have been included throughout this report. This section provides a brief summary. The recommendations in this report will enable full year achievement of £3.5m of the remaining £3.8m savings target within the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

5.1.2 Table 1: Breakdown of £3.5m saving

Proposal	Efficiencies already achieved £000's	Staffing £000's	Other £000's	Income £000's	Property £000's	Net Saving £000's
Children's Centres	0	823	726	0	200	1,749
Nurseries	53	879	83	-583	0	432
Youth Service	40	422	93	0	75	630
Libraries	46	503	121	-30	22	662
Total	139	2,618	1,023	-613	297	3,464

5.1.3 The remaining target of £0.3m will be addressed as part of a Phase 3 of Connecting Communities.

5.1.4 The financial assumptions relating to delivery of the £3.5m are that a full year saving (including property) can be achieved from 2018/19 onwards. Delays in delivery will reduce the level of financial savings that can be achieved in 2017/18 to £2.4m, see table 2 below. The budget setting report taken to Cabinet on 21st February makes provision for the £1.4m shortfall in 2017/18.

5.1.5 Table 2: Breakdown of £2.4m 2017/18 saving:

Proposal	Efficiencies already achieved £000's	Staffing £000's	Other £000's	Income £000's	Property £000's	Net Saving £000's
Children's Centres	0	482	611	0	117	1,210
Nurseries	53	508	48	-340	0	269
Youth Service	40	246	54	0	44	384
Libraries	46	342	120	-12	11	507

Total	139	1,578	1,023	-352	172	2,370
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The level of savings that can be achieved have been calculated based on current proposals and a number of assumptions around delivery timescales. Any delay past these timescales will reduce the saving that can be delivered during 2017/18. Some of the proposals rely on support and interest from organisations outside of the Council and, if this doesn't come to fruition, this could impact on the delivery of anticipated savings.

- 5.1.6** Capital resources will be required to implement the proposals but we cannot determine this until full engagement with private, voluntary and independent (PVI) operators for each centre is completed. Any capital works will need to be funded from within existing resources. Officers will report back on progress on this as part of implementation.
- 5.1.7** Investment in the Council's digital offer necessary for proposals to be implemented are being funded by existing budgets. This could include access to transition funding where community groups require investment in technology.
- 5.1.8** The remaining Transition Fund will be used to support Council stakeholders in accessing one-off funds. The fund will be accessed where, following consultation and engagement with stakeholders, expressions of interest are made that will deliver ongoing savings for the Council.
- 5.1.9** The building of some of the children's centres and youth centres in the city were funded by government grants e.g. Surestart. Should the buildings no longer be used for the purposes set out within the grant conditions there is a risk that the Council could become responsible for capital clawback. Capital spend on these buildings was c£2.3m. In order to mitigate against this risk, the service will endeavour to ensure that the buildings will continue to be used for similar activities.
- 5.1.10** Should schools or the PVI sector take over existing Council-run nurseries then existing nursery staff may transfer to these other organisations. In the case of the PVI sector this may involve TUPE. The Council will need to consider any impact that this has on the viability of business proposals on a case by case basis.

5.2 Legal implications

- 5.2.1** The proposals outline a number of significant changes to the way in which the Council delivers services to the population of the city, whilst continuing to comply with its statutory responsibilities.
- 5.2.2** Public authority decision makers are under a non-delegable ongoing duty to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not (Public Sector Equality Duty - s 149(1) Equality Act 2010).
- 5.2.3** The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- 5.2.4** Decision makers must be consciously thinking about these three aims as part of their decision making process with rigour and with an open mind. The duty is to have "due regard", not to achieve a result but to have due regard to the need to achieve these goals. Consideration must be given to the potential adverse impacts and the measures (if any) that are available to minimise any discriminatory effects.
- 5.2.5** The proposed consultation and resulting updated equality assessment is intended to enable the decision makers to consider the impact and public response to the proposals

and any alternative proposals raised. The product of the consultation and equality assessment must be conscientiously taken into account when making a decision.

- 5.2.6** In respect of proposals around library provision S.7 Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 creates a duty upon local authorities to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons. In fulfilling its duty local authorities should have consideration to the desirability of securing adequate stock and encourage people to make full use of the service.
- 5.2.7** In respect of children's centres the Childcare Act 2006 places specific duties on local authorities for arrangements to be made so that there are sufficient children's centres, so far as reasonably practicable, to meet local need. A children's centre should make available universal and targeted early childhood services either by providing the services at the centre itself or by providing advice and assistance to parents (mothers and fathers) and prospective parents in accessing services provided elsewhere. Local authorities must ensure that children's centres provide some activities for young children on site.
- 5.2.8** The Act further imposes a duty on local authorities to ensure there is consultation before any significant changes are made to children's centre provision in their area. Particular attention should be given to ensuring disadvantaged families and minority groups participate in consultations. The consultation should explain how the local authority will continue to meet the needs of families with children under five as part of any reorganisation of services. It should also be clear how respondents' views can be made known and adequate time should be allowed for those wishing to respond.
- 5.2.9** The Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to make arrangements to secure that early childhood services in their area are provided in an integrated manner in order to facilitate access and maximise the benefits of those services to young children and their parents. In discharging this duty, local authorities must have regard to the Statutory Guidance Early Education and Childcare 2006.
- 5.2.10** Section 17(1) of the Children Act 1989 imposes on local authorities a general duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area who are in need by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs.
- 5.2.11** Section 11(2) of the Children's Act 2004 applies to a local authority, it imposes a duty to make arrangements for ensuring that its functions of are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 5.2.12** In respect of Youth Services, s.507B of the Education Act 1996 imposes a duty on local authorities so far as reasonably practicable to secure access to sufficient education and recreational leisure activities for young persons aged 13-19 and certain persons aged 20-24. Such activities must be for the improvement of the well-being, personal and social development of young people. The Positive for Youth Government policy, published in 2012 also sets out a shared vision for how all parts of society can work together in partnership to support families and improve outcomes for young people, particularly those who are most disadvantaged or vulnerable.
- 5.2.13** Again, there is a duty on local authorities to consult with young people in relation to changes in youth services provision. Local Authorities must ensure that the views of minority groups and those currently least likely to engage in positive activities are well represented within any consultation. Good quality information about the consultation process and support for young people to participate in the consultation must be

provided. Local Authorities must also have regard to the Statutory Guidance on Positive Activities.

- 5.2.14** Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 ('the 1999 Act') and the statutory guidance issued under it imposes a duty on a local authority to 'make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness'. Section 3(2) requires a local authority to consult representatives of various groups of people 'for the purpose of deciding how to fulfil the duty imposed by section 3(1). In deciding how to fulfil that duty, and in making decisions about consultation, a local authority must have regard to guidance issued by Secretary of State.
- 5.2.15** Statutory guidance sets out clear expectations for councils who are considering changing funding to local voluntary or community groups that authorities should seek to avoid passing on disproportionate reductions by not passing on larger reductions to the voluntary and community sector and small businesses as a whole than they take on.
- 5.2.16** The Council will need to demonstrate that the final proposals are sufficient to meet the Council's statutory duties in relation to each service.
- 5.2.17** Employees undertaking duties at nurseries which are taken over by the PVI sector organisations will be subject to TUPE Regulations. However, employees undertaking duties at nurseries which are taken over by Council controlled schools will transfer from the City Council's establishment. In both circumstances transferring employees' continuity of employment and contractual terms and conditions must be protected.

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to the Council's priorities?

<http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan>

- 6.1.1** The Connecting Communities programme will make a positive contribution to the council's priorities, particularly in relation to: a prosperous Coventry; citizens living longer, healthier, independent lives; making Coventry an attractive and enjoyable place to be; ensuring that children and young people are safe, achieve and make a positive contribution; encouraging a creative, active and vibrant city; developing a more equal city with cohesive communities and neighbourhoods.
- 6.1.2** Following the implementation of the proposals outlined within this report, the City Council has considered the City's needs in terms of its responsibility to deliver a comprehensive and efficient library service (as defined by the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964) and has concluded that the service as amended will comply with statutory requirements.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

- 6.2.1** A Connecting Communities Programme Delivery Board meets on a monthly basis with cross Council Directorate representation. The Board is supported by an operational group that meets fortnightly to progress actions and manage identified risks. A project risk register has been established for the programme of work. Key risks identified include the pace of change required in line with budgetary savings requirements, the complex nature of the change required and the need for initial and ongoing support from the Council in a non-traditional way i.e. support with developing business case,

accessing funding etc. Risks will continue to be identified, mitigations sought and impact managed through this process.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

6.3.1 Financial impacts

The current recommendations will achieve an ongoing saving of £3.5m against the existing Connecting Communities saving target of £3.8m. The remaining £0.3m will be addressed as part of Phase 3.

6.3.2 Staffing impacts

The specific proposals for Connecting Communities Phase 2 2017/18 will impact on staff in different ways; there are likely to be staffing reductions in some cases and changes to working hours in others. The proposed changes would lead to a reduction of 19.6 Full Time Equivalents (FTE) in library services; a reduction of 21.34 FTE in children's centres, a reduction of 32.38 FTE in nurseries and a reduction of 11.34 FTE in youth services. Note that nursery staff will no longer be directly employed by the Council but they may transfer to schools or private nursery providers.

Impact on staff within support services will also need to be quantified as part of the implementation process. Staff and Trade Unions have been consulted on the specific content of the proposals for 2017/18 and if approved they will also be consulted on detailed plans for implementation, where staff are affected. Any staff impacts will be managed in accordance with the City Councils' agreement on management of change which aims to manage staffing reductions through management of vacancies, reviews of temporary contracts and avoidance of compulsory redundancies through redeployment or ER VR opportunities where possible.

6.4 Equalities / ECA

Proposals for delivery of savings in 2017/18 (Phase 2) cover libraries, children's centres, nurseries and the youth service. An analysis of equality impacts has been completed for each of the elements of the Phase 2 proposals. Initial Equality Consultation Analysis (ECA) documents for the services that are impacted were completed prior to the consultation. These have now been updated to take account of consultation feedback and findings and are attached in **Appendix A** to illustrate the current understanding of the potential impact of implementation of these proposals. An ECA for the Connecting Communities Programme is provided in **Appendix D**.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

The programme of work described focuses on changing the current relationship that the Council has with local communities in Coventry, as well as partner organisations, the community and voluntary sector. Subject to the outcome of consultation and engagement, it is envisaged the work will result in closer working and more shared responsibilities and ultimately a transformation of community and partnership working in the city.

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