

REPORT FOR: **CABINET**

Date of Meeting:	19 March 2015
Subject:	Library Strategy 2015-2018
Key Decision:	Yes
Responsible Officer:	Paul Najsarek, Corporate Director of Community, Health and Wellbeing
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Sue Anderson, Portfolio Holder for Community, Culture and Resident Engagement Councillor Sachin Shah, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Major Contracts
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 Library Strategy Appendix 2 Library Strategy EQIA

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out Harrow's Library Strategy for 2015-2018 and proposals to make savings of £500,000 in the library budget through a review of library buildings and opening hours and consideration of new services

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

1. Approve the Harrow Library Strategy 2015-18 (Appendix 1) as outlined in paragraph 6.2 including the closure of four libraries (Rayners Lane, Bob Lawrence, North Harrow and Hatch End)
2. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director Community Health & Well-being in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to implement the strategy as identified in paragraph 6.2 and Appendix 1 (paragraphs 6 & 7) subject to due consideration of final community management proposals for Bob Lawrence and North Harrow libraries.
3. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director Environment and Enterprise in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder Business Planning and Regeneration to make any necessary property disposals including the ending of leases and support the proposals for the regeneration of library buildings as outlined in paragraph 6.2
4. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director Community Health & Well Being in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Community Culture & Resident Engagement and Major Contracts & Finance to negotiate and agree any necessary variations to the library management contract with Carillion Integrated Services Ltd and to authorise a sealing of the agreement.

Reason: (For recommendations)

To enable the delivery of the Harrow Library Strategy to modernise Harrow's public library service and the proposals to reduce the number of library buildings in Harrow to meet the budget reductions identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2015-16 and beyond.

Section 2 – Report

2.1 Introductory paragraph

Reductions in local government funds and the changing nature of reading and information delivery due to changes in technology have been particular challenges to public libraries in recent years. Harrow Library Service has seen a decrease in loans of material (issues), visits to libraries and the number of library members actively borrowing library stock over the last five years, in common with the national trend for public libraries. Harrow Council has to reduce its overall budget by £25million in 2015-16 (£83million over a four year period). To deliver the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2015-16, the Library Service needs to reduce its annual budget by £500k from 2015-16. This Harrow Library Strategy aims to define the delivery of library services in Harrow for the next three years in the light of these challenges and ensure that the Library Service is sustainable in the future, with reduced financial resources being targeted to best meet the needs of residents.

3. Background

3.1 Harrow's library service is currently delivered under contract with Carillion Integrated Services Ltd through their subsidiary trust Cultural Community Solutions. This is a joint contract with the London Borough of Ealing. There are ten libraries in Harrow:

- Bob Lawrence (Edgware)
- Hatch End (in Harrow Arts Centre building)
- Gayton (St John's Road, Harrow town centre)
- Kenton
- North Harrow (Pinner Road)
- Pinner
- Rayner's Lane
- Roxeth (South Harrow)
- Stanmore
- Wealdstone

3.2 The joint library contract commenced in September 2013, in partnership with Ealing. The annual charge of £2.2million delivers:

- Operational and development staffing of ten static libraries in Harrow
- Stock control and purchase
- Facilities Management
- ICT and e-service provision
- A programme of cultural events and activities
- Outreach and targeted library services including the Schools Library Service and Housebound Service

3.3 The contract is monitored by Harrow through an Inter Authority Agreement with Ealing and quarterly joint Partnership Boards. The contract contains Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for service standards, with financial credits due to the Council for performance failures. There have been no credits to date.

The maintenance of library buildings is detailed in the library contract. The contractor is responsible for planned preventative maintenance, and the first £5k of any one maintenance item. The Council is responsible for any costs above this £5k threshold.

3.4 Libraries offer a range of services including:

- Free books for loan for all ages and abilities
- Free newspapers and magazines to read in the library or online.
- Music and audio CDs and DVDs for a hire charge
- Wi-Fi and public computers offering free access to the internet, emails and office software for library members
- Library Management System (Axial Galaxy) with access to the stock of 16 London library authorities (as part of the London Libraries Consortium)
- 24/7 online services including online ordering and renewal of books, reference materials such as Encyclopaedia Britannica, business information, etc
- E-books, e-audio and e-magazines for loan
- Range of events and activities for all ages including story times and rhyme times for children, reading groups, computer tuition, author talks, Summer Reading Challenge, and a writing group
- Employment support including advice sessions on job searching and CV skills and support for local small businesses (Enterprising Libraries).
- Community information (and bookable meeting space in some libraries)
- Council services such as sale of waste bags, parking permits, and video-link access to Access Harrow for welfare advice
- Enquiry service including advice on authors and new books
- Photocopying and printing (charges apply)

3.5 As at April 2014, the total library membership was 146,661 (39% of Harrow's population based on ONS Mid Year Estimates 2011). . There were 51,023 active library members (those who have used their library card to borrow an item of stock or use a public computer) during the period September 2013 to August 2014, which represents 21% of Harrow's residents. 46% of active borrowers (those who have used their library card to borrow a book in a twelve month period) were under 18years old (as at August 2014) compared to 20.2% of Harrow's population who are under 16 years old.

4. Current situation

4.1 Harrow Council is faced with a reduction by central government of £83million in its budget over four years. Therefore, the council is facing a significant financial challenge over the next four years and all services are required to deliver savings for 2015-16. Harrow's library service has gone through a significant improvement process over the past three years with the implementation of new or improved technologies (such as free Wi-Fi) and the reduction of costs through implementing self service and by the commissioning of library management services jointly with Ealing. This has already reduced the overall library budget by £1.4million over three years. To ensure that the MTFS budget reduction of £500k is met for 2015-16 and

further budget reductions beyond, the library service will require a radical change in how services are delivered

4.2 Six of the ten libraries in Harrow are leased and one (Kenton) is Grade 2 listed. Hatch End Library is part of the Grade 2 listed Elliott Hall. Apart from some minor improvements, most of the libraries have not had a major refurbishment in the past 10 years. The exceptions are Gayton Library which was moved from its original site in 2008 to the current location (a converted five floor former office block) and Hatch End Library which was moved from its previous location in a separate building on the Harrow Arts Centre Campus to the main Elliott Hall building. Rayners Lane Library is the only one which is not DDA compliant; situated across four floors, it would take an estimated £100k to install three wheelchair lifts to make the majority (not all) space accessible for customers (but not staff areas).

4.3 Previously library performance has been measured using the number of visits, stock loans and the number of active borrowers. All of these performance indicators have been on a steady decline nationally and regionally and in Harrow. However, the rate of decline in Harrow is higher than the England or London figures. Harrow's number of visits have declined by 25% since 2009-10. This compares with a 9% reduction in London, and a 12% reduction nationally. Harrow's stock issues have declined by 33% since 2009-10. This compares with an 18% reduction in London, and a 21% reduction nationally.

4.4 In 2013-14, Gayton, Wealdstone, and Roxeth libraries had the most library visits, with Bob Lawrence, North Harrow, and Rayners Lane libraries having the least visits. Gayton, Kenton, and Stanmore libraries had the most stock issues in 2013-14, with Bob Lawrence, North Harrow, and Rayners Lane libraries having the least stock issues. There is no longer necessarily a correlation between visits to libraries and borrowing rates. For example, Wealdstone Library ranked seventh out of the ten libraries in 2013-14 for loans but third in terms of visits (Harrow Library Strategy Appx 4 library visits and issues).

4.5 The stockfund spend was £320k in 2013-14 compared to £441k in 2009-10. However, the price of books has also reduced and Harrow is now part of the London Libraries Consortium for purchasing which offers better purchasing power across 16 London authorities. For example, in 2009-10, stock-spend of £441k purchased 39,430 items. In 2012-13, stock-spend of £358k purchased 39,182 items. Harrow has always ranked in the top quartile of Outer London Boroughs for book loans and this continues to be high (4th out of 18 Authorities in 2013-14).

5 Why a change is needed

5.1 Currently there is a national, local and regional decline in the usage of libraries and that is reflected in Harrow. In the period 2009-10 to 2013-14, stock loans have decreased by 33% and library visits by 25%. Active borrowers remain at only 20% of Harrow's population. This performance can be attributed to a number of factors, both societal (such as new technologies such as smart devices, downloadable materials, 'on demand' services etc.) and local. Harrow's libraries look outdated and unappealing, Harrow was late

to adopt some of the newer technologies on offer such as WiFi (implemented in 2013) and e-materials (also 2013) (Appendix 1 para 3.4).

5.2 In customer surveys, consultations and other engagements, customers expressed that they would like to see a different pattern of opening hours at more convenient times for them and to attract new customers.

5.3 Despite major savings of £1.4 million in the library budget over the past three years through the implementation of self-service and floor-walking staff, outsourcing to an external provider etc., the library service has a target of saving £500k in 2015-16. This cannot be achieved without a radical change to the delivery of library services, concentrating on fewer better libraries with services delivered in non-library buildings or in co-location with other community providers.

The cost per visit per library is as follows:

Cost Per Visit by Library¹

Library	% of Annual Charge	Cost per Library (Including On costs)	Visits 2013-14	Cost Per Visit	Ranking (Lowest to Highest)
Roxeth	7%	£156,257	122,809	£1.27	10
Wealdstone	9%	£200,901	143,843	£1.40	9
Pinner	7%	£156,257	107,178	£1.46	8
Hatch End	6%	£133,934	85,334	£1.57	7
Kenton	8%	£178,579	106,142	£1.68	6
North Harrow	7%	£156,257	77,563	£2.01	5
Rayners Lane	7%	£156,257	74,506	£2.10	4
Stanmore	8%	£178,579	83,892	£2.13	3
Gayton	24%	£535,737	238,134	£2.25	2
Bob Lawrence	9%	£200,901	65,445	£3.07	1
Central Services (Including Stock Services and Housebound Library Service)	8%	£178,579	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	100%	£2,232,238	1,104,846		

6. Options considered

A number of options have been considered for this report:

6.1 Continue to deliver library services as currently configured. Harrow's library services are delivered through a joint 5 year library management contract with the London Borough of Ealing, delivered by Carillion Integrated

¹ Based on annual Carillion contract price 2013/14 and excludes book fund expenditure and other internal costs such as capital financing

Services Ltd. There are ten libraries across the borough delivering free loans of books, charged loans of music and DVDs, information and council services and a range of events and activities for all ages to stimulate and develop reading. Appendix 1: Harrow Library Strategy 2015-2018 (paragraph 3) outlines the range of services delivered.

Performance shows a decline over the past five years in usage of the library service (Appendix 1 paragraph 3.4) and this is replicated across London and nationally although Harrow's performance still ranks highly in terms of book loans: 4th out of 18 Outer London authorities for book loans in 2013-14.

Given the financial challenges facing the Council, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (February 2015) outlines a budget reduction of £500,000 in the annual revenue cost of the library service from 2015-16. This is unachievable without taking a strategic view of how services are delivered and configured and making significant changes.

Therefore this option is not recommended

6.2 Approve Harrow Library Strategy 2015-2018

In order to meet the financial challenge faced by the Council, officers have developed a Library Strategy for the next three years (Appendix 1 Harrow Library Strategy 2015-18) . This strategy outlines:

- The current legislative and strategic background to delivering library services
- The current service provision (library buildings, customer base, performance, financial information)
- The consultation and engagement that has informed the strategy
- A vision and objectives for the library service
- How this will be delivered
- An action plan to take the strategy forward

The vision is as follows:

A 21st Century, vibrant Library Service that will enhance the lives of Harrow residents and promote their well-being by:

- *actively promoting, developing and encouraging reading for all ages and abilities both in library buildings and in other venues in the borough*
- *enabling learning and the development of skills to support Harrow residents to take a full part in our community*
- *providing access to literature, information and other Council or local services*
- *offering a range of community activities, events and spaces*
- *reducing the number of libraries in the borough and delivering library services in other community locations*
- *Increasing virtual (24/7) services and developing innovative service delivery through the use of new technologies*

By 2018 Harrow Library Service aims to provide a 21st Century Library Service for residents by the development of:

- A sustainable Library Service, at reduced annual cost, which actively engages with local residents, organisations, and communities. This will require a reduction in the number of library buildings through closure or by transfer into community management
- Library services that enhance the lives of Harrow residents of all ages through reading, information and learning, and enable the development of new skills and improved literacy levels. This will require library services to engage with communities in new innovative ways and in new locations outside of traditional library buildings
- Library buildings and services for the 21st Century by an active involvement in regeneration opportunities, and the use of the latest technology and digital formats. This will require a major refurbishment programme for libraries.

The Strategy outlines how this will be delivered in paragraph 6 and in an action plan as outlined in Appendix 1 para 7 and below. A summary of the key points are as follows:

i) A reduction of library buildings and a programme of renewal and refurbishment for the remaining libraries including a new Town Centre Library to replace Gayton Library. Refurbishments would be carried out using existing one-off capital budgets. The libraries proposed for closure for 2015-2016 are Bob Lawrence, Hatch End, North Harrow and Rayners Lane. The aim would be to deliver the closures by 16th May 2015. These libraries have been selected as offering the lowest levels of performance in visits and loans and with regard to the cost per visit, location, usage by their customers of other libraries etc. 67.5% of users travelled more than 1Km to use a library during the period June to December 2014.

The Council has received early proposals for the community management of Bob Lawrence Library and North Harrow Library. The earliest that this could be achieved is April 2016. This option would not deliver the full budget reduction identified in the MTFS for 2015-16 and not even in 2016-17 if taken forward, as experience from other boroughs suggests that costs would remain with the council or in Harrow's case with its library management contractor (Carillion Integrated Services Ltd). These costs could include library management systems ICT, stock purchasing, rents etc. depending on the business plans agreed with the community.

However, due consideration should be given to proposals for community management at North Harrow and Bob Lawrence Libraries before any closures occur.

In addition, in response to consultation feedback and in order to support vulnerable people who may use these services, we will trial a community transport offer between closed libraries and Gayton Library (or the next nearest library) for a period of three months – this is estimated to cost about £5k for three months.

ii) To review staffed opening hours across the borough based on consultation results and ensure libraries are open at peak demand/most cost effective

times (new opening hours to be commence on 18th May 2015). To review the Open + technology trial (offering access to the library without staff) commencing at Wealdstone Library in Spring 2015 to see if opening hours can be extended without cost.

iii) By ensuring that core services (book lending, newspapers/magazines, information, events & activities etc) that are most used by customers are continued and enhanced.

iv) By developing library services in the community such as :

- Co-location with community organisations to share costs (e.g. Wealdstone Library). Feasibility by Sept 2015
- Location of library services in Children’s Centres in the borough on a self-service basis with events and activities (locations to be delivered by Sept 2015)
- Investigating (and implementing if feasible) community management of libraries (by April 2016)
- In partnership with Access Harrow, reviewing what Council services could be delivered in libraries through video-link access or other channels (March 2016)
- Increasing the usage of Harrow’s schools library and housebound library services, offering the schools library service to out of borough schools (March 2016)
- Delivering the Creative Work Space and Lego Innovation projects to attract new people into libraries and as an offer to schools.(Summer 2015)

v) By using technology to improve services for example the potential to deliver a ‘click and collect’ service, improved online and digital resources etc. (ongoing)

vi) Through marketing and engagement with services. Developing a new library brand that emphasises the wider library role as well as the traditional offer. Setting up focus groups, encouraging more volunteering and promoting library services through a range of media (ongoing)

Action	Date
Introduction of Open+ technology to extend opening hours at Wealdstone Library	By April 2015
Review and implement revised opening hours	18 th May 2015
Closure of Bob Lawrence, Hatch End, North Harrow and Rayners Lane Libraries (subject to consideration of alternative management proposals)	16 th May 2015
Review the Open + trial and implement to extend opening hours at all libraries if successful	September 2015
Develop plans for the transfer of libraries to community management	April 2015 to March 2016
Develop plans for the potential co-location of library space with community organisations	April 2015 to September 2015

Pro-actively seek opportunities and then develop and implement plans for a new Town Centre Library as part of a mixed development. Planning Application submitted March 2015	2015 to 2018
Pro-actively seek opportunities and then develop and implement plans for a new Roxeth Library on the existing library site as part of a mixed development	2015 to 2017
Pro-actively seek opportunities and then develop and implement plans for a new Pinner Library on the existing or nearby site	2015 to 2017
Begin a process of refurbishment of libraries starting with Stanmore to offer a better environment for customers	2015-2017
Implement the Lego Innovation Studio and Creative workspace projects	Summer 2015
Increase the provision of online resources	2015 to 2018
Investigate and develop proposals for the introduction of a 'click and collect' service, and then implement as required.	2015 to 2016

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will measure the success of the Library Strategy will be developed (see paragraph 7.4):

This option is expected to deliver the proposed budget reduction required in 2015/16 as well as setting a new direction for the delivery of library services in Harrow. In order to deliver the total savings, it is also proposed to pay the unitary fee to Carillion a year in advance from April 2015. Negotiations with Carillion are ongoing, but it is expected that this approach would result in a discount in the annual fee to be agreed. Risks to the contract will be managed through robust contract management. To date there have been no penalties levied for non-performance under the contract.

It will also be necessary to reduce the stockfund by £70k in 2015-16 to make a full-year savings. This would be offset by the reduction in spend on reference materials and other areas of stock, replacing with online materials and downloads.

In order to help the Council meet the budget reduction of £83million over four years, this option is recommended, subject to due consideration of the proposals for Bob Lawrence and North Harrow libraries

7. Implications of the Recommendation

Considerations

7.1 Resources, costs

The implementation of the recommendations contained within this report will require resource to deliver. For example, if four libraries are closed on the 16th May 2015, stock etc. will have to be removed from those buildings, utilities stopped at Bob Lawrence, Rayners Lane and North Harrow libraries, staff redundancies will have to be paid. These costs are outlined in paragraph 9 below. In terms of library buildings, Notice does not need to be given to end the lease of Bob Lawrence library. This expires by effluxion of time on 24 December 2015. No action is needed on our part to bring the lease to an end.

The lease of North Harrow library continues until 30 March 2137; it cannot be terminated by either party on notice. As the rent is a peppercorn and the lease granted for a long term, the council's interest in the premises has a significant capital value. It could therefore be considered for disposal. There is a clause in the lease requiring the council to offer it back to the landlord before selling its interest to a third party.

Rayners Lane Library is part of the General Fund Stock and could be considered for disposal and/or housing.

Improvements to libraries could be contained within existing capital and revenue budgets or delivered as part of regeneration schemes (e.g. Town Centre Library).

In order to deliver a full-year savings and cover costs, it will be necessary to reduce the total spend on stock by £70k (to £253k) in year, with a review through the year to adjust this figure if savings are overachieved.

Consideration of community management proposals will need to take into account procurement regulations.

7.3 Staffing/workforce

The library workforce are employed by Carillion Integrated Services. The majority of staff are still on Harrow terms and conditions. There are an estimated 27 posts (13.5 FTEs) including facilities management staff at risk of redundancy at a potential cost of £160k. Provision has been made within the corporate MTFS implementation reserve to fund such costs arising from budget reduction proposals. Although Carillion have been notified of the potential loss of posts and have replaced staff leavers with agency staff pro tem, there has been a low rate of turnover and therefore not many vacant posts in the service which could be used to offer staff at risk. However, Carillion will attempt to minimise the number of staff redundancies by offering vacant posts across their four library contracts (Croydon, Ealing, Harrow and Hounslow). Carillion will hold a full consultation process with staff and unions.

7.4 Performance Issues

In the short-term or over the first year of the strategy, the recommended option is likely to have a negative impact on library performance and lead to further reductions in library loans and visits. However, over the period of delivering the Strategy, the aim will be to halt or reduce the rate of decline

(e.g. in the case of stock loans where outside forces are at work). A number of KPIs have been identified to measure the delivery of the Strategy as follows:

- Increase in the number of visits
- Increasing loans of e-materials and reducing the rate of decline in the current level of physical stock loans
- Increase in the number of active library members
- Increasing rates of satisfaction with library services as measured by the PLUS and other customer surveys
- Increase in the number of volunteer hours
- Reduction in the cost per visit

It is likely if the recommendation did not go ahead that library performance would in any case continue to deteriorate as it has over the past five years. Implementation of the recommendation would help to support the Council priorities of making a difference for communities by offering library services in places such as Children's Centres or by working with community partners.

7.5 Environmental Implications

There are no direct environmental implications of this recommendation although environmental efficiencies could be found through the potential provision of new replacement libraries such as Harrow Town Centre.

7.6 Risk Management Implications

Risk included on Directorate risk register? Yes

Separate risk register in place? No (but one will be developed for the delivery of the Strategy)

Key risks include:

- i) Non-delivery or delay to actions such as library closures leading to non delivery of savings targets. There is a risk that external factors (such as legal challenges) could delay the implementation of savings. A full consultation and engagement exercise has been conducted to ensure that residents views are heard. These views (such as review of opening hours) have been taken into account in considering the final option
- ii) Costs of implementation exceed available funds. The use of existing revenue library budget (capital and revenue) should mitigate against this.
- iii) There is impact on the contractual relationship with Carillion. A change control mechanism is built into the contract and flexibility in terms of service delivery and locations of libraries are built into the contract and leases. Formal notification of the changes will be made through the Council's procurement processes but in addition, Carillion have been consulted with and helped to shape some of the Strategy.

There may be opportunities to feed into a wider library strategy across the three West London authorities that contract with Carillion (Ealing, Hounslow

and Harrow) to make further improvements into service delivery across borough boundaries.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 makes it the duty of every library authority to provide a “comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof”. The proposals in this report would support this by making the library service more efficient in delivery and extending the range of services on offer to reach more customers.

8.2 The contract with Carillion Integrated Services for the delivery of library management services commenced on 1st September 2013 for a period of five years. Under the terms of this contract, the Council can close some libraries and/or refurbish and re-provide them etc. In these circumstances the Council and Carillion must agree the commercial impact of the changes on the contract and agree changes as appropriate to the annual charges, and services to be delivered etc. under the contract. Formal change control mechanisms exist to vary the terms of the contract and the changes will be documented by Legal Services in a Contract Variation Notice

9. Financial Implications

9.1 The revenue library budget for 2014-15 is £3.703m which is broken down as follows:

- Library Support service charges £229k
- Library Capital Financing Costs £0.740m
- Library Contract fee £2.345m (includes provision for repayment of discount of £97k per annum)
- Library Book Fund - £323k (after in-year ongoing reduction of £99k)
- Harrow Council Management Costs - £66k

Across the libraries and leisure contract, in addition to the budget detailed above, there is a maintenance budget of £100k for all repairs over £5k:

In addition to the revenue funding, the MTFS assumes a capital budget for library and leisure services of £300,000 from 2014-15 to 2016-17, and £150k for 2017-18 together with a specific allocation of £1m in 2017-18 for any refit and refurbishment work arising from the library strategy. This may need to be brought forward depending on the delivery of the action plan outlined in the strategy.

9.2 The Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2015-16 identifies a reduction in the library budget of £500,00pa. The delivery of the Library Strategy will achieve savings as follows:

a) Closure of four libraries is expected to deliver savings in a full year as identified by Carillion as follows:

Library	Cost
Bob Lawrence	£150k approximately
Hatch End	£100k approximately
North Harrow	£115k approximately
Rayners Lane	£115k approximately
Total	£480k

These savings are exclusive of management fees and overheads shared across the service (such as ICT costs) which cannot be separated by library. The savings are based on staffing reduction, reductions in utility, rent and council tax costs. Part year implementation in May 2015 would deliver £440k which would give a shortfall of £60k in 2015-16, which would require additional one-off compensatory savings to be identified to mitigate the shortfall (detailed below).

b). The option recommended will require the identification of additional savings to fully achieve the MTFs savings proposed for 2015-16 as a result of closure after 1st April 2015. Negotiations with Carillion are ongoing for a reduction in the annual charge in return for an upfront payment rather than by quarterly instalments during 2015-16. This cannot be finalised until the final annual charge is agreed.

There is a small risk to delivery of contract KPIs if payment is made in advance; however, under the terms of the contract, financial credits can be levied for non-delivery. None have been levied for Harrow since the start of the contract in September 2013. Annual payment in advance is often made in such contracts to aid contractor's cash-flow in return for discounted payments. This could provide part of the shortfall for 2015-16. However, this will need to be reviewed year on year as there are likely to be further budget reductions from 2016-17 onwards.

c) It is also proposed to reduce the stockfund by £70k in 2015-16 from the current level of £323k to £253k. This will be reviewed for 2016-17 budget setting.

9.3 Implementation costs, funded from the MTFs implementation fund, are outlined as follows:

Item	Cost £000s	Comments
Decommissioning of services and securing of sites	70	Some of this could be ongoing revenue depending on how long the site remained empty in the case of Rayners Lane Library
Legal costs/dilapidations	70	Any costs associated with the vacation of buildings under lease terms
Contract change payments	£0	None have been indicated so far
Transport offer from closed libraries to nearest library or Gayton Library 2x per week	£5	To be reviewed after 3 months to see how it is used. In addition, to encourage volunteer 'buddying' to drive to nearest library if possible
Redundancy costs	£160k	Assumption based on the potential

		for 13.5 redundancies. Harrow would be liable for this cost which would be met from corporate redundancy contingency
--	--	--

9.4 There is a potential capital receipt or ongoing revenue stream for the Rayners Lane Library site dependent on disposal or use for housing.

9.5 The NNDR collection could be negatively impacted if four libraries are closed. However, new uses for Bob Lawrence Library space (originally configured as three separate shop units) and for Rayners Lane Library should offset this loss, although there may be an in year shortfall unless new tenants are lined up for these premises.

10 Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

10.1 A full consultation was carried out on the proposals to close four libraries and for ideas to develop the library strategy. The survey with background information was available in hard copy at libraries, Harrow Leisure Centre, Harrow Arts Centre and online via the Harrow Council website. Consultation drop in sessions held at all libraries and at Harrow Leisure Centre. Posters were also distributed to promote the consultation to all libraries, Harrow Council's Arts and Heritage facilities leisure centres, supermarkets, doctor's surgeries, dental surgeries, and placed on community noticeboards around Harrow. Details of the library consultation were also included on the Council's Take Part web pages. There were 1,176 completed survey forms and in addition a number of letters (e.g. Pinner Association, Hatch End Association), four petitions and two proposals for community management (for Bob Lawrence and for North Harrow libraries). The results of the survey are contained in Appendix 1 Library Strategy and as a background document and were used to inform the Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendix 2). 10.58% supported the idea of fewer better libraries whilst 29.87% wanted to see libraries used as community hubs and 23.85% wanted to see libraries sharing space with other services. 71.69% did not support the proposals to close four libraries whilst 12% supported the idea and 11% were willing to consider. 45.15% supported reducing opening hours as a way of achieving some of the savings required. 47.96 % did not support reducing opening hours.

10.2 Proposals were reviewed in light of the consultation regarding library closures and aiming to reduce the impact of any library closures that are implemented. Reviewing opening hours at all libraries except for Gayton Library, the implementation of community libraries, and the co-location of library services with other services, being considered as an alternative to closing libraries or to help enable offsetting of the impact of closures to enable some funding to be available to help mitigate the impact. Additional children's activities would be held at the surrounding libraries if any libraries were to close, and the Housebound Library service will be available and actively publicised to those who are not able to travel to an alternative library – older people and those with disabilities. Additional study space and public computers will also be installed at the alternative libraries.

10.2 A full Equalities Impact Assessment on the proposals was conducted and finalised after the survey concluded and in the light of the recommendations contained within this report. A Multi Agency Equalities Impact Assessment sub group supported the development of the EQIA and was formed of Council officers, Carillion staff, Harrow Youth Parliament and individual resident volunteers elicited during the consultation process (including a representative of Hatch End Association).

10.3 The Executive must have due regard to the public sector equality duty when considering Council reports for decision.

The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The relevant protected characteristics are:

- (a) age (including carers of young/older people)
- (b) disability (including carers of disabled people)
- (c) gender reassignment
- (d) marriage/civil partnership
- (e) pregnancy and maternity
- (f) race
- (g) religion or belief
- (h) sex/gender
- (i) sexual orientation.

10.4 The following impacts were identified (Appendix 2 EQIA):

Age, Disability, Pregnancy & Maternity, Sex and Race

The proposal to close libraries is likely to have a particular impact on older and young people who are significant groups of users of the Library Service. Access to remaining libraries has the potential to be particularly difficult for these groups as they may find public transport difficult to use and the majority of the libraries have limited parking. The cost of transport could also be an issue for people on low incomes. Library closures are also likely to mean that there is less study space available. Capacity at the remaining libraries is likely to also be an issue.

Proposal to reduce opening hours – Could impact on older people who will tend to visit the libraries during daylight hours, and impact on children who will tend to visit the libraries after school or college or at weekends.

Proposal to introduce Open+ technology- Older people and children may find it particularly difficult to access the libraries during Open+ periods as they may not be familiar with the new technology and have concerns about health and safety.

The largest age group for library staff who would be impacted by reductions in staffing are older staff aged 55 and above (35%).

10.5 Mitigations identified include:

- i) Consideration of the community management proposals for Bob Lawrence and North Harrow Libraries before any library closures.
- ii) Promote greater use of the Housebound library Service for older/disabled people (or their carers) who are not able to travel to an alternative library
- iii) Provide a transport offer to enable travel to the next nearest library or Gayton Library or children and carers to attend storytime and rhyme time sessions at an alternative library.
- iv) Provide some library services at an alternative location close to the existing library, potentially co-locating with other services. This could include children's activities and a click and collect service.
- v) Additional provision at the remaining libraries. This could include children's activities, greater study space, and more IT provision.
- vi) Potential to have greater community involvement in the running of some libraries by the setting up of community libraries to help reduce library running costs.
- vii) Any changes to opening hours to be based on an analysis of demand to ensure that the opening hours are in line with demand.
- viii) Open+ technology: Technology and procedures to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Users will need to opt into Open+ and will be fully briefed on procedures including emergency procedures.
- ix) It would be ensured that Indic language collections would be available at the remaining libraries to ensure that stock in appropriate other languages was still available to the public. The existing range of stock about different religions and beliefs or different sexual orientations will still be available at the remaining libraries.
- x) Voluntary redundancy would be offered to all library staff that would be affected by any reduction in service, with every effort being made to avoid compulsory redundancies. A selection process in accordance with Carillion's normal employment policies would be undertaken if compulsory redundancies were required. This would not consider the age of staff. The trade unions would also be consulted.

11. Council Priorities

The Council's vision:

Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow

- Making a difference for the vulnerable
The Library Strategy aims to extend services such as the Housebound Library Service for older or disabled people who may not be able to get to a library building.
- Making a difference for communities
By providing safe library spaces offering a range of community events and activities and access to free internet, WiFi etc.
- Making a difference for local businesses

Through projects such as Enterprising Libraries and Creative Spaces, offering support for individuals and SMEs in employment and business innovation.

- Making a difference for families
By providing services in community locations such as Children's Centres, the Library Strategy aims to bring books and the love of reading where

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance


Name: Donna Edwards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 10 March 2015		
Name: Lanna Childs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 10 March 2015		

Ward Councillors notified:	NO, as it impacts on all Wards
EqIA carried out:	YES
EqIA cleared by:	DETG

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Marianne Locke Divisional Director Community & Culture
020 8736 x6530
marianne.locke@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers

- Cabinet Report: Future of Cultural Services in Harrow January 2012
<http://moderngov:8080/documents/g60644/Public%20reports%20pack%20Thursday%2019-Jan-2012%2019.30%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>
- Cabinet Report: Libraries & Leisure Commissioning: Award of contracts June 2013
<http://moderngov:8080/documents/g62202/Public%20reports%20pack%20Thursday%2006-Jun-2013%2018.30%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>
- Take Part Library Consultation 2015 Final Report

 Take Part Library
 FINAL consultation re
- **Exempt background papers:**
 North Harrow Library Proposal
 Bob Lawrence Library Proposal

**Call-In Waived by the
 Chairman of Overview
 and Scrutiny
 Committee**

NOT APPLICABLE

[Call-in applies]