

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning and Skills PPB
DATE: 23rd June 2008
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Health and Community
SUBJECT: Community Libraries Lottery Award
WARDS: Runcorn wards

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with a presentation and progress report on the Community Libraries Lottery Funded Project "CORE - Community Opportunities through Reading and Engagement" at Halton Lea Library.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) The report be received
- (2) Members comment on the presentation, progress and phasing of the project.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Library Service was successful in its bid for Community Libraries Lottery funding to upgrade the facilities and services at Halton Lea Library with a grant totalling £1,271,993.
- 3.2 The funding will be drawn down over 3 years following approval of the Stage 2 documentation by the Big Lottery Fund, these documents were submitted as required by 14th April 2008 and consisted of the Community Engagement Plan, Business Plan and Capital Project Delivery Plan.
- 3.3 The tender for building work was issued on 27th May with a deadline for return by Friday 27th June 2008. The tenders will be analysed and a contractor will be appointed by the end of July. A Tender Review Report will be submitted to the Big Lottery Fund for their approval before work can progress.
- 3.4 The official start on site date is anticipated to be the end of August 2008. To ensure that a library service can still be provided with the minimum of disruption to customers, the building work will be undertaken in two phases. Phase 1 covering the Ground and First floors will take place from August 2008 until January 2009 and phase 2 covering the Second and Third floors from January 2009 until May 2009.

- 3.5 Some preliminary work will be undertaken prior to phase 1, which will entail the Children's story area being closed and a small amount of children's stock being temporarily relocated.
- 3.6 From the end of August 2008 the Ground and First floors will be closed to the public and staff, resulting in the coffee bar, meeting rooms and auditorium being unavailable however, the Library will remain open operating a full service from floors 2 and 3.
- 3.7 Phase 1 will convert the current storage areas on the ground floor into offices and staff work space. Work to the first floor will consist of creating open public floor space and meeting rooms from staff areas, the coffee bar will be relocated to the second floor, the auditorium will be converted into a more flexible meeting room space with training kitchen facilities and a Community History area and IT suite and will also be provided.
- 3.8 Phase 2 involves the refurbishment of the main entrance and Floors 2 and 3; these areas will be closed to the public and staff from January 2009 until completion of the building work.
- 3.9 The First floor will re-open following handover in mid January and will provide limited access to a number of facilities during phase 2, these will consist of the meeting rooms, public computer facilities, Community History and study space. Access will be via an entrance on the north side of the building directly opposite Grosvenor House.
- 3.10 As only a limited amount of stock will be available on the First floor during this phase, arrangements have been made to provide a "library" from a vacant shop unit in the Shopping Centre. This unit was formerly occupied by FADs, is double fronted and situated just off Town Square, adjacent to Iceland, the Dental Surgery and public toilets. This will provide an excellent opportunity to raise awareness about the library and the refurbishment work and to promote and market the service from a different location to new audiences. A full range of stock, newspapers and audio visual materials will be available from this temporary location with rhyme time, class visits, reader development and other promotional activities still being delivered during this time.
- 3.11 To ensure a service is available in the Shopping Centre from the 2nd January 2009, Halton Lea Library will need to close from 8th December until the 1st January in order to relocate the stock to the unit. This coincides with the quietest period for the service and during this time a returns and enquiry service will still operate from the main library entrance. Loan periods will be adjusted to allow for this period of closure and customers will be able to borrow extra materials

- 3.12 The work to be undertaken during phase 2 will open up the area at the main entrance providing an attractive space with high glass ceiling, which offers bright and welcoming access to the rest of the building. The lobby areas around the lift and staircases will be removed, the coffee bar will be located on the main level, a new children's area will be created as well as a distinct teenage area and public toilet facilities will also be provided on this floor.
- 3.13 Floor 3 will open up the space removing the lobby areas and staff offices to create a more accessible space with clusters of computer facilities and study space as well as a more flexible layout.
- 3.14 Completion of phase 2 works is scheduled for April 2009. A further period of closure, approximately 3 weeks will be required to allow the transfer of stock from the unit in the shopping centre back to the library. It is anticipated that Halton Lea Library will be fully reopened during May 2009.
- 3.15 The project will provide Halton Lea with a fresh, modern and vibrant library with flexible spaces from which a broad range of services and activities can be delivered in conjunction with the community and partners.
- 3.16 A process of extensive community engagement is underway to ensure that the facilities and services offered through the refurbished building meet the needs and aspirations of the community. This work is ongoing but to date information has been gathered from consultation with non-users, through user questionnaires, online surveys, through young volunteers, schools and community groups. Focus Groups with users and non-users are planned for the beginning of July and presentations will be held at each of the Runcorn Area Panels, Neighbourhood Boards and an open evening is also planned for July, which will involve Partners and Stakeholders.
- 3.17 Feedback from the consultations will be collated and brought to a future Policy and Performance Board.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

The Library Service improves individuals quality of life and contributes to achieving a broad range of social issues including education and lifelong

learning, social inclusion and community cohesion and contributes to the agendas of all the Boards

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

The risks have been analysed as part of the required Big Lottery Fund documentation and are contained in the Project's Business Plan and Capital Project Delivery Plan.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
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