

Place Scrutiny Committee

6 October 2016

Library Review

Purpose of Report: Summary Report

The Group met to discuss 'Powys Library Service – options for a sustainable future and achievement of financial targets under medium term financial plan'.

The Group agreed that the following comments be forwarded to Cabinet in response to their deliberations:

- Commend officers for the extensive work undertaken and acknowledge the difficulties encountered
- Strategic direction in relation to hubs and co-location is essential – this cuts across the Authority but each service is working to its own timescales frustrating those services which would benefit from an early move to hubs
- Consideration should be given to further assistance for Community Councils, some of which are struggling to understand and deal with the current situation. To ensure community delivery is successful, a proactive approach is needed. Many Community Councils are inflexible and operate in a traditional way. Neighbouring communities do not yet see the need to co-operate with each other.
- Consideration should be given to the high rental charges imposed by County Council establishments – the Council is pricing itself out of some services as colocation at Council premises can be prohibitively expensive
- Income and grant funding opportunities should be pursued to support the service
- The difficulties in recruiting and retaining volunteers is noted. There may be a reluctance for volunteers to assist the Council. Furthermore it is unreasonable to expect that volunteers deal with some of the more demanding clients who might be accessing other services.
- The Library Service should receive financial support for delivering customer support services. There is little recognition of the absorption of these additional duties. Other services are also delivered such as tourist information etc

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Sources/background papers: Notes of a meeting held on 16 September 2016

Group Members: County Councillors G Banks, G G Hopkins, E T Morgan, G Thomas, Chair and Vice