

**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL**

**County Council  
19<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

**REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Graham Brown, Portfolio Holder for  
Commissioning and Procurement**

**SUBJECT: Question from County Councillor Graham Jones**

**Could I please have the figures incurred for operating the mobile library service (including the operation of vehicles and staff costs) for this calendar year i.e. from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016 to the present day? Could I also have comparative costs for the calendar years 2014 and 2015?**

From April 2015, the mobile library fleet serving the county reduced from 4 vehicles to 2, making monthly visits to each stop instead of fortnightly visits. There was a corresponding reduction in staffing from 4 to 2 mobile librarians, as part of the budget efficiency targets for 2015/16.

A total of 374 sites are now visited each month by the 2 vehicles, which includes some housebound people along routes, together with day centres/residential homes, sheltered housing, playgroups and end of school day stops outside primary schools. 438 sites were visited fortnightly with the 4 vehicles in 2014/15, opportunity was taken to rationalise stops when planning the amalgamated routes.

A 3<sup>rd</sup> vehicle was kept as a spare in April 2015, and is used regularly to provide a service whilst the main vehicles are undertaking routine servicing or any breakdowns, to ensure a continuity of service to the customers. One van was replaced in March 2016, as part of Fleet's regular vehicle replacement regime, but utilising external capital grant funding from Museums, Libraries and Archives Division (MALD) of Welsh Government. Lift access is provided to all vehicles, so that disabled people are able to make good use of the facility.

45,860 items were loaned to customers of the mobile library service during 2015/16.

Public support for the mobile library service is high; in the public consultation exercise over the future of the library service, April – July 2016, 88% of respondents felt that it is either very or fairly important to sustain this service going forward. The previous consultation around the reduction in branch library opening hours and mobile library visits also highlighted this:

"The service is really really valuable to the people who use it. There are a lot of people who cannot travel to a library and those who cannot carry heavy books very far. This is a very important service, please keep it"

Also the value of the service to disabled people and those with limited mobility is highlighted:

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Budgetary information:

	Calendar Years		
Mobile Library	2014	2015	2016-date (31/08/16)
Llandrindod	46,003	16,344	3,505
Welshpool	50,991	14,587	3,182
Newtown	51,598	39,747	30,370
Brecon	34,323	33,942	29,056