

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

**County Council
18th October 2018**

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Rachel Powell, Portfolio Holder for Young People and Culture

SUBJECT: Question from Richard Spanswick

Given that Welshpool has an excellent, purpose-built, easily accessible, and well used library at its Brook Street site, would the Council please confirm that it will prioritise the needs of the community above the desire to relocate council office accommodation from Neuadd Maldwyn to the library building at the same time as reducing library stock and amenities, and safeguard this facility for future public use?

Response

I understand and appreciate the concerns raised with regard to any possible change to the excellent service which is provided at both Welshpool Library and Powysland Museum.

Members will appreciate that all councils across the country are currently facing very severe financial restrictions, with Powys no exception – and this situation is going to continue for the foreseeable future. As a council, we have to seek to make the very best and cost effective use of our buildings and our staff, for the benefits of our residents.

We are committed to delivering a sustainable long-term future for library and museum services in Welshpool; we appreciate that the library lends the second highest number of books in the authority, and that the computers are also well used and invaluable to those without their own devices.

The library and museum staff will work very hard to ensure that the co-location is successful; that as many books and artefacts are available as possible, through a carefully planned layout, including digital connectivity for the public. The current services will continue to be delivered, with trained staff on hand to help visitors with choosing from the shelves, borrowing e-books or ordering books from elsewhere in the authority if needed, and to explain about the various exhibits and local culture and heritage of Welshpool.

In other parts of the county, we have found that visitor numbers have gone up, and members of the public enjoy being able to use more than one service in one location, for example in Llandrindod, Llanidloes, Builth and Knighton libraries. We hope that

this co-location will also enable visitors to continue to enjoy an interesting range of stock, exhibitions and activities in a lovely canal side setting.