



Department for Environment and Community Services

To all Parish and Town Councils in South Gloucestershire

Date: 4th October 2016
Your Ref:
Our Ref: T&P Review
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Library Service Review

1. Background

As you are all probably aware, the Environment and Community Services Committee, which met on September 7th agreed to consult on the following preferred option to achieve the Library Service's Council Savings target of £500k. Full details of the report and background are available at www.southglos.gov.uk/librarychanges, in summary the preferred option we will be consulting on is as follows:

- *Staffed opening hours per library based on current usage in tiers of 24, 26 or 35 hours per week (see para 3)*
- *Replacement of the Mobile Library with up to 10 Community Centre Libraries collections run by local communities and supported by local volunteers*
- *Extension of self-service technology to enable access of library buildings outside of staffed hours (the Savings Report highlighted one such scheme, Open+ developed by a company called Bibliotheca)*
- *Maintain Chipping Sodbury Library building with volunteers*

2. Mobile Library and community centre library network

As you will see, the proposal is to replace the mobile library with a network of small mainly book based collections based in community centres. These would help mitigate the impact of the loss of the mobile library especially to the rural areas of South Gloucestershire.

The library service would supply these centres with the following:

- Regular exchange of books – possibly every month depending on need
- Access to the library issue system – this would allow the centres to issue / discharge items, this would be required if we were to support with supplying specific book requests
- Access to the library catalogue – see www.librarieswest.org.uk
- Supply of reservations – the frequency of visits would need to be agreed and it might be that the volunteers collect from their nearest library on a regular basis
- Training of volunteers – this would be around using the system, how to look for books and useful websites for book information

In return for this service the community centre would need to supply:

- Secure display of books with appropriate shelving, we don't have a minimum size stipulated at the moment so this would be subject to discussion with the centre
- Named volunteer for contact with whom the library service would liaise on all service developments and issues
- Access to Wi-Fi to upload data, ideally this should be within the centre but can be off site
- A mobile device – laptop for managing the stock

If the option is accepted the change will be implemented in October 2017. As part of the consultation and planning for this preferred option we would like to meet with any community centre / parish or town council for an open discussion on how we envisage this option working and also to listen to any comments from community centres. We are holding a meeting for interested parties on **Wednesday October 26th, 2pm at Yate Library**. All Town and Parish Councils are welcome to send representatives or if you are aware that your local community centre may be interested please forward the invitation to them. If you are able to attend please confirm your attendance with John Abraham, Operations Manager at john.abraham@southglos.gov.uk or on 01454 865664. If you would prefer to meet outside of this forum please contact us but we feel a meeting with all the groups interested would be more productive

3. Additional funding of staffed library opening hours

The table below shows the proposed changes to the opening hours including the impact of the possible introduction of unstaffed opening hours.

Library	Current staff opening hours	Proposed staffed opening hours			Unstaffed Opening hours	Change in total hours availability	
		Staffed hours	Change from current position	% change		Hrs per week	% change
Bradley Stoke	45.5	35	-10.5	-23%	77	+ 31.5	+ 69%
Cadbury Heath	33.5	24	-9.5	-28%	77	+ 43.5	+ 130%
Chipping Sodbury	20	0	-20	-100%	77	+ 57	+ 285%
Downend Library	41.5	26	-15.5	-37%	77	+ 35.5	+ 86%
Emersons Green	38	26	-12	-32%	77	+ 39	+ 103%
Filton Library	41.5	26	-15.5	-37%	77	+ 35.5	+ 86%
Hanham	41.5	26	-15.5	-37%	77	+ 35.5	+ 86%
Kingswood	41.5	26	-15.5	-37%	77	+ 35.5	+ 86%
Patchway	33.5	24	-9.5	-28%	77	+ 43.5	+ 130%
Staple Hill	34	26	-8	-24%	77	+ 43	+ 126%
Thornbury	44	35	-9	-20%	77	+ 33	+ 75%
Winterbourne	34	24	-10	-29%	77	+ 43	+ 126%
Yate	49.5	35	-14.5	-29%	77	+ 27.5	+ 56%
Grand Total	498	333	-165	-33%	1,001	503	+101%

As part of the consultation some of our Parish and Town councils expressed an interest in direct funding to extend the staffed hours the library would be open. As part of the review we have reviewed the proposed structure of the service and the average cost of opening a library will be **on average** £2,500 per hour per annum. So should a Parish Council wish to fund an additional 7 hours per day this would be around £17,500. The amount will vary according to the size of the library. This option is open to any organisation including parish or town councils and is a method of mitigating impact of reduced staffing hours that has been used in some other local authorities. If you would like to discuss this option please contact John Abraham, Operations Manager at john.abraham@southglos.gov.uk or on 01454 865664 by the end of October and we can meet with you to discuss in detail this option.

4. Unstaffed opening hours

As part of the consultation we want to engage with the community on the option of opening libraries without staff as a way of extending access and mitigating the reduction in opening hours. If you would like a member of the library management team to attend a public meeting to discuss this option, again please contact John Abraham.

Thanks you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Martin Burton
Community Cultural Services Manager