

## Libraries Partnership Board Meeting

20<sup>th</sup> March 2018, 2.30-4.30pm

Woolston Neighbourhood Hub

### MEETING NOTES

#### In attendance:

##### Members

Lynton Green – WBC – Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services  
Eleanor Blackburn – WBC – Head of Strategic Partnerships & Commissioning  
Steve Cullen – Third Sector Hub – Chair and Warrington Citizens Advice – Chief Executive  
Cheryl Siddall – LiveWire/Culture Warrington – People, Performance & Resources Director  
Amanda Juggins – WBC – Business Intelligence Manager  
Gary Borrows – Save Warrington’s Libraries  
Jane Forshaw – Friends of Penketh Library  
Matt Parker – LiveWire – Operational Director (interim)

##### Board Support

Alison Harbidge – WBC – Commissioning & Contracts Officer (minutes)  
Damian Richards-Clarke – WBC – Communications

##### Guests

ClIr Sharon Harris – WBC  
ClIr Joan Grime – Friends of Culcheth Library  
Susan Morris – LiveWire  
Peter Lewenz – SWISH  
Jane Borrows – SWISH  
Jim Billington  
Janet Evans  
Aran Dhillon – Warrington Guardian

##### Apologies

Emma Hutchinson – LiveWire/Culture Warrington – Chief Executive  
Wendy Molyneux – LiveWire – Strategic Library Manager  
ClIr Tony Higgins – WBC

Steven Broomhead – WBC – Chief Executive

		Action
1.	<b>Welcome &amp; Apologies</b> LG opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present – introductions were made by each member of the board.	
2.	<b>Minutes of Last Meeting &amp; Matters Arising</b> <u>Matters Arising</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><u>Budget</u> GB commented that there appeared to be some uncertainty</li></ul>	



	<p>reconfiguration works, LG advised that the £1m was intended to cover all works but there was also the potential to bring in additional external funding for some projects. EB commented that works would have to be prioritised and choices would have to be made in terms of what were critical areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In response to a question about how the funding would be allocated, particularly in view of the fact that some libraries do not have friends groups to champion their cause, LG replied that there was a risk that some plans were further advanced than others due to the work underway via the friends groups and that it was important to establish friends groups for all libraries to establish what options would be available for all.</li> <li>GB asked if the capital sum allocated of £1m included the £150,000 for the book fund, and also if any indicative costs were available for the proposed works at Stockton Heath. EB confirmed the book fund was in addition to the £1m redevelopment monies, and that costs were not yet available for the proposals for Stockton Heath.</li> <li>Following a question from the floor seeking reassurance about the affect reconfiguring the library would have on the space available for book stock at Stockton Heath, CS advised that the community librarians and the stock team were working with the designers to ensure book stock levels were retained, and different ways of accommodating books were being explored to make the space more flexible for community use. MP advised that the design shown retained the same level of book shelf space.</li> <li>A discussion took place on the role of friends groups as opposed to library staff, and following a question as to whether Stockton Heath library had a permanent member of staff who was liaising with the friends group on a regular basis and whether this could arrangement could be established for Culcheth, CS advised she will progress with WM.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: CS to discuss issue allocated member of staff at Culcheth to liaise with the friends group with WM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GB commented that that there were a number of cross cutting issues across all libraries, in particularly the dementia friendly aspect, and it would be good to have that built into every single scheme. Other issues were costs to bring buildings back to a satisfactory state of repair, and also a need to consider what ICT facilities should be made available in libraries.</li> </ul> <p><u>Culcheth</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MP delivered a presentation on proposals for Culcheth library and commented a number of range of options had been explored</li> </ul>	<p>CS</p>
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	<p>initially before the report went to Warrington BC Executive, a number of which had been rejected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposals that went to Exec Board were : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1: Mixed economy proposal – Childcare</li> <li>- Option 2: Re-model existing library</li> <li>- Option 3: Do nothing</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Option 1 and 3 had been discounted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key themes from option 2 were : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Main library space retained</li> <li>○ New multi-use community area</li> <li>○ New office spaces for rental</li> <li>○ Access route to toilets / back door</li> <li>○ Opportunities to work with Friends of Culcheth Library to enhance garden area</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Following comments from the audience on the major issue with condition of the library building at Culcheth and ongoing maintenance problems, EB replied that it had been noted that Culcheth, Penketh and Burtonwood required the most maintenance.</li> <li>• Thanks were given to Jim Billington for obtaining £10,000 of lottery funding towards the wellbeing area in the library.</li> <li>• Following a question on how the decisions were reached on how different parts of the library would be used differently and how the much should be reallocated to office space, MP advised that a decision is reached on the requirement to generate income through office rental.</li> <li>• Following discussions above about decisions on reconfiguration of library space within Culcheth, it was <b>AGREED</b> to reconvene the working group to discuss options.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: MP to liaise with relevant people to ensure input into plans from members of the Culcheth Working Group.</b></p> <p><u>Birchwood</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EB gave a presentation based on the proposal to Warrington BC Executive Board which was to explore a business case for relocating the library at Birchwood to within the existing facility of the leisure/tennis centre to create a new 'hub' facility.</li> <li>• EB outlined that partner and stakeholder engagement was a key element of these proposals, including Birchwood High School. Other key partners were users, e.g. leisure and tennis centre members. There is not currently a working group at Birchwood to develop the approach, and it was proposed to set up a sub group within this group to work up the proposal in more detail.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: right;"><b>MP</b></p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MP explained the proposals were in the early stages, and that funding opportunities were currently being explored. The next stage was to engage with stakeholders and hold consultations with existing users of all facilities at Birchwood. The High School had indicated that they could make use of the space that would be vacated by the library to deliver their curriculum activities if it relocated to within the leisure/tennis centre.</li> <li>• Following a question from the audience referring to the limited budget for all the proposal being presented for various libraries, and whether this would take up a large percentage, MP responded that revenue savings would be achieved by savings in utilities and staffing costs if the library and leisure services were to co-locate, but that a detailed business case was required.</li> <li>• A question was raised on whether the current book levels would be maintained in the library were to relocate as there was a general consensus that library stock is reduced when it located in a hub environment. CS responded that the current set up at Birchwood was established in synergy with the school and there was a need to look at utilisation of stock.</li> <li>• A member of the audience asked what the next steps were after the business cases had been finalised, and EB responded that Birchwood would need a separate working group and people would be contacted to ask if they would be interested in getting involved. It had been noted that engagement with local people in the vicinity had historically been an issue. LG advised that the next steps were to get costings for the proposed plan and to finalise the business cases and to agree the timeline for decisions.</li> <li>• Clarification on timescales was raised as Lymm library had lost a commercial opportunity and felt a number of ideas had been taken up by others due to the length of time the plans were taking to progress. LG advised that the Warrington BC Executive Board had approved delegated powers to himself, and he would be discussing with the appropriate member of the Executive Board with a view to taking forward proposals as soon as possible. EB advised that proposals for Lymm would be presented to the next meeting. <b>Action: EB to present proposals for Lymm library at next meeting</b></li> </ul>	EB
4.	<p><b>Building Maintenance Progress</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EB briefed that in-depth surveys have been commissioned by the Council's building management team, with particular emphasis on windows, roof conditions, asbestos surveys etc. Other areas for review were heating and ICT requirements.</li> <li>• Work was currently being undertaken and figures were not yet available for individual library buildings.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When figures were available, there is a requirement to look at each proposal and how this affects the proposed reconfiguration works outline in the business plans.</li> <li>No timelines were currently available but an update would be presented to the next meeting. <b>Action: EB to update on building maintenance at next meeting</b></li> <li>GB enquired about 'green' buildings and the possibility of installing solar panels on library buildings, and asked could the surveys being undertaken look at strengthening roofs to allow them to support solar panels.</li> </ul>	EB
5.	<p><b>Book Fund</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CS outlined the proposed spending plan for the additional £150,000 investment into the book fund over a 2-year period from 2018-2020 which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.</li> <li>A discussion took place on the proposal to include provision of a full set of Oxford Reading Tree programme books at all libraries and how this could be construed as promoting a commercial product, and that children should be encouraged to read a wider range of material.</li> <li>LG advised that this was an outline proposal at this stage and needed to be linked back to the friends groups in terms of agreeing detailed proposals going forward.</li> <li>GB commented that this was an important topic and proposed a process be established to feedback views of friends groups and users into library management team. This proposal was <b>AGREED</b> by the Chair. <b>Action: CS to consider options for user and friend's group feedback.</b></li> </ul>	CS
6.	<p><b>Friends of Libraries Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SC updated the meeting on the networking meeting arranged by WM from LiveWire which was held on 27 February.</li> <li>The meeting was well received and had been attended by six representatives of 'friends' groups, and it had given them the opportunity to meet operational managers and community libraries from LiveWire.</li> <li>The invitation for representatives to attend the Libraries Partnership Board had been discussed, and how Warrington Voluntary Action could support the friends groups.</li> <li>It had been agreed that there should be geographical spread of members who sit on the board, and that the term of membership should be set for a fixed term before coming up for review.</li> <li>It was agreed that GB and JF continue to be the representatives on the Partnership Board in the interim period.</li> <li>It had been noted that some of the libraries do not currently have friends groups.</li> <li>An expression of interest had been from Stockton Heath to be a member of the Partnership Board, and it was expected one would be forthcoming from Culcheth also.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A further meeting was being planned to include a wider group to firm up proposals and get nominations.</li> <li>• It was agreed that if nominations for membership of the Partnership Board were oversubscribed, a ballot would take place, but general feedback was that people were relaxed about the process</li> <li>• SC commented that it would be useful if friends groups could become constituted as this would allow them to access external funding, but that this was not essential.</li> <li>• It was noted that WM is arranging a general networking meeting for Friends of Libraries groups on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018, 6.30-8.30pm at Woolston Neighbourhood Hub.</li> <li>• It was felt a separate meeting to establish partnership board representation was required.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: SC/GD'A to arrange date for next meeting and GD'A to circulate dates</b></p>	SC/GD'A
7.	<p><b>Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CS advised that since the neighbourhood hub opened on 12 February there had been 1,084 book issues to 19 March.</li> <li>• There were concerns that the new library offer in Great Sankey could impact on Penketh library, and comparisons were made to issues at Penketh for the same period last year compared to the current year and they were comparable. This would continue to be monitored.</li> <li>• Following a comment from the audience about the potential impact on Westbrook library as its location was closer to Great Sankey, CS agreed to look at comparable figures for Westbrook and report back to the next meeting.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: CS to monitor figures for Westbrook library</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footfall through the neighbourhood hub was reported at 26,000 from opening to Monday 19 March. The busiest period was currently from 2.30pm, and LiveWire were currently looking to engage with more groups to increase attendance during quieter periods.</li> <li>• It was noted that footfall was likely to increase further when phase 2 of the development was completed, i.e. pool reopening and health facilities operational.</li> </ul>	CS
8.	<p><b>Contributions from Public Gallery</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LG asked were there any further questions/comments from the public gallery in addition to those raised throughout the meeting.</li> <li>• Members commented that the meeting today had been helpful and very informative.</li> <li>• It was commented that concerns about the book spend need addressing and also the general stock levels, but that it was good to have some engagement and sharing of ideas.</li> </ul>	
9.	<p><b>Date of Next Meetings:</b> 16<sup>th</sup> May 2018 – 2.30pm-4.30pm - Culcheth Library</p>	

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