

Transforming Warrington's Public Libraries

Our Strategy for 2019-2022

Survey Results Report

Introduction

We asked to hear your views on our Draft Library Strategy for 2019 - 2022: its mission statement and vision, aims, objectives and achievements, as well as how we should monitor its progress.

We received a wide range of feedback from library users, stakeholders and staff.

The following demonstrates some of the work we have done to respond to some of this feedback. We have split this into clear sections and follows the format of You Said, We Did.

- Respondents' Profile
- Mission Statement
- Strategic Aims
- Objectives and project achievements
- Key Performance Indicators
- You Asked We Answered
- Comments
- Next steps
- Getting involved

Where open comments were received we have created word clouds. (*A word cloud is an image composed of words used in a particular text or subject, in which the size of each word indicates its frequency or importance*).

Respondents' Profile

A high proportion of respondents said they had visited a Warrington Library in the last 12 months, some stating they had visited more than one library. Adding to this some said they also held a membership with LiveWire.

Mission statement

We asked - To what extent you agreed or disagreed with the mission statement.

"Warrington libraries will make a meaningful, visible and measurable difference to the lives of people in Warrington; a place of enjoyment, reflection, calm, inclusion, safety, insight, inspiration, creativity and learning."

You Said – The majority of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the mission statement and further suggestions were put forward.

Have your say - Some of the key themes that emerged from the feedback about the mission statement can be viewed in the word cloud below.



Snapshot of comments:

Inclusion for all and Local Community

- *It should reflect the communities' needs.....we all do not live in stable little villages but have a wider diverse population*
- *I would like to have seen a comment about 'a sense of community and belonging'*
- *My husband is disabled and needs the service the library provides, i.e. audio books and large print books*
- *Providing they are accessible to the local community and schools*
- *It is important that poorer areas of the borough are better served as these are areas where the most improvement can be made.*
- *By inclusion, I hope that this includes physical access and facilities, together with staff who are aware of how to offer reasonable adjustments.*

Positive

- *This statement is what you would expect anyway.*
- *Continue on! We love our libraries.*
- *Sounds like a good mission.*

Mention books and reading

- *I'd like to see something about reading in there.*
- *Mention free access to information and books, which are still relevant.*
- *Maybe it should mention a love of reading and literature.*

Accessible

- *Could it include enablement and access to services?*

Too long

- *The statement is very long, with too many specific points.*
- *A bit long and wordy!*
- *At first glance it read really well but on second reading I think it's a bit woolly.*

What we are doing - We know we deliberately chose an ambitious and wide ranging mission statement. Our statement drew directly on the feedback we received from library users, stakeholders and staff about the difference libraries makes to their lives and the lives of our residents.

In doing so we have revised the mission statement to reflect the recent comments received.

It now reads:

"Warrington libraries are valued community spaces that make a positive difference to the lives of the people that use them. They are welcoming spaces for all and offer the opportunity for reading, learning, enjoyment, reflection, calm, safety, creativity, insight and inspiration."

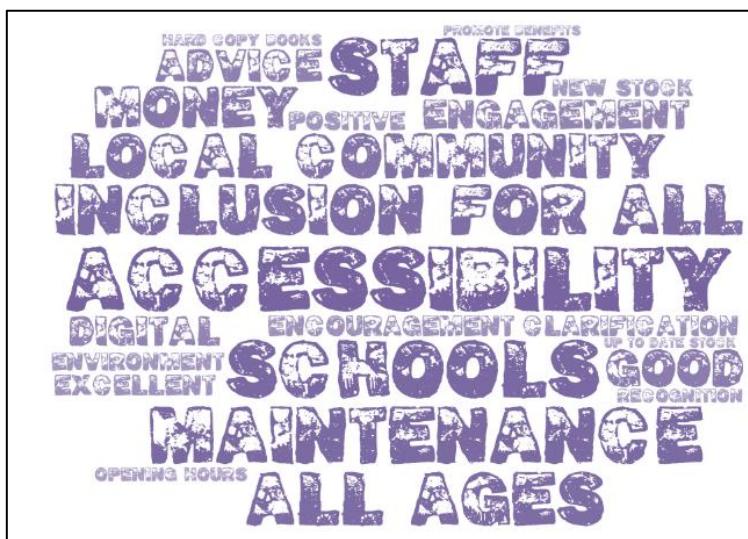
Strategic Aims

We asked - To what extent you agreed or disagreed with the 6 Strategic Aims.

You Said – Respondents supported the Strategic Aims as they were, and few comments provided suggested amendments to improve clarity or explain points in more detail.

Have your say - Some excellent comments were submitted, some generic and others targeted to a specific Strategic Aim.

Key themes that emerged from the comments across all 6 Strategic Aims can be viewed in the word cloud below.



Snapshot of comments:

Accessibility

- Ensure that accessibility in terms of opening hours.
- Hopefully this will include disabled access.
- Need perhaps to ensure that accessibility in terms of opening hours and local libraries for local communities is reflected.

Local Community

- All spaces should be community orientated not just books and lending.
- I think that an important aim which encompasses all of the above is to make the public aware of what libraries do and the part that they can play in the community's life.

Inclusion for All

- So many reasons to keep libraries and with mental health being such a relevant issue, the libraries can make such a difference to some people and are an important part of a community for all ages

Schools

- *Communication between the libraries and the school is not as good as it used to be because of government cuts and closing local libraries*
- *Look to maximise relationships with partners, i.e. local schools to engage with children.*
- *I have seen groups of very young children in Warrington Library but never school children - why not?*

Maintenance

- *Need a thorough programme of upgrades and maintenance*
- *Up to date displays*
- *We need a thorough programme of upgrades and maintenance to bring these aims to fruition.*
- *Apart from the hubs, libraries need updating with appearance, e.g. painting, furniture and new technology!*

All Ages

- *Libraries are for all ages*
- *Wording should include all ages not just younger people*
- *Wonderful for all age groups. Books are vital for children. The library helps this from a very young age. For not so young it provides continued learning and enjoyment through books.*

What we are doing – We reflected on which aims were supported and having reviewed all the comments received, we have now tweaked some of the aims to read as follows:

Strategic Aim	Before	After
SA1	Encourage enjoyment of learning, literature, creativity, culture, imagination and play.	Encourage and promote enjoyment of reading, learning, creativity, culture, imagination and play.
SA2	Provide children and young people with an engaging and relevant offer to support 'the best start in life'	Provide children and young people with an engaging and relevant offer to help them fulfil their full potential
SA3	Embrace technology and digital formats, supporting greater inclusivity in accessing new media.	Embrace technology and digital formats, supporting greater inclusivity in accessing new media.
SA4	Support positive health and wellbeing.	Support positive physical and mental wellbeing.
SA5	Enable access to up-to-date, accurate and trusted sources of information.	Enable access to up-to-date, accurate and trusted sources of information.
SA6	Provide attractive, welcoming and inclusive community spaces – a safe and social space for all	Provide attractive, welcoming and inclusive community spaces – a safe and social space for all

What will success look like? Objectives and project achievements

We asked - To what extent you agreed or disagreed with the list of objectives or project achievements?

You Said – The majority of respondents supported all the aims or project achievements. These are as follows:

- Completed a programme of investment in library buildings and book stock by 2020.
- Where possible, realised opportunities for income and / or savings to increase sustainability of the library service.
- A vision and programme of activities for each library – personalised to reflect the local community and specialisms of staff.
- An ongoing engagement process to monitor the difference libraries makes to people's lives and to generate ideas and opportunities for activities and events.
- Secure relationship with partners, focused on adding value to the library offer.
- Reviewed accessibility to libraries, and where appropriate made improvements. This might also include consideration of opening times or online information about library facilities.

Have your say - Comments were also submitted to explore if we had missed anything from the objectives or project achievements. Again some comments were specifically about individual objectives, others wide ranging.

Key themes that emerged from the comments overall.



Key words from the word cloud:

- Local community
- Opening times
- Digital
- Events and activities
- Publicity
- Build relationships
- Engagement

What we are doing - The delivery of this Strategy will be overseen by the Warrington Libraries Partnership Board.

Performance Indicators

We asked - If you had any comments about the key performance indicators, as follows:

- Book loans
- E-book issues
- Library visits
- Attendance at events and activities
- Library memberships
- People network PC usage

You Said

A wide range of comments supported the above key performance indicators. Some other suggestions were also put forward, of which were very similar to the above.

Have your say

Comments have been grouped together into key themes and these themes are displayed in the word cloud below.



Key words from the word cloud;

- Activities/events
- Marketing
- Benchmarking
- Community
- Customer service
- Digital
- Financial
- Human resources
- Marketing

Snapshot of comments:

- *The number of events and activities held should also be a KPI*
- *Count of community visits (schools or nursery) and recurring visits count*
- *Numbers of books overdue*
- *There needs to be an analysis of which e-book formats are available since this will influence take up of the service.*
- *Glad "library visits" is included as nowadays many people come to library and read in there - do not take books out. Likewise, perhaps "library website hits" should be an indicator - don't know if doing research online on library resources qualifies as an e-book issue or not?*

KPIs in the strategy

- Book loans
- E-book issues
- Library visits
- Attendance at events and activities
- Library memberships
- People network PC usage

What we are doing - The Warrington Libraries Partnership Board will continue to oversee the delivery of the strategy as set out. Warrington Borough Council also monitor specific performance indicators as part of the contract with LiveWire on a quarterly basis.

You Asked We Answered

In this section we have put together a table with a selection of questions/ comments that reflect a number of themes that came through the comments section within the survey results. In doing this we are endeavouring to give some replies to reflect the work that libraries are already undertaking but also to reflect what the strategy is aiming to achieve going forward. As the new strategy is a living document it is always the aim to refresh the strategy in an ever changing environment.

Question no.	Comments from the survey	LiveWire's response
7/25	My husband is disabled and needs the service the library provides, i.e. audio books and large print books	<p>LiveWire offers a Home Library Service and a Read to Me Service for those who are unable to visit a library in person.</p> <p>In addition to widening our core offer these initiatives provide volunteering opportunities to address inequalities and challenge barriers to participation by harmoniously bringing people and places together. For details please contact libraryconnector@livewirewarrington.org</p>
7/32	It should reflect the communities' needs.....we all do not live in stable little villages but have a wider diverse population.	<p>Using customer insight and engaging with our users and non-users we deliver affordable and accessible events and activities to engage with a range of targeted audiences.</p> <p>This includes working in partnership to establish literacy and reading programmes tailored to the specific interest and needs of communities, e.g. Rugby Reading Champions, Reading Ahead, Read to Relax and Fit, Fed and Read.</p>

		<p>As a service we are always looking at new ways to develop relationships and are open to ideas from our customers that will support a diverse community the library is located in.</p>
7/65	By inclusion, I hope that this includes physical access and facilities, together with staff who are aware of how to offer reasonable adjustments.	<p>LiveWire is committed to equality and provide safe, trusted, non-judgmental spaces.</p> <p>Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure, as far as practicable, those who visit our sites are able to access our facilities include reading materials which includes a range of traditional and online resources tailored to meet the diverse needs of our customers.</p> <p>As part of the libraries £1m infrastructure fund for library buildings we are looking at practicable accessible improvements which range from physical access to dementia friendly buildings.</p>
9/34	Support technology and digital as an extra to real books - not an alternative!	<p>We have invested £150,000 extra funding into our books, and are working hard to make savings elsewhere that can be re-invested back into our book fund.</p> <p>Our physical resources are complemented by access to online reference and information resources and reading materials including Britannica Online, Credo, e-books and Theory Test Pro.</p> <p>Our People's Network enables free pc and internet access.</p> <p>Augmented reality books introduce a new type of reading experience and events such as Code Clubs support children to develop their digital skills.</p> <p>We also seek the expertise of partners to deliver activities such as Friends Against Scams to ensure people stay safe online.</p>

9/46	<p>Look to maximise relationships with partners, i.e. local schools to engage with children.</p>	<p>We welcome children from the very earliest months of life, helping parents and carers to support them as they grow by providing a range of activities and initiatives.</p> <p>In addition to working closely with nurseries, primary and secondary schools and other education providers, LiveWire is part of ASCEL (the Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians).</p> <p>This involves managers in public and schools library services working together to ensure every child and young person visiting a public library is inspired to read for pleasure.</p> <p>LiveWire will welcome any partnerships that would support programmes of work which encourages children to access the library from an early age.</p>
9/48	<p>To achieve these aims to a high standard properly qualified and knowledgeable staff are needed at each library.</p>	<p>LiveWire employ a team of fully qualified librarians, including at senior manager level, who work with a much wider team of customer service staff dedicated to libraries. A new comprehensive training programme for new and existing staff covering all aspects of library provision has been developed</p> <p>This is being rolled out across the library service starting in June 2019 to ensure all staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge to consistently provide a positive customer experience.</p> <p>On an ongoing basis any opportunities to increase the knowledge and experience of our staff will be explored especially in light of any new technologies.</p>

11/15	<p>Building relationships with writers and writers' organisations. This is a missing link, but important and often under-estimated</p>	<p>We are part of Time to Read, a consortium of public libraries who work together to advocate the Universal Reading Offer across North West libraries.</p> <p>The Time to Read network meets regularly to share ideas and good practice. Guest speakers - including publishers, reading agencies and the BBC - are invited to attend meetings.</p> <p>This strong collaboration enables LiveWire's libraries to commission authors and poets to develop an adult reading audience.</p> <p>We also facilitate spaces to support cultural activities which enable local poets and writing groups to cultivate and nurture their creative talent.</p>
12/35	<p>Promote the Summer Reading Challenge to schools.</p>	<p>Each year, LiveWire's Community Librarian Team contact primary schools across the whole of the borough to inform them of the Summer Reading Challenge and promote the 'theme' for the year.</p> <p>68 out of Warrington's 72 primary schools took part in the SRC in 2018.</p> <p>Every school is sent a link to the SRC website and on request are provided with invitations to enable each child to join the scheme.</p> <p>There is also an option for professional librarians and Senior Library Assistants to deliver a presentation at school assemblies to promote and encourage participation.</p>

12/45	<p>Opening hours should be considered when assessing book loans, library visits, etc. I find it easier to visit Penketh or Westbrook but their opening hours are more restricted than Orford Hub.</p>	<p>One of the Strategic Aims of our strategy is to provide attractive, welcoming and inclusive community spaces.</p> <p>To ensure we meet this aim we will engage with users and stakeholders to review opening times, considering those members of the community who currently struggle to access libraries during existing core hours.</p> <p>We are starting with Warrington Central Library and are currently consulting on a proposal to open the library on Saturday afternoons and Sundays.</p>
11/19	<p>I'd like to see something about increasing and protecting the book budget and the use of professional staff.</p>	<p>LiveWire's Community Librarian Team each have over 20 years' experience in a professional capacity; including selecting stock and planning, delivering and evaluating bespoke projects and sustaining partnerships.</p>
7/33	<p>To achieve all of the above the buildings need to be improved/ renovated/refurbished, as well as the obvious services provided.</p>	<p>Part of the work of the Libraries Partnership board is to implement a programme of modernisation through the development of individual library business cases and the £1m infrastructure fund.</p>
11/37	<p>Programme of investment should be public and consulted upon</p>	<p>The individual library business cases are being developed by members of the community and friends groups. These cases propose investment plans which are shared publically through the council's website and are standard agenda items for discussion at the Libraries Partnership Board meetings.</p>

What we are doing

Next steps

The delivery of this Strategy will be overseen by the Warrington Libraries Partnership Board.

You can view the revised 'Transforming Warrington's Public Libraries Our Strategy for 2019-2022' here [Library Partnership Board webpage](#)

We would like to take this opportunity to thank those who provided feedback.