"Let's Get Barking and Dagenham Reading"

A Library Strategy for Barking and Dagenham

2013 – 2016

CONSULTATION VERSION FOR CABINET

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Contents

Foreword 1

Barking and Dagenham libraries have played a key role over many years in helping to improve the quality of life of local people and supporting them to reach their full potential.

All councils have a duty to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient service', which means that people who live, work or study in Barking and Dagenham should have access free of charge to borrow or refer to books and other printed material. However, our libraries do much, much more than this.

We think that our libraries are at the heart of our community. Our libraries help people get on line and do research on the internet. We support people to look for jobs and help them find out about other services that the council and its partners provide. Also children and adults use our libraries as safe and well equipped places for quiet study and to learn new skills. We also run a wide range of events and activities for families and people of all ages which support community cohesion.

Some of our libraries are truly exceptional: The Barking Learning Centre is an award winning facility in the heart of Barking and is the 16th busiest library in the country[1]. The Dagenham library on the Heathway is another modern library which opened in October 2010 and is attracting over 35,000 visitors a month.

We want to build on the good work that libraries are already doing by developing a service that better meets the needs of all of our residents and supports the delivery of the vision set out in the Community Strategy to "encourage growth and unlock the potential of Barking and Dagenham and its residents", and which has five priorities:

1. Ensure every child is valued so that they can succeed
2. Reduce crime and the fear of crime
3. Improve health and wellbeing through all stages of life
4. Creating thriving communities by maintaining and investing in high quality homes
5. Maximise growth opportunities and increase the income of borough residents

Above all else, we want to get more reading and improving their skills so that they can better reach their potential and lead more fulfilled lives.

This strategy sets out how we plan to achieve this.

Councillor Liam Smith
Leader of the Council
Barking and Dagenham Council

Introduction 2

This strategy has been prepared because we want to develop a library service that is more efficient and effective and better meets the current and emerging needs of our residents.

Over the last couple of years our main focus has been on "getting the house in order" and along with all other council services we have had to find significant savings to bridge the funding gap now facing local government.

We have restructured the libraries staffing arrangements and reviewed and amended library opening hours. Councillors have also had to take the difficult decision to close libraries. They are now looking at alternative delivery methods for other libraries, to maintain the service across the whole community. This will minimise the impact of budget reductions on users.

We are now looking to the future. The strategy aims to increase the use of libraries by residents, making them aware of the services on offer, increase partnerships and develop the joy and benefit of reading amongst local residents.

The strategy has been developed after consultation with the public and staff in Barking and Dagenham. It recommends areas to focus on based on what should be the key priorities for the next few years to support the provision of a high-quality, modern, cost-effective and responsive library service for the residents of the borough.

Dagenham Library

Outcomes 3

The purpose of the Library Strategy is to provide a shared vision and a framework for the delivery and promotion of Library Services over the next 3 years.

The key services outcomes from the delivery of this strategy in 2016 (what Library Services will directly achieve) will be:

- ✓ 23% of residents will be regular users of libraries (up by 8%)
- ✓ Visits increase by 10% to 1.4m
- ✓ A core offer is presented at all libraries in a clear and consistent way (books, internet access, study space and information)
- ✓ An effective marketing plan will have been implemented so that more residents know about and are using the library service
- ✓ A better range of new online services will be available
- ✓ More community involvement, more events, more fun

- ✓ An effective reading partnership will have been established that encourages different agencies across the Borough to work together to achieve more than they would working on their own
- ✓ An annual festival will be presented featuring internationally renowned and more local authors, which will showcase the work of our libraries and encourage people of all ages to take up reading and creative writing
- ✓ Stock will better reflect the public's interest and needs

In collaboration with partners and other providers of cultural services, Library Services will achieve:

- ✓ A place where local people come together to make it a better place
- ✓ Improve the effectiveness of the Home Library Service so that more residents who find it difficult to get out and about are able to socialise and visit our libraries
- ✓ Develop Valence Library as a thriving centre for older people
- ✓ Provide a place during school holidays where there are more things for children and young people to do

These outcomes link directly to the priorities set out in the Community Strategy and Council's Corporate Plan:
- Ensure every child is valued so that they can succeed;
- Reduce crime and the fear of crime;
- Improve the health and wellbeing through all stages of life;
- Maximise growth opportunities and increase the household income of Borough residents.

Why libraries are important

Libraries are a highly visible symbol of community service provision, much valued by residents.

They contribute to a long list of strategic priorities, such as economic development, the skills agenda, health and wellbeing. The library service is also ideally suited to work in partnership with others to deliver these priorities.

Libraries are extremely valuable assets, not only as community hubs and access points, but also as the providers of information, materials, digital services and a highly skilled workforce.

Libraries are places where everyone can mix freely and come together; they offer a safe and welcoming community space.

They hold enormous stocks of material with a wide range of books, DVDs, CDs and public internet access.

As well as lending books, they offer a wide range of services, including operating as community centres for formal and informal learning for all ages.

Service user in Barking Learning Centre

Traditionally libraries have always been places that people go to for information, to socialise and to learn. They have always had an ability to engage with the community, but they are also community hubs because they are well placed to meet the constantly changing requirements, goals, and challenges of their community.

1. Libraries provide a meeting point, where the community are welcomed, entertained and engaged in a safe environment.

2. They bring people from all walks of life together under one roof.

3. They provide events, training and opportunities for the community to take part in formal and informal learning.

4. They are often at the heart of local communities, whether within the local shops or alongside a range of other local services.

5. They are safe venues, with the majority of the facilities and services free to use or at a very low cost.

6. They are warm, welcoming and open for all, providing a place to browse at leisure.

7. They are friendly places where information requirements are met in a helpful and accessible manner.

8. They offer opportunities for informal learning and may be the first steps towards signing up to more formal learning.

9. They provide study spaces, helpful staff and resources for students.

10. They provide materials for different age ranges, tastes and abilities.

11. They have a wide-ranging and interesting stock with access to an ever increasing variety of materials.

12. Increasingly libraries share venues with other community facilities, for example one stop shops, doctors' surgeries and children's centres. Allowing residents to participate with library services while accessing other services.

Robert Jeyes Library

Storytime

Links to other strategies and plans 5

There are a number of key national, regional and local strategies and policies that have both influenced and had an impact on the development of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham's Libraries Strategy, these are identified as follows:

National Policy and Strategy Documents	Regional Policies, Strategies and Plans	Local Policies, Strategies and Plans
Public Libraries & Museums Act 1964	London Libraries Consortium Strategy 2009 – 2012	Barking and Dagenham's Community Strategy, 2013 – 16
Achieving great art for everyone – Arts Council 2011-2021	Cultural Metropolis; The Mayor's Cultural Strategy (2010)	Barking and Dagenham's Corporate Plan 2013/14
Every child matters; change for children 2004		A Call for Change, A Plan for Action: Children and Young People's Plan 2011 – 2016 (Barking and Dagenham Partnership)
Building a society for all ages 2009		Helping You Live the Life You Want: Older People's Strategy 2010 - 2013 (London Borough of Barking and Dagenham)
Culture, Knowledge and Understanding; great museums and libraries for everyone – a framework for future cooperation, Arts Council 2011-2015		Barking and Dagenham Heritage strategy 2013 – 16
Community Libraries, Learning from experience – Arts Council, 2013		Barking and Dagenham Arts strategy 2013 – 16
Performance in public services: public libraries – CIPFA, 2012		Health and Wellbeing strategy 2012 – 15
		Economic Regeneration strategy 2013 - 16
		Light touch peer review – MLA 2010
		Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, 2012

Local Context 6

The population of Barking and Dagenham is changing

- The borough is expected to see one of the highest growths in population in the country, with a high proportion of the growth being accounted for by pre-school and school age children.
- The population of the borough has increased by 22,000 between the 2001 and 2011 Census which is a 13.4% increase in the boroughs population.
- There has been almost a 50% growth in 0-4 year olds. This is the highest growth for this age group of any local authority in England and Wales.
- The borough has the highest population percentage of those aged 0 to 19 at 31% in England and Wales.
- The over 60 population accounts for one of the smallest percentages of population in England and Wales.
- There has been a 20% decrease in the 65+ age group in the borough, which is the biggest decrease in London. However, growth in the over 85's will be within the top 10 highest in London by 2021.

Population Projections

- The borough's population is projected to rise to 183,300 in 2010 to 206,600 by 2016 and 224,900 by 20121, the third highest population increase among London Boroughs. (ONS Sub National Projections 2010).

The Ethnic Diversity of the borough's population is also changing

- In 2001 the percentage of the White British/Irish population in the borough was 82.5%: This has dropped to 50.4% in 2011.
- Most other ethnic groups have risen in both number and percentage between 2001 and 2012. This is particular significant for Black: African, Asian and White: Other Groups.

Family fun day

Barking and Dagenham is also among the most deprived boroughs in the country based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation

- The borough is ranked 7th within London out of 33 (where 1st is the most deprived).
- Life expectancy in the borough is two years below that of the London average for men and women, with average life expectancy for men in Barking and Dagenham 77 years and for women 81 years. (ONS 2011)

Overall Barking and Dagenham's population has a low level of skills when compared to other London boroughs

- 13.8% of working age residents in Barking and Dagenham have no qualifications. This is higher than the London average of 9.3%. (Annual population survey Jan - December 2011).
- 27% of the borough's population has a degree level qualification or equivalent, which is much lower than the London average of 45%. (Annual Population Survey Jan-Dec 2011)
- Levels of adult basic skills are very low but are improving.

How our libraries stack up

1.406 million visits to our libraries
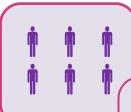
3,531 e-book issues

27,342 active borrowers = 15% of the population

684,957 stock issues

2,575 volunteer hours

581,798 visits to Barking Learning Centre

417,994 visits to Dagenham Library

Top 5 authors books borrowed:

1. James Patterson
2. Nora Roberts
3. Agatha Christie
4. John Grisham
5. Danielle Steel

Source: March 2013, SmartSM data

Residents have access to over

6 million items

through the London Libraries consortium libraries

Barking and Dagenham libraries hold

420,958

items in stock

Equality and Diversity

It is proposed that the core offer for the service will focus on books, information, internet access, and study space.

One of the key principles of the strategy will be to ensure that local libraries are at the heart of the community and reflect its demographics and any particular need. The strategy will need to be flexible enough to respond to changes in the demographic makeup of the Borough and to target resources to better meet current and emerging needs.

The starting point for the Borough's libraries is a strong one in terms of accessibility. The library service is currently provided in locations that are convenient for residents and physically accessible. The book stock is accessible to people of all ages and reading abilities and 'talking' books are provided as well as books in large print and different community languages. The services provided are free or modestly priced and usage levels and customer satisfaction are high:

- Fewer than 1,000 of the Borough's residents live more than 1 mile away or further than 20 minutes travel time by public transport to a library. This takes into account current library provision in the neighbouring boroughs of Havering and Redbridge.

- Usage levels in Barking and Dagenham are the highest out of all of the 16 London council library services in the Borough's benchmarking group and customer satisfaction high.

- It is considered that there is a good range of service provision for children, adults and older people with many local schools buying into the School's Library Service.

- The service provides free access to books, study space, information, events and activities, and social meeting space. A modest charge was introduced for internet use in 2012 but the impact of this was mitigated by maintaining free use for children and young people and older people.

- There is also a Home Library Service which delivers books to the homes of people who cannot travel to the library. A groundbreaking extension to this service is the Home from Home project run in partnership with the Council's transport section. Residents are transported into libraries on a monthly basis to choose books themselves, socialise and access various activities and wider Council services.

The equalities impact assessment for the library service indicates that women, older people and children and young people would be particularly affected by any reduction to the current level of library provision across the Borough.

None of the actions outlined in the strategy are expected to see a reduction in the geographic spread of the service provided and that the core offer will be maintained. The service will continue to improve literacy levels in the Borough through reading schemes and reading groups and by participating in national campaigns and media opportunities. Libraries will continue to contribute to improving educational attainment by providing focussed activities for under 5's and families to encourage use before and after school. This will be supported by a comprehensive school holiday events and activities offer.

However, it is recognised that the quality of service that can be provided by a community managed or volunteer led service is unlikely to be as consistently good as that provided by a wholly Council managed service. Steps will be taken to minimise any adverse impact from different management arrangements including the Council retaining responsibility for sourcing and providing book stock, IT support including self-service terminals, specialist support for activities and events, and support for recruitment and training of volunteers.

Winners of the Fairchild Award 2013

Resourcing the strategy

As well as driving improvements in the library service, the strategy will inform the budget setting process of the Council and its partners. It will also help to provide a compelling strategic rationale to support external funding bids for new projects, programmes and facilities.

However, it must be recognised that these are very difficult times for local government and that Council spending on libraries will reduce during the life of this strategy. This stark reality has directly shaped the development of the strategy improvement action plan.

It also means that some tough decisions are being made about the level of service the Council can afford to provide. Whilst every effort is being made to try to ensure that price doesn't become a barrier to participation, one of the ways the Council is seeking to balance its books is by raising more income from its facilities and services.

A cornerstone of the strategy is the need to improve efficiency and effectiveness to deliver the same quality and range of services for less money, or to deliver more for the same level of expenditure. There will also be a continued focus over the life of the strategy and beyond to secure funding from others sources working in partnership with local, sub-regional and national agencies.

To deliver the programme of activities set out in the strategy, existing funding streams will need to be directed toward the priorities identified. This will be supplemented by external funding sources. Bidding for, and securing external funding, will be a key strand of delivering this strategy if all of the actions are to be achieved.

There also needs to be the consideration of a range of management models including asset transfer of libraries as well as services being delivered by the voluntary, private or trust sectors. These could provide a more effective way of maximising available resources in order to release funds for the continued development of library provision in these financially constrained times.

The purpose of this Strategy

The purpose of the strategy is to provide the highest quality, affordable and accessible library service for all those living, working and studying in Barking and Dagenham in order to improve literacy levels, enrich people's lives and enable them to achieve their full potential.

In order to achieve this, we have identified seven key priorities for improvement, based on an analysis of the local context and consultation undertaken.

1. **Marketing – Tell people about it**
2. **Community engagement and collaboration**
3. **Improving our buildings**
4. **Staff and volunteers**
5. **Stock and reader development**
6. **Technology and innovation**
7. **Financial sustainability**

Barking Learning Centre

The clearest messages to emerge from the public consultation relate to communication. There is generally strong support for library services among the residents of Barking and Dagenham, even among those who do not currently use the services. But there is relatively little awareness of the scope and depth of the range of services on offer, even among those who **do** use them.

It is vital we let people know what a library offers and be realistic and clear, telling residents about this service based on their feedback. Good effective communications can lead to increased use, increased engagement with the service, and increased understanding of the offer and the potential of libraries.

A disciplined and consistent approach to marketing is essential to overcome the ongoing public comments about lack of awareness of services and the library offer. The service needs to invest more time and effort in marketing, especially using social media, to inform residents of the value of using libraries and what is on offer.

Get Barking and Dagenham Reading Festival

Priority One: Marketing – Tell people about it

No.	FOCUS AREAS	SUCCESS MEASURES	When	Who
1.1	Develop a marketing strategy for the service, learning from good practice elsewhere and working in partnership with the marketing department	• Marketing strategy produced • Improved community awareness of library and its products, services and facilities. Increase in active borrowers from 15% to 17%	October 2013 March 2016	Group Manager, Libraries
1.2	Develop a brand identity for Barking & Dagenham Libraries to use in future communications, presentation of messages within libraries etc	• Clear and concise message for the customers o Brand templates produced o Staff trained in how to use the brand templates	October 2013	Group Manager, Libraries Marketing & Communications
1.3	Improve the look and feel of libraries by rolling out the libraries identity	• A consistent brand identity and a comfortable and welcoming environment for all libraries. o Two libraries restyled with libraries identity per year	March 2015	Group Manager, Libraries
1.4	Identify potential new communications methods; Twitter, Facebook	• Better communication to customers – improved take up of service • Produce monthly e-newsletter and send out to library user email group • Improved take up of service – 23% of population to be library users by 2016 – an increase of 4%	April 2014 April 2013 onwards March 2016	Group Manager, Libraries

Priority Two: Community engagement and collaboration

A modern library service needs the support of partners and of the general public in order to thrive and grow. The review of good practice elsewhere demonstrates that the most successful services are those most open to the involvement of others in the planning, and design, as well as the delivery, of services.

A balance will need to be struck between being responsive to the priorities of local partners without surrendering the fundamental values and principles of library service provision. Several authorities have moved to a much more focused approach to working collaboratively with commissioning and more formal agreements between parties supporting a more structured approach.

It would be also beneficial for the library service to adopt a more strategic approach to community engagement across the whole service. A community engagement strategy, with effective marketing to back it up, would enable the service to widen its appeal to meet the needs of a more diverse section of Barking and Dagenham residents.

Iroko Showcase event Valence Library

Priority Two: Community engagement and collaboration

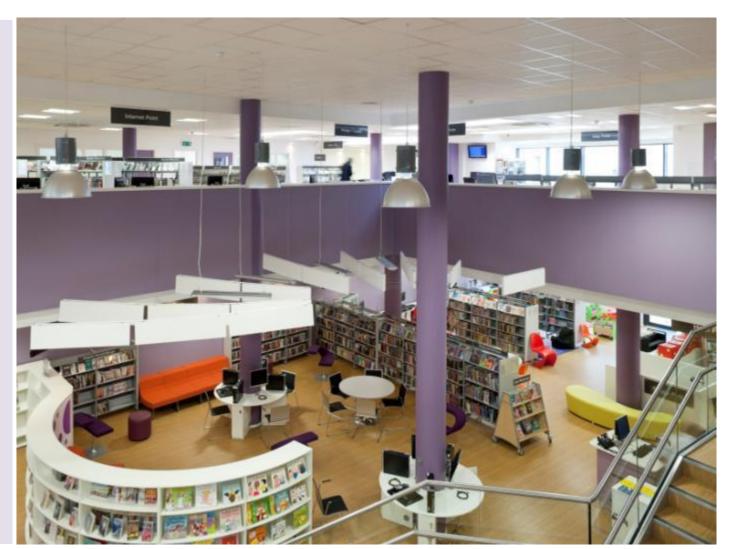| No	FOCUS AREAS	SUCCESS MEASURES	When	Who
2.1	Develop a community engagement strategy for the service	• Community Engagement Strategy produced • Public relations campaign developed and implemented to promote the establishment of a community managed arrangement for the Robert Jeyes library and a volunteer led service at Marks Gate Library	January 2014 March 2014	Performance & Improvement Manager
2.2	Start the Get Barking & Dagenham Reading Network to promote the three year reading campaign	• Eight to ten partners/individuals identified • First meeting organised • Launch of the Reading Network • Quarterly meeting schedule established	September 2013 December 2013 January 2014 January 2014	Group Manager Libraries
2.3	Develop a "friends" group to be involved in promoting the service	• Friends group at Robert Jeyes Library established and governance arrangements formalised • Friends groups rolled out across the other libraries	September 2013 March 2016	Group Manager, Libraries, Customer Services Manager
2.4	Develop communications plans	• Internal communications plan produced • External communications plan produced • Marketing plan developed and implemented	September 2013 September 2013 October 2013	Performance & Improvement Manager
2.5	Participate in the Cultural Education Partnership pilot project	• Libraries playing a key role in the development and delivery of a 'cultural passport' for every child in the Borough. • Every primary school age child in the Borough will go to a library in an organised school visit over the life of the strategy • Work with the Council's Heritage team to deliver education programmes to support the commemoration of the World War One centenary • Deliver a 'dads and sons' pilot project to encourage boys to take up reading	October 2013 March 2016 2014 – 2018 March 2016	Customer Services Manager, Culture & Sport, Children's Services and local arts organisations.

Priority Two: Community engagement and collaboration

No	FOCUS AREAS	SUCCESS MEASURES	When	Who
2.6	Participate in the Creative People and Places project.	• Prepare funding bid for project to support the development of local writers • Libraries being used as key venues for one off and ongoing cultural events and activities linked to the programme.	March 2014 March 2016	Group Manager, Libraries, Barking and Dagenham Arts Partnership
2.7	Present an annual 'Let's Get Barking and Dagenham Reading' Festival to promote the service and encourage greater participation.	• Festival presented 2013 to 2016 • 15 to 20 authors booked each year • 10% increase in attendance, year on year	October 2013 to 2016	Customer Service Manager Schools, Broadway Theatre
2.8	Deliver an effective library service for children and young people.	• Improved take up of service by local schools. Current take up by 76% of local primary schools. Target of 80% take up by 2014, maintained until 2016 • Improve take up of Summer Reading Challenge completion rate, currently 50%. o Year 1 55% o Year 2 60% o Year 3 65% • Annual Brocklebank and Feld Awards presented. Current awards to 30 children. o Year 1 35 o Year 2 40 o Year 3 45	April 2014 to March 2016	Customer Services Manager
2.9	Develop an outreach and events policy to reach out to non-users to promote the service more widely.	• Policy developed • Action plan produced with target of 23% active users of library services by 2016	October 2013 March 2014	Customer Services Manager

It is not necessarily possible, or desirable, to try to do the same things or provide exactly the same services at each library. Alongside a consistent and effective core offer (books, internet access, study space and information) the service should be shaped to meet the local needs of the service users in the catchment area for each library. It also needs to recognised that there are some services for which people would be happy to travel further than their local library to access.

This reflects a key principle already expressed that we believe local libraries are at the heart of the community and should reflect its demographics and current and emerging needs,

Meanwhile, although the potential for new technology to transform the delivery of library services is as yet not fully understood, it is likely to have a growing impact during the life of this strategy on how buildings need to function – in terms of layout, presentation, staff spaces etc. and this also needs to be considered in any review of usage of buildings.

Dagenham Library

Priority Three: Improving our buildings

No	FOCUS AREAS	SUCCESS MEASURES	When	Who
3.1	Carry out a review of current and planned changes to the strategic distribution of libraries in Barking and Dagenham and in neighbouring Boroughs.	• Undertake a review of local library locations • Research of neighbouring authorities libraries and benchmarking • An understanding of strategic deficiencies in provision now and in the future and report on findings	August 2015 December 2015 March 2016	Customer Services Manager, Performance & Improvement Manager
3.2	Where there are identified deficiencies in provision, consider alternative locations for service points, such as shared space with partners, retail units etc	• Incorporate findings into the Council's asset management and capital funding plans	March 2016	Group Manager, Libraries; Assets and Commercial Services
3.3	Review the layout of Barking Learning Centre	• Improved customer satisfaction through better zoning of noisy and quiet areas	October 2013	Group Manager, Libraries
3.4	Develop alternative use plans to accommodate any future decision for the withdrawal of partners from Barking Learning Centre	• Risk Assessment plan in place • Service is 'future proofed' from the risk of budget cuts resulting from service withdrawal by partners.	April 2014	Group Manager, Libraries; Barking and Dagenham College and UEL
3.5	Zoning options for libraries and or creation of themed branches	• Libraries providing targeted services to meet the specific needs of the communities in which they are located. • Experian data analysed to identify likely options for themed branches	March 2014	Customer Services Manager

Critical to the success of any strategy are the skills and expertise of those delivering the service.

Both the public and staff themselves recognise that services evolve, especially those driven by new technologies and new ways of working. As a result, new skills may be needed to deliver the service effectively.

Managers in Barking and Dagenham are very aware of this, and are also interested in exploring how the roles of volunteers in supporting and delivering the service can be expanded and encouraged. This needs to be mutually beneficial to the service and in developing the skills and experience of local residents.

Children's Library, Dagenham

Priority Four: Staff and volunteers

No	FOCUS AREAS	SUCCESS MEASURES	When	Who
4.1	Make a list of skill requirements based on the priorities of this strategy	• Restructure the organisational structure to support the new ways of working • Audit skill sets of current staff and volunteers • Development of skills required to deliver the strategy	September 2013 January 2014 March 2014	Customer Services Manager
4.2	Look at the best way to train staff and volunteers to improve service provision	• Research best practice from across all customer service sector • Identify suitable cost effective training • Staff training scheduled and carried out • Staff skilled to provide a better service	September 2013 November 2013 December 2013 March 2014	Customer Services Manager
4.3	Monitoring and management of volunteer led services	• Prepare SLA identifying key requirements and monitoring methods • Mechanisms for evaluation established • Support plan in place for Community Groups	October 2013 January 2014 January 2014	Group Manager, Libraries

4.4	Getting more people to volunteer their time to support the delivery of the service	• New volunteering policy developed and implemented
		• Increase in number of people volunteering year on year
		    o Year 1 – 2,500 hours
		    o Year 2 – 5,000 hours
		    o Year 3 – 6,000 hours
			September 2013
			
			March 2014
			March 2015
			March 2016
				Group Manager, Libraries

Stock provision in traditional formats (mainly print) and in new technology-driven ways constantly needs to be reviewed.

There is a general acceptance that the latter are "the way forward", but nevertheless there is still, for now, a strong interest in reading and borrowing books.

In the Borough there is a clearly defined requirement on stock (printed and digital) to support study and self-improvement.

The Library Service needs to continue to consult with customers and staff on what they want and make the best use of available information supported by statistical evidence to meet these needs in the most cost-effective way.

Pam Ayres at the "Get Barking and Dagenham Reading" Festival

Priority Five: Stock and reader development

No	FOCUS AREAS	SUCCESS MEASURES	When	Who
5.1	Look at stock policies and opportunities presented by new technology.	• Research stock policies and benchmark ideal practice in terms of stock quality and cost • Research opportunities presented by new technology. Investigate new formats for stock delivery such as e-books and e-magazines	January 2014	Customer Services Manager

5.2	Look at stock purchasing to match the reading and studying needs of the community	• Realigned budget to better meet the current and emerging needs of service users.
		    o Collect data of current stock performance
		    o Consult with supplier and update current specification
			March 2014	Customer Services Manager

5.3	Consider further research to inform a clear understanding of what the public want from the stock	• Stock budgets matched to customer needs
		    o Update data on community profiles
		    o Customers to be involved in stock selection
			September 2014	Customer Services Manager

5.4	Development of book clubs	• To establish a minimum of four book clubs, meeting across the service	January 2014	Customer Services Manager
5.5	Development of writers groups in the borough. Encourage local people to get published.	• Establish two writers groups meeting in libraries • Prepare and submit bid to Grants for the Arts Libraries fund • Put in place a schedule of workshops and writing support for participants • Support local residents to publish their works.	July 2013 October 2013 September 2013 September 2014	Customer Services Manager
5.6	Help to improve the health and well being of local residents	• Support local GPs by introducing a 'Book on Prescription' programme to support people with mental health related illness.	January 2014	Customer Services Manager

The consultation process that informed the development of this strategy clearly showed an enthusiasm amongst many users, especially, and perhaps unsurprisingly, younger ones, for an increasing emphasis on using more technology in library services. E-books and other digital resources are already part of the service offer. In the future there will be a need to assess and introduce new offers and innovative developments as they emerge.

There is a strong willingness among staff and managers to meet these requirements, as demonstrated by the enthusiasm in the consultation workshops for a general move towards more technology and fewer books. This needs to be at a pace that suits the varied demands placed upon the service. As indicated above, the recent public consultation suggests that for the immediate future more traditional formats and services may continue to dominate demand.

That said, the service needs to take a strategic approach to the development of new services and to design and test the new offers that will enable it to respond to changing demands over the next few years. It is also important that as technology evolves and new services become possible, the infrastructure to support these is regularly updated to enable the library service to keep up to date with customers' expectations and requirements.

Self service terminal

Priority Six: Technology and innovation

The service already has a track record of innovation. It has piloted a pioneering "Home from Home" service working with the borough's transport section and the NHS to bring home restricted clients into libraries to participate in talks and events. More recently this has been expanded to include an increased range of engagement for this client group for example using online learning and reminiscence sessions with Eastside Community Heritage for a Memory Games project in the lead up to the London 2012 Olympics

An Older Peoples Zone has been developed at Valence library to provide resources and a venue for events for the Over 50's. Traditionally libraries provide areas with stock and activities for children and young people, but not for older library users. The area at Valence library is home to the Home Library Service collection and has a range of materials, furniture and activities such as matinee film shows craft and IT sessions aimed at older users.
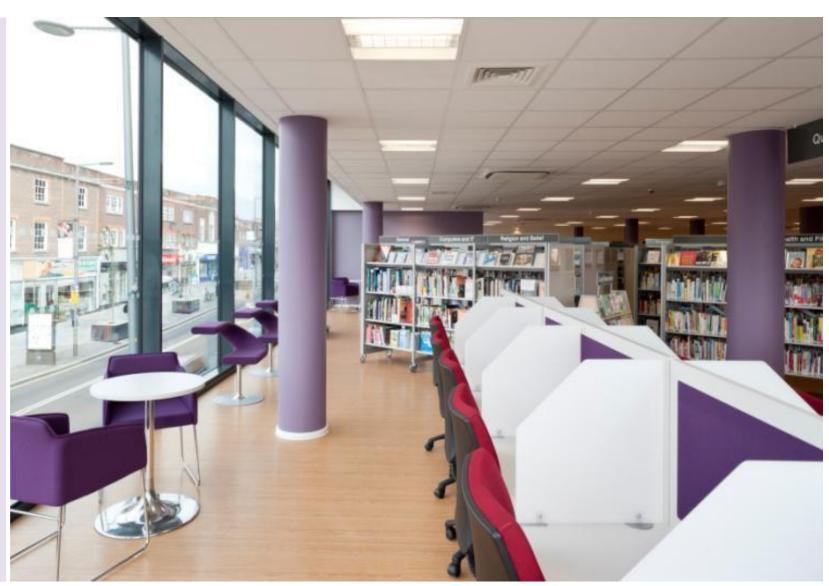
No	FOCUS AREAS	SUCCESS MEASURES	When	Who
6.1	Expand the service offer of e-books, and online subscription services	• Increase in take up of e-book service by 5% year on year • Increase range and subject coverage • Increase online subscription usage by 5% year on year	March 2016	Customer Services Manager
6.2	Introduce new IT training courses run by volunteers	• All "New to Computer" classes run by volunteers • Classes to run at a minimum of four libraries • 600 volunteer hours delivering IT sessions per year	December 2013	Customer Services Manager
6.3	Produce and implement a service wide ICT strategy	• Produce final strategy • Liaise with our IT partner to deliver strategy, using cost effective innovative solutions for delivering library function and public IT service • Full implementation of ICT Strategy • Feasibility of delivering public IT provision through Google Chrome boxes investigated	September 2013 December 2013 March 2016 March 2014	Group Manager, Libraries; Elevate
6.4	Pilot and embed new services including " Home from Home"	• Eight Home from Home events delivered annually	April 2013 – March 2016	Customer Services Manager

The Library Service is always looking at innovative and creative ways for achieving best value for the community in delivering its services. This includes considering a variety of different service delivery models and income generation plans.

The library service will look at options for the type of services that it delivers to the community. The service should also assess if there are services that it should stop delivering.

Often, there is a tendency for library services to cater for the whole community, and in these tough economic circumstances it may be appropriate to deliver a more targeted service to people who need the service.

Dagenham Library

Priority Seven: Financial sustainability

No	FOCUS AREAS	SUCCESS MEASURES	When	Who
7.1	Consider new management options	• Options appraisal undertaken to inform the future shape of the service and how it should be managed • Cabinet decision on way forward • New way of working introduced	June 2013 July 2013 April 2014	Group Manager, Libraries

7.2	Bringing in additional income. Investigating external funding opportunities.	• Investigate and identify suitable funding opportunities
		  ○ One Grants for the Arts funding bid to Arts Council England
		  ○ One funding bid to Big Lottery Fund
			
			2013
			
			2014
				Group Manager, Libraries

7.3	Investigate other partnerships to be co-located within service points	• Investigate suitable partners and undertake options appraisal • Options appraisal completed and reported	March 2015 March 2015	Group Manager, Libraries

7.4	Reduce utility costs and ensure compliance with EU's Energy Performance of Buildings Directive	• Ensure all libraries over 500m^2 are achieving at least average energy usage for their size as defined by Energy Performance of Buildings Directive
		  ○ A Display Energy Certificate displayed in relevant libraries
		  ○ Advice on achieving improvement in energy consumption to at least average level for size obtained and agreed from all relevant bodies
		• Consult with Carbon Trust and Energy Saving Trust to reduce energy costs and consumption for all service points
		• Reduced cost of electricity at all libraries
		• Reduced cost of water
		  ○ Installation of water meters at appropriate locations
			March 2014	Group Manager, Libraries; Assets and Commercial Services

No	FOCUS AREAS	SUCCESS MEASURES	When	Who
7.5	Identify new partners to base services in libraries to reduce overheads	• Overheads reduced by £20,000 per annum	March 2015	Group Manager, Libraries
7.6	Review existing contracts and ensure best value is embedded in all new procurement agreements	• Review existing contracts to identify potential efficiencies • Ensure that service requirements with existing partners and suppliers are cost effective and reflect current and predicted service needs	March 2014	Group Manager, Libraries
7.7	Investigate the potential for shared service delivery	• Investigate potential services to be delivered with a suitable partner • Options appraisal completed and reported	March 2015	Group Manager, Libraries

Barking Learning Centre

The Library Service manages the Barking Learning Centre which is a centre piece of the town centre's regeneration. The Centre provides learning opportunities from basic skills through to further and higher education which are delivered by local education partners The University of East London and Barking and Dagenham College. The centre also houses the Central library for the Borough and a Council One Stop Shop facility. The centre has approximately 30 rooms, including a conference room with capacity for up to 120 people. The rooms are primarily used for delivering the courses but when these are not in use they are hired out to bring in income.

The service has recently sought to bring in additional partners to reduce the running cost of the building. Barking Job Shop has relocated to the building and currently there are negotiations with the Police to have a front counter reporting station at the BLC. The café has just been refurbished and opened in March 2013 as Relish@BLC. The council run café offers an opportunity for local residents with learning disabilities, to get experience in the hospitality sector

Spitalfields Music – partnership

Spitalfields Music based in Tower Hamlets, secured Arts Council funding and are working with Barking and Dagenham Libraries to deliver a 3 year touring programme of interactive musical sessions across the boroughs libraries. Each tour includes training for library staff in structuring story times and activities to make them more interactive for pre-school children. The first tour "A Musical Rumpus" Fairy Queen in the Forest was held in six libraries in November 2012. The performance for 0 to 2 year olds was well attended and received very positive feedback from the families involved and from the Head of the Community Music Service. The second piece Musical Rumpus: Mudlark Dances will be toured around the borough in July 2013 again preceded with training for library staff in delivering sessions using a range of musical instruments and props. Library staff are already using the techniques from the training to make rhyme and story sessions more engaging for young audiences.

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Library Strategy

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