

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Notice of Meeting

THE EXECUTIVE

Wednesday, 7 May 2008 - 7:00 pm
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Dagenham

Members: Councillor C J Fairbrass (Chair); Councillor L A Smith (Deputy Chair); Councillor J L Alexander, Councillor G J Bramley, Councillor H J Collins, Councillor S Kallar, Councillor R C Little, Councillor M A McCarthy, Councillor M E McKenzie and Councillor Mrs V Rush

28 April 2008

R. A. Whiteman
Chief Executive

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AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Declaration of Members' Interests**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Members are asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interest they may have in any matter which is to be considered at this meeting.
- 3. Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2008 (Pages 1 - 3)**

Business Items

Public Items 4 to 5 and Private Items 16 are business items. The Chair will move that these be agreed without discussion, unless any Member asks to raise a specific point.

Any discussion of a Private Business Item will take place after the exclusion of the public and press.

- 4. Council Debt Write-Offs (Pages 5 - 12)**
- 5. Budget Monitoring Report 2007/08 (Pages 13 - 29)**

Discussion Items

- 6. East London Transit (ELT) - Temporary Transfer of Powers (Pages 31 - 35)**
- 7. Libraries Strategy (Pages 37 - 73)**
- 8. Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent**
- 9. To consider whether it would be appropriate to pass a resolution to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting due to the nature of the business to be transacted.**

Private Business

The public and press have a legal right to attend Council meetings such as the Executive, except where business is confidential or certain other sensitive information is to be discussed. The list below shows why items are in the private part of the agenda, with reference to the relevant legislation (the relevant paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended).

Discussion Items

- 10. Beacontree Heath Leisure Centre (Pages 75 - 99)**
- 11. Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (Pages 101 - 106)**
- 12. Barking and Dagenham Local Housing Company and Barking Riverside Local Housing Company (Pages 107 - 173)**
- 13. Housing Modernisation Programme: Procurement of the Replacement Housing ICT System (Pages 175 - 180)**
- 14. Contract for Catering Equipment Maintenance in Public Buildings and Schools (Pages 181 - 186)**
- 15. New Dagenham Library and One Stop Shop Update (Pages 187 - 208)**

Business Items

- 16. Urgent Action: Term Contract to Extend Parent Support Adviser Service (Pages 209 - 219)**
- 17. Any other confidential or exempt items which the Chair decides are urgent**

THE EXECUTIVE

Tuesday, 25 March 2008
(7:05 - 7:18 pm)

Present: Councillor L A Smith (Deputy Chair), Councillor J L Alexander, Councillor G J Bramley, Councillor H J Collins, Councillor S Kallar, Councillor R C Little, Councillor M A McCarthy, Councillor M E McKenzie and Councillor Mrs V Rush

Apologies: Councillor C J Fairbrass

141. Declaration of Members' Interests

Councillor L Smith declared a personal interest in respect of the Agenda Item 8 'Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Outline Business Case'.

There were no other declarations of interest.

142. Minutes (11 March 2008)

Agreed.

143. Budget Monitoring Report January 2007/2008

Received a report from the Corporate Director of Resources providing an update on the Council's revenue and capital position for 2007/08 as at the end of January 2008.

The position for the revenue expenditure at the end of January 2008 had improved significantly from the December position. Directors have action plans in place which will be closely monitored to achieve a balanced budget by year end.

For the Housing Revenue Account, pressures exist around housing subsidy, income from rents and repairs and maintenance costs and it was currently forecast that there would be a small overspend which will need to come from its balances for the financial year.

Regarding the Capital programme, Directors will continue to review the delivery of individual capital schemes to achieve maximum spend by the year end.

Agreed, in order to assist the Council to achieve all of its Community Priorities, to:

- (i) Note the current position of the Council's revenue and capital budget as at 31 January 2008 as detailed in the report;
- (i) Note the position and projected out-turn for the Housing Revenue Account as detailed in the report; and
- (ii) Note the action plans being undertaken to alleviate the budget pressures to ensure a balanced budget for the Council is achieved by the end of the financial year.

144. Private Business

Agreed to exclude the public and press for the remainder of the meeting by reason of the nature of the business to be discussed which included information exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

145. Pre Tender: Term Contract for Asbestos Analysis and Surveying Services in Non Domestic Properties - 2008 to 2012

Received a report from the Corporate Director of Regeneration on proposals to procure a new four-year contract for asbestos analysis and surveying in Non-Domestic Properties from 2008 to 2012.

Agreed, in order to assist the Council in achieving its Community Priority of "Making Barking and Dagenham Cleaner, Greener and Safer, to:

- (i) The Corporate Director of Regeneration, in consultation with the Divisional Director of Corporate Finance, be given delegated authority to award the Term Contract for Asbestos Analysis and Surveying in Non-Domestic Properties 2008-2012 following the agreed procurement process; and
- (ii) Nominate Councillor L Smith, Councillor G Bramley and Councillor H Collins to be part of the tender packaging and evaluation procedures panel.

146. # Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Outline Business Case

Received a report from the Corporate Director of Children's Services setting out the Outline Business Case (OBC) to be submitted to Partnerships for Schools (PfS) and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to support the Council's bid for Building Schools for the Future (BSF) investment resources from Government.

Agreed, in order to assist the Council in achieving its Community Priority "Better Education and Learning for all", to:

- (i) Endorse the OBC principles and process and to engage further with the BSF programme;
- (ii) Seek to fund Private Finance Initiative (PFI) revenue contributions from the Dedicated Schools Grant and obtain the views of the Schools' Forum;
- (iii) The Divisional Director of Corporate Finance to ascertain the optimal solutions to support lifecycle costs for consideration in the relevant budget process, to ensure that non-PFI schools are maintained in a good serviceable condition;
- (iv) Note the current funding gap on the Barking Riverside Secondary School of £19m and, if no alternative sources are found, it will be met from the Dedicated Schools Grant;
- (v) Consider, as part of the 2009/10 capital programme review, earmarking £2m from the long-term capital programme for potential costs of off-site works, pending further advice from the Council's BSF technical consultants;
- (vi) Authorise the Divisional Director of Corporate Finance to approve the approach in seeking provision of an equity investment in the region of £1.310m in the Local Educational Partnership (LEP) and Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) for each of the three new PFI schemes planned;

- (vii) Note the profile of BSF project costs, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report and that this is fully considered as part of the 2009/10 capital programme review and Medium Term Financial Strategy;
- (viii) The Corporate Director of Resources, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Children's Services, agreeing the BSF contract with the private sector;
- (ix) Secondary Head Teachers, Head Teacher of Trinity Special School and Governing Bodies participating in the selection and procurement process; and
- (x) The Council operating and adjudicating the Schools' competition process.

(# The Chair agreed that this item could be considered as a matter of urgency under the provisions of Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 so as not to unnecessarily delay the delivery of the project).

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THE EXECUTIVE

7 MAY 2008

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER SERVICES

Title: Council Debt Write-Offs January 2008 – March 2008 (Fourth Quarter)	For Decision
<p>Summary: Barking and Dagenham Direct is made up of a number of service areas. Two of these (Income & Collection & Rents & Benefits sections), are linked to the billing, collection and recovery of the vast majority of debts that fall due to be paid to the Council for chargeable services and statutory levies such as Council Tax and Business Rates.</p> <p>The value and type of debts written off as uncollectible within these two sections must be reported to the Executive on a quarterly basis in line with the Council's financial regulations. The first of these reports went to the Executive on 6 November 2007 and reported on debts written off during 2006/07 and provided a detailed breakdown of debts written off for the first two quarters of 2007/08 (i.e. April 2007-June 2007 Quarter 1 and July 2007-Sept 2007 Quarter 2).</p> <p>A second report was presented to Executive on 19 February 2008 and provided a summary of debts by (type and amounts) written off for Quarter 3 of 2007-08 (i.e. October 2007- December 2007) shown in table 4 of appendix A.</p> <p>This is the third report outlining write offs and provides a summary of debts written off for Quarter 4 of 2007/08 (i.e. January 2008- March 2008) shown in table 5 of appendix A. A summary of all debts written off for 2007/08 is also shown.</p> <p>Wards Affected: None specific.</p>	
<p>Recommendation(s) The Executive is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Note the contents of this report, in particular the list of debts written off for 2007/08 to date and the list containing the top ten debtors along with their individual details. (ii) Agree that the Council publicise these individual details where the Council's right to demand the debt has been legally ratified via Court action, or via binding contractual agreement, with the exception of debts outlined within paragraph 6.4 below. 	
<p>Reason(s) As a matter of good financial practice and good debt management reporting, the number, value and types of debts written off, should be reported regularly to the Executive.</p>	
<p>Implications:</p> <p>Financial: All debts written off, will have been provided for within the Council's Bad Debt Provision and as such there should be no specific financial implications. However, there is the</p>	

possibility that unforeseen and unplanned additional write offs occur, which lead to the value of debts written off in any year, exceeding the agreed bad debt provision.

Where this is likely to happen, this quarterly report will act as an early warning system and will enable additional control measure to be agreed and taken, to either bring the situation back under control, or to make appropriate adjustments to the bad debt provision.

Legal:

As this report is likely to be a public report, there should not be any legal implication of publicising the details of individual debts. In addition, any lists publicised will be limited to those cases where prior to the debt being written off, the debt has been proven at Court as rightly and properly due.

Risk Management:

No specific implications, save that of this report acting as an early warning system to any problems in the area of write offs.

Social Inclusion and Diversity:

No specific implications.

Crime and Disorder:

No specific implications.

Options Appraisal:

Not applicable.

Contact Officer: Julian Hall	Title: Group Manager (Income & Collection)	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 2578 Fax: 020 8227 2574 E-mail: julian.hall@lbbd.gov.uk
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1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Income & Collection section and the Rents and Benefits Section is responsible for the collection of the vast majority of debts falling due to the Council by way of statutory levies and chargeable services. Whilst measures are taken to collect all debts and levies due, it is invariably the case that some debts will remain unpaid, even after concerted efforts have been made to collect them.
- 1.2 In order that the Council can take proper account of debts that will actually be paid and also take account of debts that are unlikely to be paid, the writing off of uncollectible debts are carried out on a regular basis. This way the Council is able to take account of just those debts that it knows will be paid, whilst making some provision within its accounts for debts that are unlikely to be paid.

2. Policy for write off of irrecoverable debts & unclaimed credits

- 2.1 The processes and procedures in place for managing and recording debts written off are governed by the Council's write off policy. The purpose of the policy is to

establish a framework to regulate the write off of irrecoverable debts and long standing unallocated and unclaimed credits.

2.2 Adherence to this policy will ensure that there is always consistency and probity adopted in the procedures of debt and credit write offs and that best practice is followed in:

- Debt collection and recovery
- Accountancy code of practice
- Audit controls

3. Authorisation to write off debts

3.1 Authority to write off debts and credits is delegated to the Chief Financial Officer by the Council's Constitution. Further delegation is made via the constitution and is specified below:

- Up to £2,000 (Group Managers / Business Unit Head)
- 2,000.001 to £10,000 (Head of Service)
- Over 10,000 Corporate (Corporate Director / Head of Corporate Finance)

3.2 These authorisation levels are strictly adhered to for all write offs.

4. Current Position

4.1 The net value of debts written off for the fourth quarter (Quarter 4) of 2007/8 (i.e. January 2008 – March 2008) was £559,742 as shown in table 5 of appendix A.

4.2 Details of debts written off for Quarter 4 are shown together with a summary of debts written off for Quarter 1-Quarter 3 in appendix A (within Table 2,3 &4).

4.3 A summary of all debts written off for 2007/08 is also shown.

5. Points to note from debt write off tables (Appendix A)

5.1 Council Tax and Business Rates are both statutory debts and for the most part, regular monthly write offs take place. No NNDR write offs had been actioned during Quarter 2 and Quarter 3. £73,639 was written off in January 2008, just before the conversion of the NNDR system to Academy took place.

5.2 General Income debts relate to debts raised for chargeable services that the Council either provides as a statutory duty or as a service where no other providers are available to provide a similar service.

5.3 Home Care and Residential Care debts are also dealt with within the General Income section and are shown separately. It should be noted that regular write offs of Home Care and Residential care debts have only recently commenced, so the level of write offs seen for 2006/07 are relatively high for these two areas.

5.4 The numbers and value of debts written off within the Home Care and Residential Care categories are expected to be very low and it was planned to amalgamate these debt write offs with the write offs for the General Income team.

5.5 Plans are being put in place to move the Home Care / Residential Care team from General Income, to the Benefits section, where it is felt it would work better. Because of this, these figures will continue to be reported separately.

5.6 Write off activities within the Council Tax area for Quarter 4 have been relatively large. This was done in preparation for main billing and year end.

6. Publication of individual details of debts written off

6.1 A number of Authorities have begun to publicise the details (names, addresses etc.), of residents who have had debts written off. In the vast majority of cases, these debts have been written off where the debtor has absconded.

6.2 It was agreed that a list showing the details of debtors who have had debts written off, would be attached to this report. A list has been attached at appendix B. The list has been limited to the top ten debts only.

6.3 As outlined within recommendation (ii) above, the Executive is asked to consider the publication of this list of debtors locally (e.g. within the Citizen, local newspapers, etc.).

6.4 As was previously outlined within the 6 November 2007 Executive report, it was recommended that the following types of debt write offs are excluded from this publicised list:

- (a) Debts that have been written off following a corporate complaint being upheld
- (b) Debts that have been written off due to the debtor falling within one of the many vulnerable groups (e.g. elderly, disabled, infirm etc.)
- (c) Where the original debt was raised in error
- (d) Where debts have been written off, but no legal action has been taken to prove that the debt was legally and properly due
- (e) Where the debt has been written off following bankruptcy or insolvency action (the majority of these cases will be individually publicised)

6.5 The exclusion of the category of debts listed above will eliminate the possibility of any unnecessary and potentially costly legal challenges from debtors, who take issue with their details being publicised. It is intended that where the details or whereabouts of debtors become known following publication, those debtors will be pursued as far as is possible, to secure full payment of the debt.

6.6 The list provided at appendix B does not include any debts or debtors that fall within categories a-e above, so the list as it stands can be publicised after the removal of date of birth and national insurance number details.

7. Ongoing debt recovery and tracing work

7.1 It should be noted that debt recovery and tracing work is an ongoing activity within the Income & Collection and Rents & Benefits section. Some form of tracing work continues on debts even after the debt has been written off. In many cases,

tracing and follow-up work can continue for up to a year after the debt has been written off (e.g. in the case of higher debts) and debtors have been known to resurface up to five years after a debt has been written off.

7.2 Where debtors are located after a long period of time, measures are taken to recover the debts and in some cases, the debt is written back on so that legal action can commence or be picked up from where it was left.

8. **Consultees**

Divisional Director of Corporate Finance
Head of Barking & Dagenham Direct
Group Manager (Rents & Benefits)
Group Manager (Legal Services)

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

Policy for write off of irrecoverable debts and unclaimed credits
Income & Collection tracing procedure

Debts written off 2006/07

Table 1

Month	General Income Debts £	Former Tenant Arrears £	Home Care £	Residential Care £	Council Tax £	NNDR £	Total £
2006/07	£209,571	£698,423	£32,234	£98,608	£1,965,030	£82,256	£3,086,122

Debts written off during 2007/8 Quarter 1

Table 2

Apr-07	Oracle	FTA	Home Care	Residential Care	Council Tax	NNDR	Total
Q1 Totals	£23,986	£146,994	£0	£6,661	£449,103	£96,018	£722,762

Debts written off during 2007/8 Quarter 2

Table 3

Jul-07	General Income Debts	Former Tenant Arrears	Home Care	Residential Care	Council Tax	NNDR	Total
Q2 Totals	£50,810	£71,309	£0	£0	-£113,963	£0	£8,156

Debts written off during 2007/8 Quarter 3

Table 4

Oct-07	General Income Debts	Former Tenant Arrears	Home Care	Residential Care	Council Tax	NNDR	Total
Q3 Totals	£39,992.76	£54,549.94	£0.00	£707.35	£1,141.08	£0.00	£96,391.13

Debts written off during 2007/8 Quarter 4

Table 5

Write Offs		Oracle	FTA	Home Care	Residential Care	Council Tax	NNDR	TOTAL
Jan-08	Under £2k	4,218	3,803	0	0	0	8,442	16,463
	Over £2k	4,611	12,224	0	0	0	18,190	35,025
	Over £10k	0	0	0	0	0	47,007	47,007
	Total	8,829	16,027	0	0	0	73,639	98,496
Feb-08	Under £2k	5,388	832	0	0	331,882	0	338,102
	Over £2k	17,137	0	0	0	0	0	17,137
	Over £10k	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	22,525	832	0	0	331,882	0	355,239
Mar-08	Under £2k	19,270	46,313	0	3,175	0	0	68,758
	Over £2k	0	37,249	0	0	0	0	37,249
	Over £10k	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	19,270	83,562	0	3,175	0	0	106,007
Quarter 4 Totals		50,624	100,422	0	3,175	331,882	73,639	559,742
2007-8 Totals		£165,413	£373,275	£ -	£10,543	£ 668,163	£169,657	£1,387,051

Appendix B

Reference	Date of Invoice	Name	Original Address	Last Known Address	DOB	NINO	Comment	Value
60540777	04/02/08	H Sardu & Z Ozulko	438 Lodge Ave, Dagenham	Same as debt address			No assets, stat demand has been served. Will write back on if successful	£17,136.73
70284742	14/06/07	Mr Ian Butler	48 Alderman Ave, Barking	Same as debt address	20.4.63	NA910607A	All tracing unsuccessful	£5,228.68
70285194	10/5/07	Mr John Charles	120 Alderman Ave, Barking	Same as debt address	15.1.32	ZE167245B	NFA – Tracing on CTAX, EXPERIAN and LOCTA unsuccessful	£4,827.19
71082622	7.8.06	Mr Nnamudi Ezike	50 Cape Close, Barking	Holly Lodge, Hoppers Road	20.6.75	PW803733B	Returned from Newy/ins bailiff unable to recover debt.	£4,380.39
71497895	21.3.07	Mr Barry Kelly	47 Alderman Ave, Barking	498A Gale St, Dagenham			All tracing unsuccessful	£4,170.35
71488202	23.3.07	Mr James Patten	17 Bentry Close, Dagenham	114 Osborne Sq, Dagenham			All tracing unsuccessful	£4,036.12
70140308	9.11.06	Mr Joseph Quinney	17 Levine Gds, Barking	Same as debt address	28.2.23	LM322273B	Mr died Nov06, Mrs Quinney was resident but is now suffering from senile dementia	£3,830.70
71399407	8.3.07	Mr Simon Elsmore	9 Abridge Way, Barking	365 Valence Ave, Dagenham	18.12.62	NB032319D	Not at forwarding address tracing on CTAX, EXPERIAN and LOCTA unsuccessful	£3,566.26
70802624	10/11/05	Mr Anthony Terry	69 Cobham House, St Margaret's, Barking	20 Estuary Close, Barking	4.11.58	JC336809B	Returned from Newy/ins bailiff unable to recover debt.	£3,547.72
71318655	8.1.07	Mr K Hewitt & Miss V Morrell	6 Steadman House, Uvedale Road, Dagenham.	84 Babington Road, Dagenham	18.5.81	JJ078017B	Returned from Newy/ins bailiff unable to recover debt.	£3,363.98

THE EXECUTIVE

7 MAY 2008

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

Title: Budget Monitoring Report February 2007/2008	For Decision
<p>Summary:</p> <p>The report updates the Executive on the Council's revenue and capital position from the beginning of April 2007 to the end of February 2008.</p> <p>The position for revenue expenditure at the end of February 2008 highlights various pressures across Council departments totalling £1.2m, and this position remains broadly unchanged to the January position (£1m). In summary the £1.2m pressure can be identified as £0.6m within the Children's Services department and £0.6m within the other departments. These remaining pressures will continue to be managed through to the end of the financial year and addressed as part of the Council's closure of accounts process. Departments are continuing to address these cost pressures with the delivery of a range of action plans, and the overall position will continue to be closely monitored to ensure the full reduction in these pressures.</p> <p>For the Housing Revenue Account, whilst pressures exist around housing subsidy, income from rents and repairs and maintenance costs, it is projected that an underspend of £315k will arise for 2007/08 which will be added to its balances to result in an estimated opening working balance of £3m for 2008/09.</p> <p>In regard to the Capital programme, the current working budget is £63.2m. Directors have been and are continuing to review the delivery of individual capital schemes to ensure maximum spend is achieved by the year end.</p> <p>Wards Affected: This is a regular budget monitoring report of the Council's resource position and applies to all wards.</p>	
<p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>The Executive is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Note the current position of the Council's revenue and capital budget as at 29 February 2008 (Appendix A and C and Sections 3 and 5 of the report); (ii) Note the position and projected out-turn for the Housing Revenue Account (Section 4 and Appendix B of the report); and (iii) Note the action plans being undertaken to alleviate the budget pressures to ensure that the necessary balanced budget for the Council is achieved by the end of the financial year. 	
<p>Reason (s)</p> <p>As a matter of good financial practise, the Executive should be regularly updated with the position on the Council's budget.</p>	

Implications:**Financial:**

The overall revenue budget is indicating budget pressures in several areas, however, Directors are continuing to implement the necessary action plans to fully alleviate these pressures. The working capital programme is now reported at £63.2 million.

Legal:

There are no legal implications regarding this report.

Risk Management:

The risk to the Council is that budgets are overspent and that this reduces the Council's overall resource position. Where there is an indication that a budget may overspend by the year end the relevant Director will be required to review the Departmental budget position to achieve a balanced position by the year end. This may involve the need to produce a formal action plan to ensure delivery of this position for approval and monitoring by the Resource Monitoring Panel and the Executive.

Similarly, if there are underspends this may mean a lower level of service or capital investment not being fully delivered. Specific procedures and sanctions are in place through the Resource Monitoring Panels, Enterprise Programme Office (EPO), Corporate Management Team and the Executive.

Social Inclusion and Diversity:

As this report does not concern a new or revised policy there are no specific adverse impacts insofar as this report is concerned.

Crime and Disorder:

There are no specific implications insofar as this report is concerned.

Options Appraisal:

There are no specific implications insofar as this report is concerned.

Contact Officer Joe Chesterton	Title: Divisional Director - Corporate Finance	Contact Details: Tel:020 8227 2932
Lee Russell	Group Manager, Accounting & Budgeting	E-mail: joe.chesterton@lbbd.gov.uk Tel: 020 8227 2966 E-mail: lee.russell@lbbd.gov.uk

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 It is important that the Council regularly monitors its revenue and capital budgets to ensure good financial management. It is now practise within the Council for this monitoring to occur on a regular monthly basis, which helps members to be constantly updated on the Council's overall financial position and to enable the Executive to make relevant decisions as necessary on the direction of both the revenue and capital budgets.

- 1.2 The report is based upon the core information contained in the Oracle general ledger system supplemented by detailed examinations of budgets between the budget holders and the relevant Finance teams to take account of commitments and projected end of year positions. In addition, for capital monitoring there is the extensive work carried out by the Enterprise Programme Office (EPO).
- 1.3 The monthly Resource Monitoring Panels, chaired by the lead member for finance, and attended by Directors and Heads of Service, monitors the detail of individual departments revenue and capital budgets alongside relevant performance data and this also enhances and forms the basis of this report.

2. Current Position

2.1 Overview for Revenue Budget

At the end of February 2008 there remain various pressures across Council departments which total £1.2m, and this position remains broadly unchanged to the January position (£1m). These remaining pressures will continue to be managed through to the end of the financial year and addressed as part of the Council's closure of accounts process. Departments are continuing to address these cost pressures through the delivery of a range of action plans, and the overall position will continue to be closely monitored to ensure the full reduction in these pressures.

3. Service Position

3.1 General

3.1.1 Details of each Department's current financial position are provided in Section 3 of this report and are summarised in Appendix A.

3.1.2 At the Executive meeting on 12th June 2007, Members approved a small number of roll forwards from 2006/07 for the revenue budget amounting to £290k (2006/07 £1.65 million) to be added to the relevant Departmental budgets for 2007/08.

It is important to remind Members that Directors need to use these funds to deliver the relevant services associated with the agreed roll forwards and that the appropriate work is undertaken to ensure delivery of full spend by the year end. In addition, consideration by Directors on the use of these roll forwards will need to be made where Departments are currently indicating pressures in their budgets.

3.2 Adults and Community Services Department

3.2.1 The Adult and Community Services budget position, after eleven months of the financial year, indicates a balanced budget by the year end which remains unchanged from the position reported in January.

3.2.2 The Department's Management Team remain committed to maintaining a sound financial base, dealing with current overspend areas, and ensuring the departmental budget in on target for the current year. Value for money considerations are paramount within Adult and Community Services.

3.2.4 Adult Care Services

This area relates primarily to Older Persons Residential and Home Care services that are run by the Council. The budget is approximately £10m, and includes three residential homes for Older Persons, one residential home for Learning Disability clients, and two day centres for Learning Disability clients. Previous budget pressures relating to the delivery of the Older Persons Modernisation savings, in both residential and Home Care services, have primarily been dealt with, however some ongoing pressure areas still exist.

3.2.5 Adult Commissioning Services

These services represent Social Work/Care Management budgets in the department, together with services commissioned from the Independent and Private Sector. Service areas include Older Persons, Physical Disability, Learning Disability and Mental Health. The department has set itself some challenging targets in this area around procurement and commissioning gains/savings. Current expenditure at the end of February is broadly in line with the budget for this stage of the year due to some partner support and actions taken to reduce demand.

Interface issues with the local Hospitals and the PCT regarding delayed transfers of care are always volatile, but work is ongoing to ensure these areas are actively managed. Efficiencies are expected from the full year effect of reviewing the Fair Access to Care Criteria (FACS).

The Executive will recall the pressures in 2006/07 regarding external care packages in this area, however, it is envisaged that the FACS review, robust monitoring and gate-keeping will mitigate these issues in 2007/8.

3.2.6 Community Safety and Preventive Services

This service area covers CCTV, Community Safety & Parks Police, Substance Misuse, and the Youth Offending Team of which the overall gross budget is in the region of £6m. There are currently pressures in relation to Parks Police and the external security service which are being off-set by underspends and support elsewhere in the department.

3.2.7 Community Services and Libraries

This service area covers Heritage and Libraries, the Lifelong Learning Centre, Community Development & Halls, Equalities & Diversity and the Neighbourhood Management Service. The gross budgets of these services are in the region of £10m. Pressures currently exist in relation to the decision not to site the one-stop-shop/library at the Heathway, employee costs and the PFI & service charge costs at the Castle Green site, which could result in a £311k shortfall in the Libraries budgets. These issues are being addressed as part of the departmental action plan to deliver against the set budget.

3.2.8 Other Services, Central Budgets, Recharges, and Government Grants

The Adult and Community Services Department receive specific government grants, and incur recharges for departmental and divisional support. All specific grants will be used in support of the existing service areas as outlined above. An underspend is currently forecasted in this area which will be used to fully support the overall departmental position.

3.2.9 The department is continuing to work to implement a range of action plans to further address some of these pressures. In particular this includes working with partners to seek funding to contribute to these pressures. The overall departmental position is closely monitored by the Director and her Management Team to ensure the full reduction in these pressures.

3.3 Children's Services Department

3.3.1 The Children's Service projected overspend position at the end of February has decreased by £137k from the £720k reported in January. This reduction has come about as a result of a decrease in forecast spending in the Safeguarding & Rights service in relation to children's placements.

3.3.2 The remaining reasons for the outstanding pressures include the non-delivery of some of the £1.4m approved savings for 2007/8, as well as financial pressures related to care leavers, multi-occupation buildings and PFI funded projects.

3.3.3 Safeguarding and Rights

The pressures reported earlier in the financial year on the Children's placements, and for Children leaving care budgets, were being partly alleviated by the approval of in-year budget adjustment of £3.5m.

The service is implementing an action plan to address the position for the future which covers issues on fostering, prevention and commissioning. Whilst these actions will reduce expenditure, the base budget position for children's placements for 2008/09 has also been adjusted as part of the recently approved 2008/09 budget to reflect these ongoing pressures.

Overall there still remains pressure in the service due to the numbers of Children in out-borough placements, and care leavers which are required to still be looked after as they are still in Education settings.

3.3.4 Schools Budgets

At this stage it is not envisaged there will be any significant financial pressures in regard to the individual schools budgets, and this is supported in that no school reported any significant deficit for the 2006/7 financial year.

3.3.5 Quality and Schools Improvement

This service area covers budgets of approx £14m net and includes the Westbury Centre and Special Education Needs (SEN) Budgets which are very demand led. Pressures and overspends exist within this service in relation to both SEN transport and the Castle Green trading service. Close monitoring and controls remain in place around SEN budgets.

3.3.6 Shared Services and Engagement

The Shared Services and Engagement budget covers areas involving early years, children's centres and childcare and extended schools. Although the net budget is only £1.6m the gross budget is in the region of £8 million, having benefited from significant government grants. No significant budget pressures are occurring presently, although the increased cost of subsidising Nursery places is to be reviewed.

3.3.7 **Pupil and Family Support**

This service area covers Admissions and Attendance, Youth Services and other pupil and family support. The net budget is in the region of £3.5m. Currently pressures are occurring in the order of £250k regarding saving commitments made for 2007/8 in the admissions area and Youth Service which are not being delivered.

3.3.8 **Policy and Trust Commissioning, and Other Services**

These budget areas relate to the central and support services for the Department, as well as pooled grants, and total just over £24m. Currently there are pressures on accommodation/buildings based budgets – including some multi-occupation sites, together with pressures to deliver savings commitments around commissioning. Where possible, revenue grants are being utilised to assist with the department's current budget pressures.

3.3.9 In order to reduce the remaining pressures on its budget, the department is continuing to work to identify and implement a range of action plans to address some of these pressures. The overall departmental position will therefore continue to be closely monitored to ensure the full reduction in these pressures.

3.4 **Customer Services Department**

3.4.1 The department's projected February position now includes the forecasted outturn position for those services which have transferred into the department during the year. Whilst these transfers will have the effect of changing the forecasted outturn of the Customer Services department from that reported in previous month's, the net cost of the transfers are being absorbed within the transferring departments budget. As a result of these transfers the services now relating to the department are anticipating to overspend by £81k by the year end.

The main reasons for pressures in this department are:

- Recurring overspends from existing pressures;
- Reduction in levels of income for vehicle maintenance and fleet management, and increased repair costs due to age of existing fleet;
- Income in Trade Waste Service is currently below budget requirement;
- Potential risks to new savings option for 2007/08.

Specific general management actions undertaken to contain these pressures include holding vacant posts, tight controls on agency recruitment and supplies and services spend, reduction in levels of overtime, a review of improvement work in the Fleet service and a review of the recovery of outstanding debt.

3.4.2 **Environmental and Enforcement Services**

An overall projected pressure of £751k is identified within the Environmental and Enforcement Service. The main pressures include: potential recurring overspends on employee costs in the and Grounds Maintenance service, loss of income as a result of delays in the implementation of charging for bulky waste, loss of income within the Vehicle fleet as a result of reductions

in usage, reduction in income at Frizlands Depot as a result of reductions in the usage of the depot facilities (particularly from Shanks Waste PLC) and increased maintenance costs and off road time of vehicles owned by the Council due to the age of the fleet.

Some of these pressures are being off-set by staff vacancies and reduced expenditure particularly within the Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Enforcement services. Specific action plans to reduce costs on the future include reviewing and reducing overtime and agency costs and delivering business improvement work within the vehicle fleet.

The service has joined the APSE (Association of Public Sector Excellence) benchmarking club for refuse and street cleansing and is currently looking at visiting beacon Councils with similar demographics to Barking and Dagenham to replicate best practice. The VFM objectives for 2007/08 have included driving out efficiencies within the service, reinvesting in service priorities and maximising income and grants. To assist with this process, the service is undertaking a detailed benchmarking exercise of the whole service against a similar council.

3.4.3 Housing Services

An underspend of £50k exists for this service mainly in relation to the recovery of outstanding debt and vacant posts. A review of temporary accommodation has resulted in the validation of the recovery of a number of outstanding debts in this area.

The Value for Money objectives for 2007/08 have included building on maximising income and analysing the costs of services through benchmarking. The service has also identified/visited best practice authorities and has used this learning to inform new methods of working.

3.4.4 Barking & Dagenham Direct

The division is currently projecting an underspend of £562k.

The main reason for the underspend is as a result of the additional recovery of overpaid housing benefit within the Revenues & Benefits service which has arisen through the implementation of the Academy system. To improve the Revenues & Benefits service throughout 2007/08, the service has reduced the number of agency staff employed and has developed a new entrants programme to encourage local people to work for the council. In addition, sickness levels have reduced year on year as a result of better management. In terms of ensuring the service achieves VFM, the service has been working with all Revenues and Benefits benchmarking clubs for a number of years and actively participates in the London and National Benefits, Rents, Council Tax, Cashiers, Business Rates and General Income Benchmarking groups. The VFM objectives for 2007/08 have included delivering the Medium Term Financial strategy that relates to the service and ensuring that VFM is achieved by managing out the need for agency staff.

In terms of the Emergency Out of Hours service, the Registration Service, the Contact Centre and the One stop shops, the overall position for these service is a projected underspend of £82k. The main reason for this underspend is due to increased income levels in the Registration service and a number of vacant posts within the Contact Centre.

The overall net underspend in the Barking & Dagenham Direct service will be used to support and off-set overspends elsewhere in the department.

3.4.5 Customer Strategy

The overall position for Customer Strategy is a projected underspend of £100k. The service has used information from their benchmarking club to inform how they compare with similar authorities and build relationships with other authorities in order to share best practice. A significant objective for 2007/08 includes significant savings through better ways of working and the implementation of new technology to reduce the number of customer service officers required.

3.4.6 Parks & Open Spaces

The overall position for Parks & Open Spaces is a projected overspend of £186k. The reasons for this overspend include additional security costs, reduction in levels of income and the nursery services (employee costs and income).

3.4.7 Highways & Parking

The overall position for Highways & Parking is a projected underspend of £144k. The service has experienced cost pressures resulting from a shortfall in highway sponsorship income and street column maintenance, however these are being off-set by additional parking income and reductions in spending on land drainage and traffic management.

3.4.8 Regular monitoring meetings are occurring within the department, and within the management team, to deal fully with the outstanding pressure areas.

3.5 Regeneration Department

3.5.1 The department's projected February position now includes the forecasted outturn position for those services which have transferred from, and into, the department during the financial year. Whilst these transfers will have the effect of changing the forecasted outturn of the Regeneration department from that reported in previous month's, the net variation of the transfers are being absorbed within the transferring departments budget. As a result of these transfers, the services now relating to the department are anticipating to overspend by £598k in 2007/08.

Particular pressures continue to exist around recurring overspends arising from 2006/07, such as additional employee costs and shortfall in income, as well as potential risks in delivering the approved savings options for 2007/08.

Management actions including holding posts vacant and tight controls on agency recruitment and supplies and services spend remain in place, and are continuing to reduce the overspend position.

3.5.2 Directorate & Support

Vacancies, and management action not to recruit to vacancies, will produce an estimated underspend of £189k.

3.5.3 Housing Strategy

The current forecast is that the service will incur an overspend of £275k, of which £101k relates to reduced income in Property services and on Commercial property. This pressure was previously reported under the Asset Strategy and Capital Delivery service. In addition there have also been additional costs incurred as result of the delivery of the land disposal programme.

3.5.4 Spatial Regeneration

It is forecasted that the service will incur an overspend of £120k in 2007/08. This overspend projection now includes the Local Land Charge service which recently transferred from the Resources department. As a result of the new Local Land Charges (LLC) regulations introduced on the 1st April 2007, the LLC service is projecting a budget shortfall in 2007/08 of £155k, which has arisen due to the requirement that LLC income should not in future exceed the cost of providing the service. This overspend in 2007/08 will be funded from various underspends which have been identified within the Resources department.

3.5.5 Skills, Learning and Enterprise

An overall projected pressure of £328k is identified within the Skills, Learning and Enterprise Service. This position has arisen due to an income shortfall of £60k as a result of a change in policy by the Learning Skills Council, a further funding shortfall from the LSC (£70k) and a planned budget saving option to increase income by £25k in the B&D Training Services not being achievable. In addition the Project Trident service, the Lifelong learning team and Building East are all experiencing pressures within their budgets, and further work is being undertaken to examine these issues. Improved VFM will be achieved within the service by the merger of the Adult College and Barking and Dagenham Training Services as a single business unit. This will achieve efficiencies and savings in terms of contract administration with the Learning & Skills Council, and with general administrative and finance functions.

3.5.6 Leisure, Arts and Olympics

An overall projected pressure of £7k is identified within the Leisure, Arts and Olympics Skills Service. The majority of pressures in 2007/08 have related to the leisure centres (employee costs, security costs and supplies and services) and the nursery services (employee costs and income). Some of these pressures have been offset by both staffing vacancies across the division and additional income within the parks service. The interim reviews of both the grounds maintenance and leisure centre functions have identified opportunities to improve value for money and to contain costs within budget, and an action plan is currently being prepared.

3.5.7 Asset Strategy and Capital Delivery

The division is reporting a projected overspend of £57k which compares favourable to the forecasted £110k overspend position reported in January. The reason for this change relates to reduced spend on leaseholder buildings and reductions in staffing costs.

3.6 Resources Department

3.6.1 The Department is now forecasting an underspend of £69k. This revised position now includes the transfer of the Local Land charges service to the Regeneration department, and the transfer of both the facilities management and public buildings services into the department from Regeneration. The approval and implementation of a detailed action plan by the department's management team has been successful in producing this forecasted outturn position, and details of actions taken include holding vacant posts and tight controls on both the use of agency recruitment and supplies and services spend.

3.6.2 **Democracy and Partnerships**

This service now includes the transfer of the facilities management and public buildings services from the Regeneration department. As a result of these transfers the service is now projecting to overspend by £66k. The main reasons for this overspend relate to a proposed saving in Building Cleaning not being achieved (£55k) and additional costs of the Software licences for the Geographic Information System (GIS). This overspend will be funded from underspends elsewhere in both the Regeneration and the Resources department.

3.6.3 **Performance and Delivery**

There are currently no immediate issues within these budgets and it is now projected that these will breakeven by the end of the financial year.

3.6.4 **Strategic Finance and Audit**

There are currently no immediate issues within the Strategic Finance & Audit budget. As a result of the departmental action plan it is now projected that the service will underspend by the end of the financial year and this will contribute to the overall departmental position.

3.6.5 **ICT & e-Government**

There are currently no immediate issues within these budgets. As a result of the departmental action plan it is now projected that the service will underspend by the end of the financial year and this will contribute to the overall departmental position.

3.6.6 **Legal Services**

The Local Land Charges (LLC) service has now transferred to the Regeneration department. The projected 2007/08 overspend in this area (as set out in paragraph 3.5.4) will be funded within the Resources department. The remaining pressures in the service relate to the recent review undertaken of the service. As part of the departmental action plan these additional costs will now be funded from underspends elsewhere within the department.

3.6.7 Human Resources

The division is experiencing a particular pressure in relation to the saving proposal to reduce Payroll staffing. As part of the departmental action plan it is now projected that this service will broadly break-even.

3.6.8 Corporate Finance

The division continues to have some vacancies, some of which are being occupied by temporary staff. The division has now finished reviewing its staff structure (including its vacant posts) in light of both operational experience over the last 6 months and a number of minor changes that have taken place within the Council wide structure. The division will also be undertaking a major review of its accounting structure during 2008, which when completed will create significant benefits in terms of financial and management information for all staff in the organisation. There are currently no immediate issues within these budgets, and as a result of the departmental action plan it is projected that the service will underspend by the end of the financial year, and this will contribute to the overall departmental position.

3.6.9 Corporate Management and General Finance

There are currently no immediate issues within these budgets and it is projected that these will breakeven by the end of the financial year.

3.6.10 Interest on Balances

The current position on interest from investments is that these are performing to the budget target. A significant proportion of the Council's investments continue to be managed by two external investment managers, and the Council's Treasury Management Strategy has set stretching targets for these managers in 2007/08 which are being closely monitored by the Corporate Finance Division. An element of these investments will require the use of investment instruments such as gilts to be used which require tactical trades to be undertaken. Inevitably there are risks and rewards with the use of such investment instruments, and whilst the Council needs to continue to review the manager's performance it also needs to be aware that these potential risks/rewards do exist.

The position of interest on balances is also affected during the year by both performance and actual spend on the Capital Programme and the delivery of the Council's disposals programme. Any positive position arising in these areas may allow Council balances to increase, whilst at the same time any weakening may lead to reductions.

4. Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

4.1 The HRA is currently projecting a surplus against its revised budget (i.e. an increase to balances) of £315k for 2007/08, which will result in an estimated opening working balance of £3m for 2008/09.

In general terms, the increase in the negative subsidy payable to the Government has, and will continue to increase the pressures on the HRA. In addition Right to Buy sales will reduce stock levels which will result in income falling, and the challenge will be to ensure that costs fall in line with the reducing stock.

There are also other significant pressures on the HRA including repairs and maintenance spend, premises costs, rising energy prices and reducing Supporting People Grant. In part this may be off-set by improved performance in rent collection and better management of voids.

4.2 Specific issues relating to the HRA include:

- Overall income is forecast to overachieve by £2.4m. This is due to a combination of 2007/08 being a 53 week year (£1.5m) thereby allowing the HRA to achieve an additional one week's rental income, and £600k increase in rental income due to lower than budgeted void and write off levels. Right to Buy sales are in line with the 200 sales forecast in 2007/08;
- Supervision and Management budgets are currently forecast to overspend due to increased employee and premises associated costs;
- The Repairs and Maintenance budget is forecast to overspend by £1.57m mainly due to increased demand.;
- Interest receipts are projected to exceed the original forecast by £315k due to improvements in interest rates during 2007/08.

A summary of the latest position for the HRA for 2007/08 is shown in Appendix B.

5. Capital Programme

5.1 As at the end of February, the working budget on the capital programme was £63.2m against an original budget of £75.1m.

5.2 Actual expenditure as at the end of February was £44.3m, which is equivalent to 70% of the annual budget after 11 months of the year. In addition to March expenditure, creditors will need to be raised for work completed but not yet paid for. The latest expectations are therefore that outturn capital expenditure will be £60.8m, or 96% of the current working budget.

5.3 The main expected variance from budget is in respect of Housing Futures, where the projected outturn is £2.6m lower than the current working budget. A further variance is in respect of expenditure on Children's Centres, which is expected to exceed budget by £0.7m.

5.4 Progress on capital projects continues to be monitored through the monthly Resource Monitoring Panels. The completion of capital projects on time and on budget not only supports the Council's drive to excellence through its Use of Resources score, but will also ensure that the benefits arising from our capital projects are realised for the community as a whole.

6. Consultees

6.1 The members and officers consulted on this report are:

- Councillor Bramley
- Corporate Management Team
- Group Managers – Corporate Finance
- Enterprise Programme Office

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- Oracle & CPMO reports

REVENUE BUDGET 2007/2008

APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF POSITION - FEBRUARY 2008

<u>Department</u>	<u>Original Budget 2007/08</u>	<u>Working Budget 2007/08</u>	<u>Budget to date</u>	<u>Actual to date</u>	<u>Current projected position</u>	<u>Current projected variance</u>	<u>Action in place/ to be taken</u>	<u>Projected Outturn 2007/08</u>
	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>
Adults & Community Services	58,647	59,972	57,814	57,815	59,972	0	0	0
Children's Services	172,184	183,761	163,069	159,575	184,344	583		583
Customer Services	27,896	28,054	23,908	25,122	28,455	81		81
Regeneration	10,266	10,975	9,566	10,880	11,673	598		598
Resources	1,153	1,633	(17,779)	(17,126)	1,564	(69)		(69)
Total for Department's	270,146	284,395	236,578	236,266	286,008	1,193	0	1,193
<u>Other Services</u>								
Corporate Management	4,930	4,740	4,345	4,421	4,740	0	0	0
General Finance	(19,470)	(33,295)	(31,431)	(31,535)	(33,295)	0	0	0
Contingency	1,200	966	0		966	0	0	0
Levies & precepts	6,581	6,581	6,568	6,568	6,581	0	0	0
Total for Other Services	(6,759)	(21,008)	(20,518)	(20,546)	(21,008)	0	0	0
Total Council Budget	263,387	263,387	216,060	215,720	265,000	1,193	0	1,193

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HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - BUDGET MONITORING SUMMARY

APPENDIX B

Month February 2008

<u>Housing Revenue Account</u>	<u>Original Budget</u> <u>£'000</u>	<u>Revised Budget</u> <u>£'000</u>	<u>Budget Feb-08</u> <u>£'000</u>	<u>Actual Feb-08</u> <u>£'000</u>	<u>Forecast</u> <u>£'000</u>	<u>Variance</u> <u>£'000</u>
NET RENT OF DWELLINGS	(69,047)	(69,047)	(63,294)	(64,676)	(71,175)	(2,128)
OTHER RENTS	(2,438)	(2,438)	(2,235)	(2,235)	(2,340)	98
OTHER CHARGES	(5,170)	(5,170)	(4,739)	(4,739)	(5,113)	57
CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS EXPEDITURE	0	(825)	(756)	(703)	(1,263)	(438)
TOTAL INCOME	(76,655)	(77,480)	(71,024)	(72,353)	(79,891)	(2,411)
REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE	21,878	21,722	19,912	19,456	23,289	1,567
SUPERVISION & MANAGEMENT	24,023	24,843	22,773	23,461	25,908	1,065
RENT, RATES AND OTHER CHARGES	994	379	0	0	424	45
NEGATIVE HRA SUBSIDY PAYABLE	14,125	14,125	14,125	14,125	14,125	0
NEGATIVE HRA SUBSIDY TRANSFERABLE TO GENERAL FUND UNDER TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS	3,449	3,449	0	0	3,174	(275)
DEPRECIATION & IMPAIRMENT OF FIXED ASSETS	23,197	23,197	21,264	21,264	23,197	0
HRA SHARE OF CDC COSTS	750	776	711	711	776	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	88,416	88,491	78,785	79,017	90,893	2,402
INTEREST EARNED	(1,354)	(1,354)	(1,241)	(1,530)	(1,669)	(315)
NET COST OF SERVICE	10,407	9,657	6,520	5,134	9,333	(324)
DEPRECIATION ADJUSTMENT	(10,098)	(10,098)	(9,257)	(9,257)	(10,089)	9
MOVEMENT IN WORKING BALANCE	309	(441)	(2,737)	(4,123)	(756)	(315)
WORKING BALANCE B/F	(2,776)	(1,665)			(1,665)	0
EARMARKED RESERVE - HOUSING SUBSIDY		(580)			(580)	
WORKING BALANCE C/F	(2,467)	(2,686)			(3,001)	(315)

Notes:

(1) Revised Budget b/fwd balance reflects the closing working balance as per 2006/07 outturn

(2) Revised Budget c/fwd balance reflects estimated balances at year end

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APPENDIX C

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2007/2008

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURE - FEBRUARY 2008

<u>Department</u>	<u>Original Budget (1)</u>	<u>Working Budget</u>	<u>Actual to date</u>	<u>Percentage Spend to Date</u>	<u>Projected Outturn</u>	<u>Projected Outturn against Revised Budget</u>	<u>Projected Outturn against Original Budget</u>
<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>
Adult & Community Services	2,019	2,138	1,243	58%	1,785	(353)	(234)
Children's Services	9,718	8,542	8,033	94%	9,495	953	(223)
Customer Services	42,505	11,448	8,522	74%	11,283	(165)	(31,222)
Regeneration	19,407	39,725	25,478	64%	36,857	(2,868)	17,450
Resources	1,467	1,326	888	67%	1,322	(4)	(145)
Total for Department Schemes	75,116	63,179	44,164	70%	60,742	(2,437)	(14,374)
Accountable Body Schemes							
Regeneration	-	111	97	87%	111	0	111
Total for Accountable Body Schemes	-	111	97	87%	111	0	111
Total for all Schemes	75,116	63,290	44,261	70%	60,853	(2,437)	(14,263)

Note

(1) Excludes provisional schemes approved at Executive 20th February subject to achieving 'four green lights' from EPO appraisal

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THE EXECUTIVE

7 MAY 2008

JOINT REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER SERVICES AND THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION

Title: East London Transit – Agreements with Transport for London	For Decision
<p>Summary: The Council has given its support to the implementation of the East London Transit (ELT) route along roads in the Borough. Work is due to commence in September 2008.</p> <p>With the exception of a small length of road over the A13, the Council is the Highway Authority for the whole route but in order to expedite implementation of the project it is recommended that a number of functions/powers be the subject of agreements between the Council and Transport for London (TfL) by which the ELT project team can undertake the works and prepare appropriate orders accordingly.</p> <p>The Council will retain overall traffic management functions as set out in the Traffic Management Act. Officers of the Highways Group within the Customer Services Department will work closely with the ELT project team to ensure coordination of all works related to the ELT project with the works of utilities and other works being undertaken within the Borough on behalf of the Council and others.</p> <p>On completion of the ELT project the powers/functions will transfer back to the Authority.</p> <p>ELT/TfL will be providing funding resources to the Borough to cover part of the cost of a senior engineer and Clerk of Works in support of highway services. ELT/TfL will be expected to lead on a communications and engagement plan, with support of Council officers, in order to mitigate any potential costs to the Council for high levels of interest from the community.</p> <p>Wards Affected: Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames</p>	
<p>Recommendation(s) The Executive is asked to the Assembly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) To approve the terms to enter into an agreement with Transport for London pursuant to Section 101 of the Local government Act 1072 and Section 8 of the Highways Act 1980 as set out in the report; and (ii) That the Corporate Director of Customer Services, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Regeneration and the Divisional Director of Legal and Democratic Services, be given delegated authority to agree the detail of the Agreements; 	
<p>Reason(s) To assist the Council in achieving its Council Priority 'Regenerating the Borough'.</p>	

Implications:**Financial:**

The full cost of implementing the agreement and thereafter the costs associated with the powers/functions being undertaken by TfL via the ELT project team will be met by TfL. The potential resource implications of high levels of interest by the community will be carried by the ELT team with support from Council officers. ELT/TfL will be funding officer resources to oversee and liaise with the project team.

Legal:

Legal Agreements will be entered into pursuant to Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and Section 8 of the Highways Act 1980 in order to implement the proposals. As this involves the transfer of functions to another Authority, a decision of the Assembly is required under the Council's Constitution.

Risk Management:

1. The ELT project team propose operations that are deleterious to traffic flow within the Borough
 - There will be clear lines of responsibility between the Borough and the ELT project team from which agreement will be reached on working arrangements. Operations that have a significant implication on traffic movement will need to be agreed with the Borough
2. The project does not commence
 - The transferred powers/functions will revert back to the Borough
3. High levels of community interest requiring officer engagement
 - TfL/ELT to provide resources for Council services. In addition the ELT project team to lead and become the focal point of community engagement

Social Inclusion and Diversity:

No specific implications that relate to the transfer of responsibilities

Crime and Disorder:

No specific implications that relate to the transfer of responsibilities

Options Appraisal:

Consideration has been given to not transferring the powers/responsibilities however it was considered that there was little risk in recommending these agreements in terms of potential difficulties to the Borough and the agreements represent an efficient means by which the ELT project team can administer the necessary changes without undue burden on the Council.

Contact Officer: Gary Ellison	Title: Group Manager for Highways and Civil Engineering	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 3226 Fax: 020 8227 3116 E-mail: gary.ellison@lbbd.gov.uk
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1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 After considering a number of significant issues related to the route of the East London Transit, the Council now supports its implementation. Work has commenced on detailed design and the ELT project team have issued tender documents in preparation of physical commencement.
- 1.2 Almost the entire ELT route within the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham is on land where the Council is the Highway Authority. As a consequence the Council is responsible for approving and coordinating all works that take place on these roads and footpaths.
- 1.3 Under the Traffic Management Act the Council has a duty to efficiently manage traffic on its highways and to have a designated Traffic Manager. Gary Ellison, Group Manager for Highways and Civil Engineering Services, is designated as the Borough's Traffic Manager.
- 1.4 Transport for London have sought the Council's support in entering into an agreement under Section 8 of the Highway Act 1980 to undertake works on the Public Highway and to enter into an agreement under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 to prepare orders on the Public Highway.
- 1.5 Discussion is continuing with regard to the details in the agreements, and a recommendation of the Executive is now sought to enter into these agreements which in the case of the Section 101 Agreement in particular requires Assembly approval as it involves the transfer of functions to another Authority

2. Agreement under Section 8 of the Highways Act 1980

- 2.1 Such an agreement will enable TfL, via the ELT project team, to implement the project on the Public Highway. TfL will appoint a contractor to carry out the physical construction work along the designated route.
- 2.2 The only works that are permitted under this agreement are in respect of those agreed with the Council as being part of the ELT project and within the ELT Zone which represents the ELT route plus associated improvement works.
- 2.3 TfL/ELT will agree with the Council prior to commencement the phasing of the works, specifications and standards, environmental mitigation measures and traffic management arrangements. This arrangement will be in place until completion of the defects period.
- 2.4 TfL will bear the whole costs of undertaking the improvements including any remedial works required during the maintenance period. In addition TfL will pay the Council's reasonable legal costs in preparing this agreement.
- 2.5 TfL has agreed to pay for the Council's costs in supervising construction works. Final agreement has yet to be reached in this respect but it is likely that funding will be provided for a Clerk of Works and a senior engineering officer on a part time basis throughout the project.

- 2.6 TfL indemnifies the Council against any claims or loss that result from the project
- 2.7 In the unlikely event that the Council and TfL find conflict, there are measures within the agreement as to how these can be progressed and resolved.

3. Agreement under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972

- 3.1 Such an agreement will enable TfL, via the ELT project team, to be responsible for making Traffic Management Orders relating to the ELT route until such time that the project is fully completed. This will include permanent and temporary orders in relation to regulating or controlling traffic and parking controls.
- 3.2 The agreement will come into effect at an agreed date and can be terminated by either party by giving not less than three months notice however every endeavour will be made by all parties to work in cooperation and to coordinate all works.
- 3.3 TfL/ELT will pay all costs related to any Orders including administration, advertising, and costs of any public inquiries that may become necessary. Additionally they will meet any reasonable cost incurred by the Council in this respect.
- 3.4 The ELT project team will consult with the Council before making any Orders and will take account any representations.
- 3.5 These arrangements will also apply to any existing Orders that need to be modified and/or revoked.
- 3.6 The Council retains its authority to make any orders deemed necessary but agrees to notify and discuss with TfL/ELT the Council's intentions and to take reasonable account of the views of TfL/ELT
- 3.7 The Council agrees to enforce, where possible and practical, the orders being implemented under this agreement.
- 3.8 TfL indemnifies the Council against any claims or loss that result from the project

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Council enters into these agreements. It is proposed that the Corporate Director of Customer Services be authorised to agree the detail of the Agreements in consultation with the Corporate Director of Regeneration and the Divisional Director of Legal and Democratic Services.
- 4.2 The Council retains the role of being responsible for overall traffic management along the construction routes however it is recognised as an inherent requirement of the project that officers of the Highways Services develop and maintain close working relationships with the ELT project team and the works contractor(s) from commencement through to the agreed defects completion period.
- 4.3 The Council will seek to support the successful implementation of the ELT project with the minimum amount of disruption to the community and the travelling public. It will only exercise its ultimate authority of preventing work or changing

programmes under the Traffic Management Act via its Traffic Manager as a last resort and after all alternative discussions and negotiations have been exhausted

5. Consultees

5.1 The following were consulted in the preparation of this report:

Robin Hanton, Group Manager, Corporate Legal Services

Darren Henaghan, Head of Environment and Enforcement Services

Jeremy Grint, Head of Spatial Regeneration

David Higham, Group Manager, Transport Strategy

Mo Choudhury, Principal Engineer

Tony McNamara, Interim Group Manager Customer Services

Alex Anderson, Group Manager, Regeneration and Customer Services Finance

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THE EXECUTIVE

7 MAY 2008

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Title: Libraries Strategy	For Decision
<p>Summary: A libraries strategy has been drafted which aims to ensure that the library service is fit for purpose to meet the needs of the borough's growing and changing population, while making a significant contribution to key borough priorities relating to skills and wellbeing.</p> <p>The report summarises the key actions which it is proposed will deliver these outcomes, and the performance and financial implications of the strategy.</p> <p>Member approval of the draft strategy is sought, prior to staff and public consultation.</p> <p>Wards Affected: All</p>	
<p>Recommendation(s) The Executive is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Agree the draft libraries strategy, subject to consultation with staff and the community; and, (ii) Agree in principle to the development of plans for a reprovisioned library at Rush Green as part of a redevelopment of the Barking College site, subject to a further report on detailed proposals including capital funding 	
<p>Reason (s) To assist the Council to achieve its Community Priorities of 'Raising General Pride in the Borough', 'Improving Health, Housing and Social Care', 'Providing Better Education and Learning for All' and 'Regenerating the Local Economy'.</p>	
<p>Implications:</p> <p>Financial: The Libraries Strategy covers a variety of options regarding the future of the Library service - all of which have financial implications, some of which are additional financial implications (see paragraph 3 for Capital and Revenue implications).</p> <p>In summary, the salient financial points contained within are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation that the current Library service and costs (including extended opening hours), can be contained within the current £4m libraries base budget for 2008/9 (Paragraph 1.6) • Additional net revenue costs for the proposed new Dagenham Library, for which no provision currently exists, are identified in a report elsewhere on the Executive agenda • Proposed initiatives around skills and tackling worklessness (£300,000 estimate), and the improved health and well-being agenda (£200,000 estimate) linked to the libraries strategy (paragraph 2.4(xii) and 2.4(xiii)) amount to an estimated £500,000 cost. Officers will investigate funding from within existing resources including LAA and ABG 	

grants redistribution, and partner negotiations with the Primary Care Trust regarding health and well-being initiatives

- Additional Capital requirements of the strategy at this stage are provisional and to be confirmed, but are potentially significant and will no doubt lead to additional borrowing costs for the service
- It is suggested that a zero base budget review is performed of the Libraries service in 2008/9 to seek to identify efficiencies which can be redirected into the service expansion.

Legal:

The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 requires each library authority to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient library service'. The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport has a duty under the same Act to superintend the delivery of library services and to promote the improvement of public libraries. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has made it clear that it considers the Public Library Service Standards as key indicators as to whether an authority is meeting its legal requirements under the Act.

Risk Management:

There is a risk that, if performance by the library service is significantly poorer than in comparable authorities, the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport may intervene. Any reduction in service levels would also risk significant local opposition, as well as a missed opportunity to contribute to wider borough objectives. The strategy proposed in this report is designed to mitigate those risks.

Social Inclusion and Diversity:

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places a requirement on local authorities to make an assessment of the impact of new and revised policies in terms of race equality. Existing policies have already been subjected to impact assessments. This Authority has adopted an approach of extending the impact to cover gender, disability, sexuality, faith, and age and community cohesion.

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed for the Libraries Service. The assessment identifies a lack of detailed information about the profile of library users, due to a comparatively small number of library members supplying information about their disability/sexuality/ethnic background. Addressing this gap in information has been identified as a key action arising from the EIA.

Where it is possible to assess the needs and implications for different equality theme groups in relation to the service, it is clear that the proposals of this strategy, i.e. extending opening hours, making services more attractive for a wider range of people, and providing a network of libraries across the borough will have a positive impact on these groups. If a decision were to be taken to reduce the number of libraries, this would particularly have an impact on older people, younger children and people with disabilities, who are in general terms less able to travel to libraries outside their immediate neighbourhood.

Crime and Disorder:

The libraries service makes a positive contribution to reducing crime and disorder in a number of ways:

- Delivering diversionary activities and a safe space for young people
- Providing a forum in which crime prevention advice can be shared with older people, via coffee mornings
- Libraries have provided a venue for cycle safety courses and cycle marking campaigns

- Libraries staff invite crime prevention officers to visit their premises to consider changes to buildings to reduce the risk of crime. Crime prevention advice is also considered when designing new buildings.

Any reduction in the network of library buildings will have a commensurate impact on the service's ability to support crime and disorder objectives. Conversely, an increase in the attractiveness and accessibility of libraries will increase the potential to reach greater numbers of people with these messages and services.

Contact Officer: Heather Wills	Title: Head of Community Services Libraries and Heritage	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 2786 Fax: 020 8227 2214 E-mail: heather.wills@lbbd.gov.uk
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1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 In 2002, a Best Value review of Libraries was conducted. The Audit Commission reviewed a report based on that review, and concluded that the service was good, with uncertain prospects for improvement. The Audit Commission made the following recommendations:
- A strategy for increasing visits should be put in place
 - A process should be implemented to ensure that user feedback informs service planning and improvements
 - The service charter should be revised and adopted in consultation with service users
 - Service objectives should be simplified
 - A review of opening hours should be brought forward
 - A medium to long term financial strategy should be developed for the service including realistic targets for income generation
 - Electronic trading for stock purchases and online reservations should be implemented
- 1.2 Of these recommendations, several remain outstanding, although consultation on the service charter has taken place, realistic income targets have been set, online reservations are in place and electronic trading is being planned.
- 1.3 In 2006, the Audit Commission conducted an inspection of Cultural Services in Barking and Dagenham, which included Libraries, and concluded that the borough provides fair cultural services with promising prospects for improvement.
- 1.4 There are some areas in which the borough's library service performs comparatively strongly. These include:
- Capital investment in buildings
 - Number of libraries/1,000 population
 - Revenue expenditure on book stock
 - Customer satisfaction
- 1.5 However, there are other areas where the service performs comparatively poorly:
- Number of visits to libraries/1,000 population (the main indicator of use of libraries)

- Number of library staff/1,000 population
- Contemporary look and feel of library buildings and style of service

1.6 There has been recent investment in the service to ensure that structural budget issues were addressed, and to enable increased opening hours at some sites. This puts the service in a strong position to move forward, and to make a positive contribution to achieving the wider objectives of the borough.

1.7 No explicit strategy for libraries in the borough currently exists. There are a number of issues, pressures and opportunities which make the need for a strategic approach to library services in the borough particularly urgent. These include:

- Libraries' current performance against key performance indicators, and as part of the CPA Culture Block
- A diverse and high-profile range of library capital projects
- The nature of current service provision, based on a range of historical factors
- The increasing population of the borough
- An emerging national agenda for libraries

2. A draft Libraries Strategy for Barking and Dagenham

2.1 A strategy for libraries has been drafted, and is attached at Appendix 1. The proposed mission statement for the service 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 enrich people's lives and enable them to achieve their full potential.

2.2 The Library Service has the potential to make considerable contributions to a number of key Council and Partnership agendas, including:

- Tackling skills levels and worklessness
- Health and wellbeing
- Raising achievement
- Community cohesion
- Excellent customer services

The strategy is designed to enable libraries to reach their full potential so that they can support services across the Partnership to achieve their objectives.

2.3 The strategy is based on the key themes of:

- Accessibility:
 - Library locations and numbers
 - Opening hours
- Quality services:
 - Buildings
 - Service standards
 - Investment in stock
 - IT services
 - Investing in staff
 - Contemporary marketing
- Value for money:
 - Focusing resources to add value
 - Volunteering

- Partnership working
- Providing improved life chances:
 - Increasing skills and tackling worklessness
 - Supporting improved health and wellbeing

2.4 The key issues addressed under each of these themes are summarised below:

- (i) **Accessibility:** the borough has the third greatest number of libraries/1,000 population anywhere in London. This will be rationalised slightly when the new Dagenham library opens, replacing Fanshawe and Rectory libraries. Proposals for the new Dagenham library appear elsewhere on this agenda. However, the borough's expanding population means that plans need to be prepared to further extend the library network into Barking Riverside.

It is also important that libraries are fit for purpose in terms of scale. At present Rush Green library is too small to enable an adequate service to be provided. The strategy proposes its replacement and the reprovisioning of Wantz library in a joint venture with Barking College, taking the unique opportunity provided by their site redevelopment. Member agreement in principle is sought to develop plans with the College to enable a bid for capital funding in due course.

- (ii) **Opening hours:** the borough has under-utilised its most expensive asset: the network of library buildings. Many of them are open only part of the week, and user feedback is clear that part-time opening is confusing and leads to lower usage. It is considered that the inconsistency and low level of opening hours at many libraries is a major reason why use of the borough's libraries is not as high as might be expected. An investment has already been made to increase opening hours at the BLC, Marks Gate and Thames View libraries, following a pilot programme, and further work will be done to ensure that opening hours more closely match demand at other libraries, within existing budgets.

- (iii) **Library buildings:** while libraries in the borough have received relatively good levels of capital investment, proportionate revenue investment has not been made ongoing, and so the quality of the user experience is deteriorating over time. The strategy proposes:
- An appropriate level of revenue expenditure on library building maintenance ongoing
 - Re-ordering of libraries at Thames View and Marks Gate to maximise potential for co-operative working in mixed use buildings, leading to increased service take-up
 - Modernisation of buildings at Valence, Markyate and Robert Jeyes libraries in order to enable the provision of contemporary, attractive library services

The last two proposals will be subject to bids to the Council's capital programme in due course.

- (iv) **Service standards:** libraries, alongside the rest of Cultural Services, have been consulting with the public on the standards of service which are important to local people in their libraries. This consultation has recently

been completed and standards will be drafted in light of the responses received.

- (v) **Investment in stock:** the borough continues to invest comparatively heavily in its library stock: the strategy proposes that this should continue.
- (vi) **IT services:** The Council has recently replaced all People's Network PCs with new PCs and the new ICT strategy agreed by the Council outlines a commitment to on-going investment in the modernisation of the infrastructure, recognising that that this will be an on-going programme. If this were not to happen corporately, then it will be necessary for funds to be identified for the library service to update its own IT services, in order to meet public needs.
- (vii) **Investing in staff:** The provision of adequate staffing levels to facilitate attendance at training and staff briefings should make a significant difference to the service's ability to develop its staff. There are, however, significant risks to the service arising from the significant percentage of the borough's library staff who are due to retire in the next few years, particularly in the context of a national shortage of professionally qualified staff, particularly at senior levels. Continued investment in the service is even more important, therefore, in order that the service is sufficiently attractive to recruit a high quality of staff. The service will also continue to encourage its staff to pursue accredited qualifications, including professional qualifications, in order to 'grow its own talent'.
- (viii) **Contemporary marketing:** If the Council is to achieve its objectives in terms of increasing skills in the local population, then it is essential that libraries' potential to reach out to those 'turned off' previous learning is maximised. However, in the 21st century, people have many things they can be doing in their leisure time- and libraries need to compete for this to reach them. Libraries therefore need to use marketing and branding techniques as contemporary and sophisticated as their commercial rivals (such as shops and leisure providers) to ensure that they raise their profile and communicate what they can offer to local people in an attractive way.
- (ix) **Focusing resources to add value:** Technology will be fully exploited to enable customer self-service as far as possible. Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) has the potential to simplify loan administration, improve security, enable staff to spend more time helping customers to get better use of their library and extend opening hours. Barking Learning Centre will be the first library to pilot this technology, and then it is proposed to roll it out across the borough.
- (x) **Volunteering:** the use of volunteers in libraries in the borough to date has been limited. There is scope, as part of a strategy to develop the skills and work chances of local residents through volunteering, to work with, for example, the Adult College to offer training and support to local people to become volunteers in the library service, and hence to extend service provision further.

- (xi) **Partnership working:** libraries have a significant track record of partnership working, having entered into a consortium with 8 other London boroughs to procure stock supply contracts and also a contract for a library management system. This has enabled the borough to achieve economies of scale in the management of the contracts, as well as introducing a considerably enhanced library computer system which provides a number of benefits which the old system did not:
- Meets CIPFA management information reporting requirements
 - Meets e-Government metadata requirements
 - Enables borrowers to consult catalogues for all 9 boroughs and to reserve books from them to be sent to their local library
- (xii) **Increasing skills and tackling worklessness:** libraries offer a non-threatening opportunity to re-enter the world of learning through highly accessible venues, offering many initiatives such as family literacy classes and basic skills support. This often leads to more formal qualifications, facilitated by libraries' highly developed links with other learning providers in the borough. Libraries are therefore well-placed to contribute significantly to increasing skills levels in the borough, equipping local people to compete for jobs and reducing the numbers of NEETS (not in employment, education or training), and will reach even more people as their accessibility and attractiveness is increased.

In addition to actions already listed, Libraries have worked with colleagues in Skills, Learning and Enterprise to devise a programme of enhanced activities to support the development of skills and employability in the local population to be delivered through libraries, including:

- *Surgeries* for advice and guidance on job seeking and training opportunities
- Informal *ICT learning*, using the People's Network as a route to attract people to more structured learning
- *Family learning* extended into libraries beyond school-based settings
- The creation of *apprenticeship* opportunities in libraries
- An enhanced programme of *reader development*
- All of the above will be linked through to clear *learning progression routes*, to support people to gain appropriate qualifications in a way that is right for them

- (xiii) **Supporting improved health and wellbeing:** Libraries already provide a range of services and activities which support the health and wellbeing of the local population. A further programme has been developed, in consultation with the PCT, which will ensure that libraries' potential contribution is maximised, including training to help people become healthier at the same time as improving their language skills, providing 'information prescriptions' for health information and advice, and supporting a wide range of partners to get health and wellbeing messages across via libraries.

3. Financial implications of the Libraries Strategy

- 3.1 The financial implications of the Libraries Strategy which cannot be met within existing budgets, and the route through which it is proposed to address them, is set out in the following tables:

Revenue

Action	£	Funding source
A new library for Dagenham	See report elsewhere on the Executive agenda	See report elsewhere on the Executive agenda
A new library for Rush Green	TBC	To be identified following development of plans- efficiencies to be achieved through joint working with the College
A library for Barking Riverside	TBC	To be identified following development of plans
Ongoing repair and maintenance of library buildings	£20,000	Corporate asset maintenance programme
Tackling skills and worklessness and contemporary branding/ marketing strategy	£300,000	LAA/ Working Neighbourhood Fund
Promoting health and wellbeing, developing volunteering	£200,000 (approx)	PCT LDP programme

Capital

Action	£	Funding source
A new library for Dagenham	See report elsewhere on the Executive agenda	See report elsewhere on the Executive agenda
A new library for Rush Green	£1,000,000 (provisional)	Bid to capital programme 2009/10
A library for Barking Riverside	TBC (shell only to be provided by developer)	Pending development of plans: bid to capital programme 2009/10
Re-order Marks Gate library	£1,500,000	Bid to capital programme 2009/10
Modernise Valence library	£50,000	Bid to capital programme 2009/10
Re-model Markyate library entrance	TBC	Develop feasibility study with PCT
Improve Robert Jeyes library garden	£60,000	Bid to capital programme 2009/10
Refurbish existing libraries ongoing	£30,000	Bid to capital programme 2010/11 and ongoing
RFID/ self service	£200,000	Bid to Council's IT innovation programme

- 3.2 The opportunity will be taken in 2008/9 to conduct a zero based budgeting exercise for the library service, to seek to identify efficiencies which can be redirected into the service to assist in achieving this strategy without recourse to additional funding.

4. Asset implications

- 4.1 Any requirement for future premises will be reviewed via the Council's Corporate Asset Management Group in the first instance to ensure that other existing or planned assets would not fulfil these requirements. Proposals contained within this strategy have either been subject to this review (in the case of Rush Green), or will be prior to any proposals coming forward to the capital programme (in the case of Marks Gate).
- 4.2 Likewise, where any library building becomes surplus to requirements, it will be reviewed as a corporate disposal and subject to the formal disposal process.

5. Impact on performance

- 5.1 If the proposed investment is achieved, it is forecast that this would have the following impact on performance by 2010/11 (taking account of projected population increases):

	Barking & Dagenham 07/08*	Barking & Dagenham 10/11	London average**	Public Libraries Service Standard
Population/ library	15,000	17,698	20,379	N/A
Opening hours/ 1,000 pop	128	133	111	128
Visits/ 1,000 pop	6,040	7,500	7,176	8,600

*Projection

**Figures for 2006/7- latest figures available

6. Alternative options considered

- 6.1 A number of alternative options have been considered when developing this strategy. Alternative options relating to Dagenham library are considered in a report elsewhere on this agenda, but other alternatives are summarised below:

Option 1: Status quo, no further investment to support skills, worklessness or wellbeing agendas, marketing or building investment.

Option 2: Do not proceed with reprovisioned Rush Green library, close Wantz library when Dagenham opens.

Option 3: Do not proceed with reprovisioned Rush Green library, close Wantz library when Dagenham opens, close Markyate and Rush Green libraries.

- 6.2 A table summarising the estimated implications of each of these options is given below.

Options summary

Option	Service implications	Financial implications*	Performance implications 2010/11
<p>1: Status quo, no further investment to support skills, worklessness or wellbeing agendas, marketing or buildings investment (apart from Dagenham and Rush Green).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential contribution to borough priorities not achieved Usage of libraries remains sub-optimal, and hence outputs from libraries expenditure not maximised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £520k revenue not required £1.8m capital not required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population/library: 17,698 Opening hours/1,000 population: 133 Visits/1,000 population: 6,776
<p>2: As 1 above, plus do not proceed with re-provisioned Rush Green library, close Wantz library when Dagenham opens.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As 1 above, plus: Sub-optimal provision remains at Rush Green Users of Wantz library may not travel to Dagenham library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As 1 above, plus: £125k revenue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population/library: 19,665 Opening hours/1,000 population: 121 Visits/1,000 population: 6,397
<p>3: As 2 above, plus close Markyate and Rush Green libraries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As 2 above, plus: Significant numbers (15,300 or 9%) of the borough population no longer live within 1 mile of an LBBB public library (Public Library Service Standard) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As 2 above, plus: £84k revenue (Markyate) plus £73k revenue (Rush Green) Total saving: £283k 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population/library: 25,283 Opening hours/1,000 population: 108 Visits/1,000 population: 6,233

*All revenue costs at 2007/8 rates

5. Next steps

- 5.1 The Executive is asked to agree to a programme of public and staff consultation relating to the draft strategy which appears at Appendix 1.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 People consulted during the preparation of this report:
Cllr Bob Little, Portfolio Holder for Libraries
Cllr Graham Bramley, Portfolio Holder for Resources
Jennifer Dearing, Corporate Director, Regeneration
Roger Luxton, Corporate Director, Children's Services
Alan Lazell, Head of Skills, Learning and Enterprise
Jane Hargreaves, Head of Quality and Schools Improvement

7. Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- Barking and Dagenham Libraries Best Value Review 2002
- Cultural Services Inspection, Audit Commission, 2006

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LIBRARIES STRATEGY

March 2008

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Section 1: Background

1.1 Profile of the borough

Barking and Dagenham is located at the heart of the Thames Gateway, approximately 11 miles from central London. The most recent figures indicate a population of approximately 170,800¹, living in just over 69,000 households². The borough is one of the fastest-growing in the country. By 2020 the population is likely to have increased to 205,000. The Thames Gateway social and physical regeneration in the south of the borough will bring increased demand for services, together with great opportunities.

At present, 24% of the population is 0-16 years, and 64% is 17-64 years old. The borough has a higher proportion both of older and younger people than the London average: 12% are over the age of 65³. These age groups are libraries' natural constituencies, and so library use should be comparatively strong.

An important recent change has been the rapid rise in the proportion of the borough's population which is made up of black and minority ethnic residents. In 1991, only 6.8% of the borough's population was non-white: this had risen to nearly 15% by 2001, and is now, it is estimated, approximately 25%. Historically, there has been a homogeneous and stable white, working-class population in many parts of the borough, although in areas of Barking there has been significant ethnic diversity since the 1960s. Increasing diversity offers considerable opportunities, but the pace of change poses a number of real challenges for community cohesion.

The percentage of residents with no qualifications is the highest in London and the percentage with degree level qualifications is the lowest. Levels of adult basic skills are also very low, but are improving. As a result of long-term development, primary and secondary pupils achieve test and examination results close to the national average on many measures, and the rate of improvement at GCSE grades 5A*-C since 2002 puts the borough in the top 25 of all authorities. This offers great hope for the future as the council and its partners help residents to capitalise on an untapped reservoir of talent, and a willingness to explore new possibilities.

Barking and Dagenham is a more-or-less uniformly deprived area and is unusual in the homogeneity of its socio-economic profile. Our borough is ranked 21st out of 354 authorities on the 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation. 14 of the 17 wards fall into the bottom 20 per cent nationally and none is in the top 50%.

¹ GLA 2006 projection for 2007

² DCLG Valuation Office 2006

³ All figures GLA 2006 projections for 2007

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1.2 Library provision in Barking and Dagenham

The revenue budget for libraries in Barking and Dagenham in 2008/9 is £4,115,000.

Prior to December 2007, there was the following pattern of library provision in the borough:

Days open per week	Library
6 days (56 hours)	• Barking Learning Centre
5.5 days (50 hours)	• Castle Green
4 days, 2 half days (48 hours)	• Robert Jeyes • Valence
4 days, 2 half days (46 hours)	• Rectory
4 days, 1 half day (42 hours)	• Wantz
2 days, 2 half days (21 hours)	• Rush Green*
2 days, 1 half day (18 hours) (20 hours)	• Fanshawe* • Thames View*
1 day, 3 half days (23 hours)	• Markyate*
1 day, 2 half days (15 hours)	• Marks Gate*

*Closed for 1 hour at lunchtime on full opening days

The locations of the borough's libraries are mapped at Appendix A with information showing approximate numbers of households and residents living within 1 mile of each library. This demonstrates that 100% of the population currently lives within 1 mile of a library, and that a considerable proportion of the population lives within 1 mile of more than 1 library. Detailed information on all the borough's libraries is set out at Appendix B.

Section 2: Our vision for libraries in Barking and Dagenham

2.1 Mission Statement

To provide the highest quality, affordable and accessible library service for all those living, working and studying in Barking and Dagenham in order to enrich people's lives and enable them to achieve their full potential.

2.2 What is the national vision for libraries?

In 2003 the Government outlined its long term strategic vision⁴ to help libraries position themselves at the heart of the communities they serve. It recognised four key strengths:

- they offer neutral welcoming community space and support active citizenship
- they hold enormous stocks of materials ranging beyond books including DVDs, CDs, videos supported by free 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
- they provide information and advice.

The central themes of the Government's vision are:

Books, Reading and Learning: Knowledge, skills and information are at the heart of economic and social life. In an informal, supportive and stimulating environment libraries can encourage reading and provide access to learning for everyone.

Digital Citizenship: Libraries provide access to vastly more information than ever before through the internet. They enable all citizens to have access to information and services and are central to the delivery of electronic government.

Community and Civic Values: Libraries are safe, welcoming, neutral spaces open to all the community. They are particularly well placed to engage hard to reach groups, working with education, social, health and leisure services. This has since been further developed by the Museums Libraries and Archives Council⁵ which has set out the core services that children, young people, families and communities can expect:

- an accessible local library – as a place of resource and expertise at the centre of community life

⁴ Framework for the Future – Libraries Learning and Information in the Next Decade, DCMS, 2003

⁵ A Blueprint for Excellence, MLA, 2007

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- a library service working in partnership to engage with communities and enable people to access resources and expertise, information and knowledge
- a global, interactive information, resources and communications service, 24/7, for learning, knowledge and inspiration.

To reach this goal requires challenge and change so that our libraries will have:

- the right level and quality of resources, services and facilities
- a culture of responding to and leading on community expectations and need
- effective and efficient leadership and management
- ongoing improvement and contribution to the priorities of local government provision and performance
- recognition by national, regional and local policy makers of the vital importance of public libraries to personal, family and community development.

2.3 Libraries' contribution to a better Barking and Dagenham

Libraries have the potential to make a particularly strong contribution to the development of local skills, tackling worklessness, and promoting health and wellbeing. The ways in which the service will do this to an even greater extent in future are outlined in section 3 of this strategy.

In addition, libraries will continue to make a significant contribution to other priorities in the borough through their everyday work:

- **A Strong Community:** As community hubs, libraries make a key contribution to the community cohesion agenda, as places where everyone can freely mix and come together. As activities to bring people together are increasingly facilitated through Neighbourhood Management, libraries will be further supported to be a venue that everyone in the community sees as 'their' space. This role will be further reflected in the Council's forthcoming Community Assets Review, which will ensure that the potential of libraries is maximised, as part of a network of community facilities.
- **Living and Working:** The provision of high quality buildings and services such as the Barking Learning Centre and new Dagenham library makes a significant contribution to local quality of life and the regeneration of the area
- **Enjoy and Achieve:** Support to children's learning is also a vital part of library service provision. As well as materials to support homework studies, activities such as Bookstart provide vital support for early years, and the Reading Challenges help to sustain learning across the holiday periods. Free access to reading and many other activities provided at low cost means that libraries offer much valued and accessible entertainment. Social contact provided through libraries is often as valuable as the services themselves.
- **Be Safe, Feel Safe:** Libraries are a long-established source of diversionary activity for young people, thus reducing the risk of offending. This potential

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will be enhanced as the attractiveness of libraries is enhanced, and their opening hours extended. The provision of advice and support on community safety matters is a regular service provided by libraries through coffee mornings for older people.

There are many other ways in which the borough's priorities are framed: for example, there is a priority identified in the Joint Area Review in relation to improving opportunities for young people. By providing safe, engaging environments in which informal learning and leisure opportunities are provided, libraries contribute to the achievement of this priority.

2.4 A vision of excellent library services in Barking and Dagenham

The key features of an excellent library service for our borough will be as follows:

Accessibility:

- Libraries will be open at hours which are convenient for local people
- 100% of the borough's population will live within one mile of a public library

Quality services:

- Library buildings will be well maintained and attractive
- Service standards will be developed in response to user and non-user consultation, and will be regularly reviewed in response to feedback
- The service will continue to invest in a strong collection of books and other materials as relevant
- High quality, up to date public IT facilities will be maintained in all libraries
- Staff will be supported and developed to provide a quality service to customers, including information provision, advice and training to IT users, and specialist services to home library users, family and basic skills learners and teachers
- Contemporary, high quality marketing techniques will be used to enable library services to compete effectively for people's leisure time

Value for Money:

- Resources will be focused on where they can add most value to customers, such as in reader's advisory work; new technologies such as self service and Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) will be used to enable this
- Volunteering in libraries will be developed and encouraged, both to add value to library services and also to develop skills in the local population
- The service will work in partnership with other agencies and boroughs to achieve efficiencies, more effective working and shared objectives wherever possible

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Providing improved life chances for local people:

- Libraries will play a key role in the borough's strategy to increase the level of skills in the local population, enabling people to compete for jobs and hence increasing household income. This involves both working with local adults as well as continuing to increase educational attainment in schools.
- The service will play an increasing role in supporting the improved health and wellbeing of local people, working in partnership to increase access to information and advice in highly accessible ways

Section 3: How will we achieve our vision?

3.1 Accessibility – library locations and numbers

The borough has 14,955 population/library: only 2 boroughs in London have a lower population/ library ratio. Redbridge has 22,864/ library and Newham has 22,382/ library. It could therefore be argued that, at present, there is over-provision of libraries in the borough. However, it is essential that provision continues to adjust to changing population patterns and increasing population numbers, and it is proposed to do this in the following ways:

1. A new library for Dagenham: a proposal to locate a new local library on the site of the Church Elm public house, was approved by the Executive on 1st August 2006. The proposal includes plans to relocate the Rectory Road and Fanshawe libraries to the new site. It is planned that the new library will be open in 2010.

It is aimed that this new library will achieve the following benefits for local residents:

- More accessible location
- A wider range of stock and services than the current libraries in the area are able to provide
- Increased opening hours across the week
- Increased footfall to the Heathway area, increasing the viability of the shopping parade, and hence its attractiveness to other potential retailers (studies have shown that the inclusion of a library within a retail area significantly increases the attractiveness of the retail offer)
- Integrated service provision with a One Stop Shop on the same site
- A clear demonstration to Dagenham residents that they are entitled to, and will receive civic investment in quality facilities

A detailed proposal for the new Dagenham Library and One Stop Shop and associated costings will be presented for Member consideration in spring 2008.

2. Rush Green Library: This is currently housed in what was originally the ground floor rooms of two domestic dwellings, and is too small to provide an adequate library for the area. A replacement site needs to be identified to bring the service provision to an acceptable standard, including public toilet provision.

Barking College has indicated that they wish to pursue plans for joint library provision on their redeveloped site. Such a joint development should enable efficiencies of scale and joint working, on a site within the Rush Green area. No other suitable sites within the area have been identified. It is anticipated

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that, if such a scheme were developed, a new facility could be completed in 2011.

It was previously proposed that Wantz library should close in association with the opening of new Dagenham library. There is considerable over-provision and duplication in this area of the borough. However, while half of the Wantz library catchment area will be covered by the new Dagenham library (or Valence library), the other half is covered by Rush Green library. It is therefore proposed to reprovide Wantz library in the new, improved Rush Green library, when opened. The revenue costs of Wantz library will be used to mitigate the revenue costs of the new Rush Green library.

3. Libraries in areas of regeneration: there are plans to build 11,000 new homes in the *Barking Riverside* development, leading to an additional population of approximately 26,500 (at least 30% of provision will be for families). Provision for land for a library will be made as part of the section 106 agreement for community facilities for the site: this will be essential as existing provision will be insufficient to meet the needs of the new community.

It is proposed that, to meet the needs of the incoming population, a library of approximately 800m² would be required (equivalent to Robert Jeyes), to be open 56 hours per week.

The opportunity will be sought to achieve co-location with other community facilities, possibly a new extended school, if links to retail areas are sufficiently strong and the distance from Thames View is appropriate. It is anticipated that this would come onstream in 2015.

It has been proposed that funding for the shell of the library would come via the developer contributions for the scheme. However, this will not cover the core or fit-out of the building, for which capital costs are yet to be determined, nor the start-up stock. No provision for revenue costs has yet been made: it is anticipated that the revenue requirement would be in the region of £200,000 p.a.

Furthermore, there are plans to create a 'Green Village' at South Dagenham, close to the wind turbines at Ford. There is the potential for over 4,000 new homes and it is estimated that the population here will increase by 9,500 people. There is also the potential for new community facilities, such as leisure and health centres, and schools. The potential to create a joint facility within any new leisure facility in the area will be explored with Regeneration. However, the majority of the new homes will be within the 1 mile catchment areas of the new Dagenham and Castle Green libraries and therefore it is not proposed to develop separate proposals for a library in this area, given over-provision elsewhere in the borough.

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There is potential for joint facilities with Havering in this area. However, at this time plans are at too early a stage to be able to indicate costings.

3.2 Accessibility – opening hours

Customer feedback in the borough, as elsewhere, indicates that part-time library opening hours are a significant source of dissatisfaction since it is difficult to remember on which days and times the library is open. Over time, library usage of part-time libraries will decline accordingly. As evidenced in section 1.2, there has historically been a diverse pattern of opening hours in the borough, which has led to customer confusion and reduced service usage.

During the latter part of 2007/8, a pilot programme of extended opening hours has been trialled in a number of the borough's libraries. In line with the outcome of that pilot, investment in the service has enabled extended hours to be made permanent at the following sites:

- Barking Learning Centre: opening 7 days per week including late evenings, totalling 74 hours per week
- Marks Gate library: now opening across 5 days per week, totalling 38 hours per week
- Thames View library: now opening across 5 days per week, totalling 38 hours per week

The new Dagenham library is also planned on the basis that it will be open 7 days per week, including late evenings, so that each side of the borough has a library open long hours during the week.

The opportunity will also be taken, as soon as possible, to review existing opening hours in all other sites, to identify more logical and consistent patterns of opening.

3.3 Quality services - buildings

Library services in the borough have seen significant investment in replacement libraries, on a scale rarely seen elsewhere. There is also an excellent track record in co-locating with partner services. There are, however, a number of challenges to address in order to ensure that the service offers quality services through its buildings in the future:

1. Maintenance: as part of the Council's emerging asset strategy, provision for library buildings will be made within a corporate programme of planned repairs and maintenance.

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2. Opportunities for re-ordering: opportunities to achieve improvements have arisen at both Marks Gate and Thames View libraries.

The Sue Bramley Centre (including Thames View library) has been funded via the Adult College to improve reception facilities and complete small scale interior re-modeling. This will enable greater joint and volunteer working across the Centre, and is facilitating the increase in opening hours at the library.

The library based in the Marks Gate Community Centre is sub-optimal for a number of reasons:

- It has no visibility from outside the Centre, and minimal visibility within it
- When the library is closed (for more than half the week), a large metal shutter is pulled down which impacts negatively on the rest of the centre
- There is minimal opportunity for co-operative working with the other partners working in the Centre
- Various works to the Centre have been conducted over a period of years, which have led to the layout and design of the Centre lacking coherence and clarity

Review of a variety of options to achieve an improved library as part of a development of the community centre is underway, and it is proposed to bring forward a proposal for consideration as part of the Council's capital programme in due course.

3. A programme to enable library modernisation ongoing: the Library Service will develop a programme including costs to refurbish and replace existing premises to meet modern library standards in both public and staff areas. The following works issues remain in relation to the remaining libraries at this time:
 - Valence Library: This requires extensive internal works including new floor finishes and furnishings in both public and staff areas. The external fabric of the building is deteriorating and the site suffers regular vandalism. In addition the security of the site needs to be substantially improved, and a solution found to enable public access to toilets when the Learning Village is closed. Improvements to this site are particularly important to ensure that the investment in Valence House Museum is not diminished by a poor quality adjacent library service. It is estimated that approximately £50,000 will be necessary to achieve this, and this will be the subject of a bid to the Council's capital programme in due course.
 - Markyate Library: The complex requires substantial works to re-model the entrance area into the community hall, library and GP surgeries. The external security also needs to be improved. It is proposed to prepare a feasibility study to inform more detailed costings, in collaboration with the PCT.
 - Robert Jeyes Library: the garden at this site offers significant potential for development to enable it to be used by the library and its users as part of a

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programme of events and activities. An early ballpark figure is that development of the whole garden could cost from £50,000 to £75,000, but further investment would be required to develop a detailed feasibility study. This will be the subject of a bid to the Council's capital programme in due course.

This investment would bring libraries up to contemporary standards as at 2010/11. It would then be necessary to invest in the service ongoing to ensure that furniture, fittings and décor are refreshed and updated after a maximum of every ten years, and to ensure that contemporary styles are still reflected (approximately £30,000 p.a.) Proposals to achieve this will be the subject of bids to the Council's capital programme in due course.

4. Works to libraries scheduled for closure: Rectory and Fanshawe libraries have suffered from many years of under-investment and it could be argued that not to invest in them at all before their replacement by new Dagenham library could lead to services in that area of the borough 'withering on the vine'. A small investment will therefore be made to address urgent issues on the sites.

3.4 Quality services - service standards

The service has consulted, alongside other cultural services in the borough, on the detail of service standards which are important to local people in relation to libraries. The most important aspects of library service standards identified in the consultation were the achievement of published opening hours, staff availability to help with enquiries and affordability.

The service will put in place measures to ensure it can comply with all of the service standards identified as important by the consultation exercise and will publish the standards widely so that local people know the standards they can expect of the service. It is also considered that, if proposals identified in this draft strategy are addressed, the service will have sufficient flexibility to meet future needs identified by ongoing consultation and engagement.

3.5 Quality services- investment in stock

The service's long-standing commitment to investment in library stock will be maintained. However, the service will continue to review and revise its stock offer to ensure it meets the changing needs of its users.

The music subscription service currently generates £11,000 p.a. from 800 customers. Changes in the wider market for music have shown a fall in sales and library issues alike of CDs, with music downloads becoming the preferred choice for contemporary music. A small niche market for world music, jazz, folk

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and classical music remains, and it is proposed to continue to focus on this for the foreseeable future.

Similarly, videos and DVDs are increasingly available through digital broadband/ satellite/ cable and postal DVD hire services, with a declining market in retail sales. The stock consortium of which the service is a member is in the early stages of sourcing a commercial provider who would supply a kiosk in the library to enable on-line selection, on a rental charge or commission basis.

Given the borough's comparatively strong budget for stock purchases, it is anticipated that the service is well-placed to accommodate changes in the market ongoing. However, additional, capital provision will need to be made for start-up stock for new libraries to ensure that there is sufficient to meet initial demand.

3.6 Quality services- IT services

The level of IT home ownership in the borough is lower than in many other areas of London, and it should be assumed that this will continue to be the case for a number of years to come. In this context, the free access to the Internet provided in libraries will continue to be very important.

The Council recently replaced all People's Network PCs with new PCs, and the new ICT strategy agreed by the Council outlines a commitment to on-going investment in the modernisation of the infrastructure, recognising that that this will be an on-going programme. If this were not to happen corporately, then it will be necessary for funds to be identified for the library service to update its own IT services, in order to meet public needs.

The service will work closely with corporate IT service to adopt new technologies, such as WiFi, where they will assist in developing service capability and flexibility.

3.7 Quality services – investing in staff

Recent investment in the service will provide sufficient staffing levels to support attendance of staff at training and development activities.

There are, however, significant risks to the service arising from the high percentage of the borough's library staff who are due to retire in the next few years. This is particularly grave in the context of a national shortage of professionally qualified staff, particularly at senior levels. Recent investment in the service will support the borough to attract a high calibre of staff. The service will also continue to encourage its staff to pursue accredited qualifications, including professional qualifications, in order to 'grow its own talent'.

3.8 Quality services – contemporary marketing

If the Council is to achieve its objectives in terms of increasing skills in the local population, then it is essential that the potential libraries offer to reach out to those ‘turned off’ previous learning is maximised. However, in the 21st century, people have many things they can be doing in their leisure time- and libraries need to compete for this to reach them.

Libraries’ competitors include commercial retailers and leisure providers, all of which use high quality branding and marketing techniques to capture people’s attention and encourage them to engage with and use their services.

Libraries therefore need to use marketing and branding techniques as contemporary and sophisticated as their commercial rivals to ensure that they raise their profile and communicate what they can offer to local people in an attractive way. A branding and marketing strategy for libraries, consistent with the borough’s overarching branding, will therefore be developed to facilitate this.

3.9 Value for money – focusing resources to add value

Technology will be fully exploited to enable customer self-service as far as possible. Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) has the potential to simplify loan administration, improve security, enable staff to spend more time helping customers to get better use of their library and extend opening hours. RFID will enable the service to focus on providing contemporary services that follow the retail model in terms of how we present the library, including removing or repositioning counters away from the entrance and extending opening hours. Barking Learning Centre will be the first library to pilot this technology in the borough in the first part of 2008, and then it is intended to roll it out across the borough, as funding allows, as part of the Council’s IT innovation programme.

3.10 Value for money – volunteering

To support and encourage the building of community capacity, the active involvement of the voluntary sector is viewed as an essential part of the delivery of modern library services. Volunteers are involved in a variety of roles in other boroughs, including home library services, story time sessions, reader support, local studies and friends of library groups.

The encouragement of local volunteering also has positive benefits in terms of increasing local skills and employability, and supporting civic participation and engagement.

In Barking and Dagenham to date, the use of volunteers has primarily been in supporting the delivery of the toy library service and at Castle Green. Some

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volunteers are working in schools on Family Literacy projects and in providing learner support for students engaged in obtaining ECDL accreditation. Other areas that will be looked at are supporting Reading Zone/Summer Reading Challenge, Bookstart Treasure Box delivery and assistance in conducting the CIPFA Plus surveys. However, the use of volunteers to support service delivery is not yet as well developed as in other boroughs.

It is proposed that, with appropriate support and training, volunteers will be used to extend library opening hours. This initiative will be further supported through:

- Partnership working with the Adult College at Marks Gate and Thames View libraries to recruit, train and develop volunteer's skills
- Proposed alterations to premises at Marks Gate and Thames View to enable spaces to be used flexibly
- Consideration of the potential for people with learning difficulties to find roles which have purpose and meaning within the service which can extend their personal wellbeing

In due course, consideration will also be given to potential Friends of Libraries groups, as a means of encouraging engagement in the local community and its services.

3.11 Value for money – partnership working

The libraries stock contract was re-let in May 2007 as part of a consortium with North-East London boroughs. As a result, the Council has the potential to make increased savings of £7,850 on the purchase of stock. 1.5% of this saving will be contributed to Adult and Community Service efficiency savings. The balance will contribute to meeting the additional costs identified elsewhere in this section.

The library service has also contracted for the provision of a library management system as part of a consortium of other London boroughs. This has enabled the achievement of considerable economies of scale in relation to the contract, as well as service improvements: Barking and Dagenham's library users are now able to access stock in 8 additional London boroughs, through the same reservation system as before, and can view the catalogue of all titles online.

The library service welcomes the opportunity to work in partnership with others to deliver shared objectives. Key among these will be:

- Active and health: increasing health and wellbeing in the local population
- Enjoy and achieve: developing local skills, including Skills for Life
- A strong community: creating opportunities for local people to come together

3.12 Providing improved life chances – increasing skills and tackling worklessness

Libraries offer a non-threatening opportunity to re-enter the world of learning through highly accessible venues, and offer many initiatives such as family literacy classes and basic skills support. This often leads to more formal qualifications, facilitated by libraries' highly developed links with other learning providers in the borough. Libraries are therefore well-placed to contribute significantly to increasing skills levels in the borough, equipping local people to compete for jobs and reducing the numbers of NEETs (not in employment, education or training), and will reach even more people as their accessibility and attractiveness is increased.

In addition to actions already listed, Libraries have worked with colleagues in Skills, Learning and Enterprise to devise a programme of enhanced activities to support the development of skills and employability in the local population to be delivered through libraries, including:

- **Surgeries** for advice and guidance on jobseeking and training opportunities
- Informal **ICT learning**, using the People's Network as a route to attract people to more structured learning
- **Family learning** extended into libraries beyond school-based settings
- The creation of **apprenticeship** opportunities in libraries
- An enhanced programme of **reader development**
- All of the above will be linked through to clear **learning progression routes**, to support people to gain appropriate qualifications in a way that is right for them

It is proposed to seek funding support for this programme through funding sources designed to deliver the wider skills agenda in the borough.

3.13 Providing improved life chances – supporting improved health and wellbeing

Libraries already provide a range of services and activities which support the health and wellbeing of the local population. The social contact provided by libraries is also particularly important in terms of the wellbeing of vulnerable adults, through services both in libraries and through the Home Library Service.

This approach has been developed further to ensure that libraries' potential contribution is maximised, via a programme which includes:

- **Skilled for health**: supporting adults who want to improve their health and well being whilst developing their literacy, language and numeracy skills.
- **Health promotion 'surgeries'**: enabling health and voluntary sector partners to communicate key health messages and campaigns to the local population

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- **Books on prescription:** working in partnership with the PCT and NELMHT to enable local people to receive 'prescriptions' for information and books on their minor mental health issues, supporting them to manage their own conditions
- **Information prescriptions:** working with the PCT and social care services to extend the Books on prescription scheme into a holistic approach to wider health and healthy living information
- **Health information resources:** enhanced books and information collections available for health professionals at the Barking Learning Centre
- **'Health champions':** supporting library staff to enable local people to find the right health information for them

It is proposed to seek funding support for this programme through funding sources designed to deliver improved health outcomes and reduced health inequalities in the borough.

Section 4: How well do libraries perform?

4.1 A Performance Management Framework for Libraries

Library Services nationally have a number of statutory performance indicators that they are required to collect and report on and these are used to measure performance. The data is submitted annually to CIPFA and the Audit Commission. Barking and Dagenham is able to compare performance against CIPFA neighbours.

The Museums Libraries and Archives Council has indicated that library services will no longer be required to report against Public Library Service Standards, in the context of a reduced portfolio of performance indicators for local authorities generally. However, they have drafted a package of indicators which local authorities may wish to use to monitor library service performance (currently out at consultation), and which, if used consistently, may provide a basis for comparative performance analysis. This framework will be confirmed later in 2008, however, it is likely that the indicators referred to below will feature in that framework.

4.2 In what ways does Barking and Dagenham perform well?⁶

The level of library stock per 1,000 population is 2,528, in comparison to the CIPFA neighbour average of 1,487 in 2005/6 (latest confirmed figures available).

Resident satisfaction with libraries is fairly high at 85% for adults compared to a neighbour average of 88% and 81% for children compared to an average of 78%.

The borough performs slightly better than the neighbour average for the number of items issued per 1,000 population at 5,527 compared to a neighbour average of 4,769. However it is worth noting that performance has declined since 2005/06.

4.3 In what ways does Barking and Dagenham not perform well?

Library visits per 1,000 population declined to 5,800 in 2006/7, largely due to the introduction of a more accurate method of calculation. This is projected to increase to approximately 6,040 in 2007/8. This compared with a neighbour average of 7,059.

Consequently, Barking and Dagenham does not perform well on cost per visit. For 2006/07 costs have risen to £3.78 (adjusted for deprivation), although this is

⁶ Source: CIPFA, all figures 2006/7 unless otherwise stated

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projected to decrease slightly to £3.72 in 2007/8, due to increased visits. In 2005/6 the cost/visit in CIPFA neighbour boroughs was £2.95 (latest data available, not adjusted for deprivation). For the purposes of further comparison, across London, the average cost per visit in 2005/6 was £3.22, with the highest cost being £5.06 (Hackney) and the lowest being £1.66 (Havering).

4.4 A new performance framework for Libraries

To date, the Library Service has been part of the CPA Culture Block. Performance against key indicators will affect the overall score on the Culture Block, and hence the Council's overall Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

As the Council moves from the Comprehensive Performance Assessment towards the Comprehensive Area Assessment, the previous focus on a set of compulsory performance indicators will no longer apply.

A major focus of the Comprehensive Area Assessment will be the extent to which the Council, acting with its partners, is achieving its objectives in relation to promoting the future prosperity of the borough, and decreasing worklessness amongst economically active members of the population. Performance in increasing the health and wellbeing of the population will also be assessed.

It is possible to identify proxy indicators which can be used to gauge the 'fitness-for-purpose' of libraries to deliver against this agenda. Libraries will only be able to deliver if they are accessible, are successfully attracting significant numbers of visits from across the population, and residents are satisfied with the service they receive from them. Hence, a significant number of the performance indicators which have previously formed part of the Culture Block will still be relevant, and are considered below.

4.5 Projected impact on performance of implementation of this strategy

Conservative assumptions have been made on the impact on library visits, active borrowers and customer satisfaction which would be achieved as a result of full implementation of the libraries strategy. It is assumed that an increase in library visits will have a proportionate impact on active borrowers. Significantly increased library visits will also disproportionately mitigate increased costs, thus reducing the cost/visit indicator.

The baseline position is assumed to include recently extended opening hours, and the opening of new Dagenham library in 2010/11.

Key factors associated with the implementation of the strategy will be:

- Increased opening hours to all other libraries

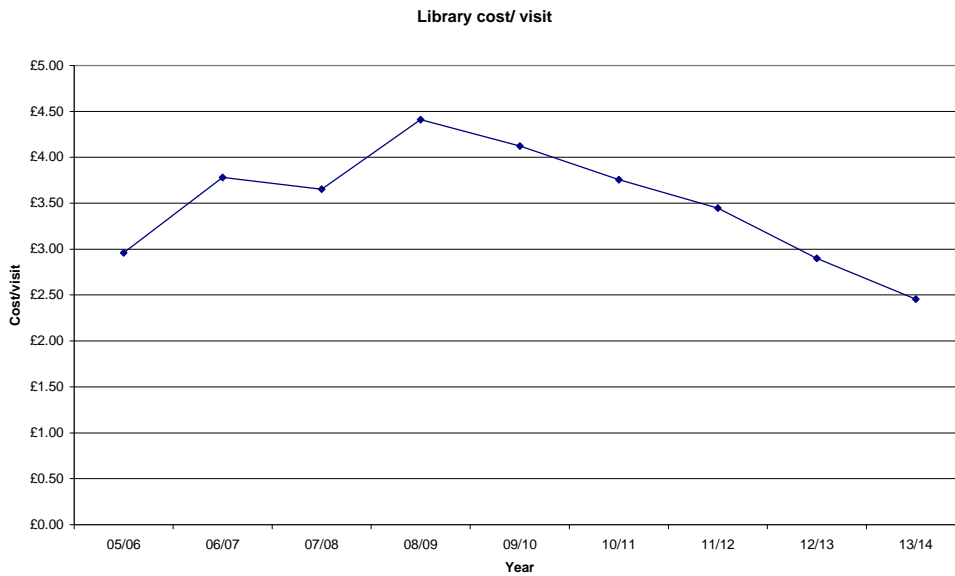
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- Marketing/ branding campaign
- Improvements to library buildings

	Public Library Standard	07/08 performance	2010/11 baseline performance	2010/11 performance with strategy
Visits/ 1,000 population	8,600 upper 6,020 lower	6,040*	6,776	8,691

*projection

While investment in the service will increase the overall revenue cost of the service, it is expected that the significant increase in visits which will be achieved as a result of service improvements will lead to a positive effect on the cost/visit indicator, as follows (no adjustment made for inflation):



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Appendix A: Map Showing Library Locations

Appendix B: Library Information

The libraries are organised into clusters and staff are shared across these clusters. In addition there is an Operational Management team that supports the service that is located at Muirhead Quay. The School and Home Library services are located here.

Operational Management Team

The Operational Management team has 11.6 FTE staff.

Home Library Service

The Home Library Service is a free service available to those who, through age or disability, cannot visit a library, or get a relative or friend to help them. It is also available to carers. The service has 2.51 FTE staff.

Schools Library Service

The Schools Library Service provides a valuable educational resource for all teachers who work in the borough. It also offers a book purchase scheme that allows schools easy and cost effective ways to buy books for their library. The service has 6.37 FTE staff, including staff who provide the children's library service in the borough's public libraries.

The following table outlines key information (for 2006/7) for each of the borough's libraries.

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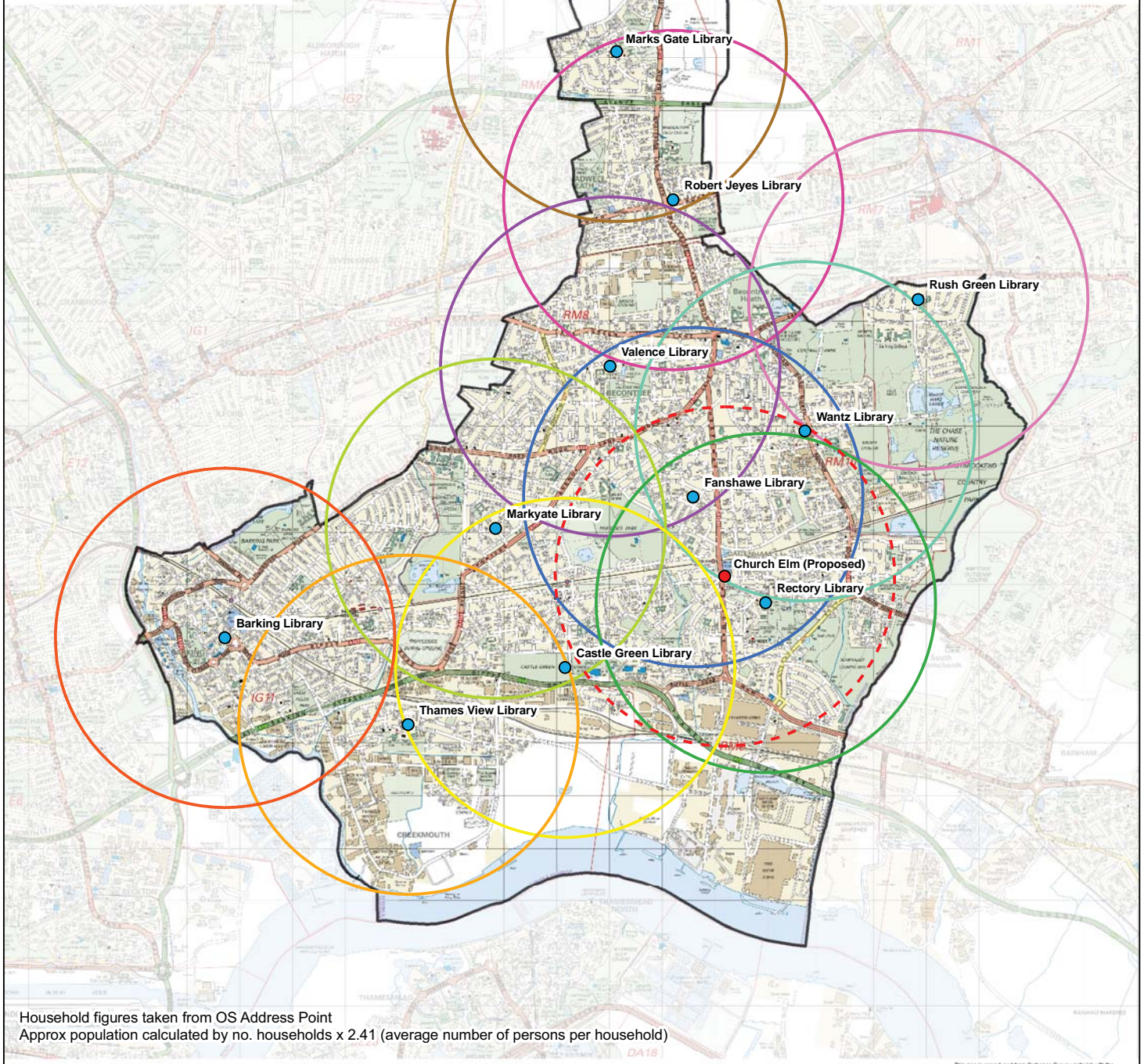
	Marks Gate	Robert Jeyes	Rush Green	Thames View	Fanshawe	Rectory	Wantz	Castle Green	Markyate	Valence	Barking Learning Centre**+
Opening hours per week at start of 2007/8	15	48	21	20	18	46	42	50	23	48	56
Number of visits	12,753	65,890	12,575	55,747	9,419	54,494	43,222	145,992	23,312	20,253	454,542
Number of registered borrowers	1,299	8,205	1,405	1,701	2,505	6,491	5,458	6,924	2,475	8,469	36,435
Number of active borrowers (borrowed in last year)	646	2,933	548	712	848	2,352	2,124	2,699	959	3,266	11,942
Approx. number residents within 1 mile radius	11,652	24,505	8,404	31,091	58,189	42,349	41,888	33,048	45,221	49,395	30,964
Satisfaction with libraries	92%	95.2%	95.2%	80%	81.1%	88.1%	90%	93.8%	83.6%	94.2%	80.4%
FTE staff		6.91			9.4				11.69		10.2

*Prior to June 2007 Barking Library was based in Vicarage Fields.

+The BLC, as the borough's Central library, may be expected to attract users from a wider catchment area than other libraries: over 47,000 people are resident in the 5 most easterly wards in the borough, nearest the BLC.

Library Locations in LBBD

Library - Buffer	Approx. Households	Approx. Population
Marks Gate Library	4835	11652
Robert Jeyes Library	10168	24505
Rush Green Library	3487	8404
Valence Library	20496	49395
Fanshawe Library	24145	58189
Wantz Library	17381	41888
Rectory Library	17572	42349
Markyate Library	18764	45221
Castle Green Library	13713	33048
Thames View Library	13091	31549
Barking Library	12848	30964
Church Elm (Proposed)	20446	49275



Household figures taken from OS Address Point
 Approx population calculated by no. households x 2.41 (average number of persons per household)

Map Produced by the Information Team (August 2007)

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