

REPORT TO: Cabinet Member - Leisure & Tourism

DATE: 2 December 2009

SUBJECT: Libraries: Universal membership, national and regional development and Sefton successes

WARDS AFFECTED: All

REPORT OF: Leisure Director – Graham Bayliss

CONTACT OFFICERS: Christine Hall – 0151 934 2376

EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL: No

PURPOSE/SUMMARY:

To notify and update the Cabinet Member of universal membership of libraries, national, regional and successful local developments.

REASON WHY DECISION REQUIRED:

To inform the Cabinet Member of this national initiative and its impact on Sefton's libraries

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Cabinet Member is asked to:

Note the universal membership of libraries and the successes of Sefton Library and Information Services

KEY DECISION: No

FORWARD PLAN: Not appropriate

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: Following the expiry of the "call-in" period for the Minutes of the meeting.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

None

IMPLICATIONS:

Budget / Policy Framework:

Financial:

There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

	2008/9 £	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE				
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources				
Specific Capital Resources				
REVENUE IMPLICATIONS				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton funded Resources				
Funded from External Resources				
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? Y/N	When?			
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

Legal: Not appropriate
Risk Assessment: Not appropriate
Asset Management: Not appropriate

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN / VIEWS

None

CORPORATE OBJECTIVE MONITORING:

<u>Corporate Objective</u>		<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community		√	
2	Creating Safe Communities		√	
3	Jobs and Prosperity		√	
4	Improving Health and Well-Being		√	
5	Environmental Sustainability		√	
6	Creating Inclusive Communities	√		
7	Improving the Quality of Council		√	

	Services and Strengthening local Democracy			
8	Children and Young People		√	

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS RELIED UPON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

None

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As part of a national initiative to promote libraries, a universal membership scheme has been introduced that entitles any member of the public to use the 4000 public libraries across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Customers will be able to borrow books from any library and library users simply need to show their existing library card, or proof of address, to join or access the library they are visiting.

2 UNIVERSAL MEMBERSHIP AND SEFTON

- 2.1 Sefton MBC abolished the need to provide ID to join a library in 2003. For many years, people outside Sefton have been able to join a library within Sefton and Sefton residents can join libraries in neighbouring authorities. Also, Sefton has always been able to register people as visitors and if on holiday or visiting on business, they have been able to borrow books and use the PCs. By doing this the service removed the barriers to joining the library and there has been no noticeable increase in lost books.
- 2.2 The scheme was announced at the end of September 2009 and although it has little impact to date in Sefton, it has had an impact in authorities who had stricter rules and regulations.
- 2.3 Although the scheme itself has had little impact in Sefton, it is a major scheme across the country. It has resulted in a huge amount of positive publicity, coverage and debate about libraries in national newspapers, national television and radio which benefits all library services.

3 NATIONAL AND REGIONAL UPDATE

- 3.1 The universal membership initiative has been launched ahead of the DCMS Library Modernisation Review. This was due to be released in October 2009 but has been delayed due to a change of minister and the Wirral Inquiry. However, some of the ideas that are contained within it were publicised by Margaret Hodge MP, Minister for Culture at the Public Library Association conference in October. These include a web-based lending service with home delivery, a deal with a Starbucks or a Costa to give places in libraries where people can sit, relax and meet their friends with a coffee and a book, a loyalty card with rewards. This theme of modernisation is at the heart of the development of Southport library as part of the Cultural Centre. The Cabinet Member will be kept informed of the review, once it is published.
- 3.2 In a letter from the Chief Executive of Museums, Libraries and Archives to Chief Executives of Local Authorities, "The 'Wirral' inquiry established by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport is expected to have significant implications which will need to be taken into account, alongside the growing pressures on public sector finances....."

4 SEFTON UPDATE

- 4.1 Within Sefton, the new library at Meadows opens in November, and plans are progressing for Southport and Netherton. The Asset Management Review being undertaken by a working party of Overview and Scrutiny has started its second phase. Meadows will mean a different way of working for libraries. The service will share reception duties with Sport and Recreation, there will be a staff uniform and the service's first self-service provision introduced. Staff will be floorwalking, rather than working behind counters, providing the opportunity for improved customer service.

There are a number of highlights for the service over the past six months. A few of these include:

- 1) There was an increase in the number of children participating in and completing this year's Summer Reading Challenge (Quest Seekers). 4560 children joined (8% increase) and 3706 completed (18% increase). Some libraries almost doubled their figures. This increase was due to the target that was set for all primary schools to be visited by library staff to promote the challenge. All schools were approached and all but two schools were visited.
- 2) The successful public/private partnership between the library service and a local bookseller has enabled the service to increase the number of small author events within libraries plus organise high profile events at Crosby Civic Hall, such as Jacqueline Wilson and Frank Cottrell Boyce. Sefton has built up a good reputation for organising such events and it was a real coup to get Jacqueline Wilson. Crosby was full to capacity of 400 children and adults for the evening event.
- 3) The service won a CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals) Local History publication award for a previous publication, "Sand and Sea". "Birkdale in Camera" has just been published - part of the successful Local History publication programme. The service worked with Birkdale Civic Society and Birkdale and Ainsdale Historical Research Society.
- 4) Improved efficiency and streamlining of Bookstart delivery has led to 100% delivery and a decrease in costs. (Bookstart is a national programme, delivered locally to provide book packs at 8 months, 18 months and 3 years, as a foundation to the development of literacy skills).
- 5) The service's existing partnership with Henshaws Society for Blind People enables the society to provide support and training in libraries, to visually impaired people in the use of ICT. This was further developed so that Henshaws provided free training to library staff about how to work with visually impaired people.

- 6) New contracts are in place for the purchase of library materials. The contracts are part of a North West and Yorkshire consortium. Work is under way to increase efficiency as a result of streamlining procedures within the contract framework.
- 7) The upgrade of the Library Management System has been completed. Within the next few months, this will lead to a number of efficiencies including speed of supply and direct delivery to libraries. This will mean that books will arrive on library shelves nearer to the date of publication than they do now.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The Cabinet Member is asked to:

Note the universal membership of libraries and the successes of Sefton Library and Information Services