

Agenda Item 9

Scrutiny – Update on Libraries

January 11th

2015 – Draft Plan

1. Lone Working

We have looked into the Bristol City Council approach to lone working. There is no blanket statement or policy on lone working.

There is a policy on the management of lone workers and the council does have officers who work under this. However this very much depends on the assessment of risk and associated mitigations.

Currently Bristol Libraries operate a minimum of two members of library staff to enable libraries to open. For libraries, in the midst of a complex staff review to achieve savings for April 2016, we will not be able to alter our current arrangements of a minimum of two staff working.

We appreciate that Members wish to maximise the service available for the community and we fully support this. However between now and the end of March 2016, we have a complex Managing Change to complete with a responsibility to support staff. We can begin the risk assessment on each individual library building and situation after the completion of Managing Change but we must not underestimate the importance of our overall responsibility to safe environments for staff and citizens and how important individual assessments will be as each library building is very different.

2. Technology

i. Broadband upgrade

Virgin Media will be installing the new broadband fibre in the first two weeks of December. In the meantime ICT will upgrade to larger data cabinets and the sites should go live soon after their broadband upgrade.

ii. Public computers and software upgrades

We are upgrading all the public computers and aim to have this completed by January 2016. The priority sites of the Central Library, Bishopsworth, Bedminster, Junction 3 and Horfield have been completed to match the rollout of Universal Credit.

iii. Swipe Card Access

We now have the site surveys for Westbury and St George libraries. The new library management system is still on track for implementation in June 2016. We plan on discussing the pilots with staff in January and will be keeping the Friends groups up to date on progress (Stockwood and Westbury).

3. People

i. Volunteering Programme

We have appointed to the new role of Volunteer Coordinator and the successful candidate will be starting in February 2016, after a notice period.

ii. New Staff Roles

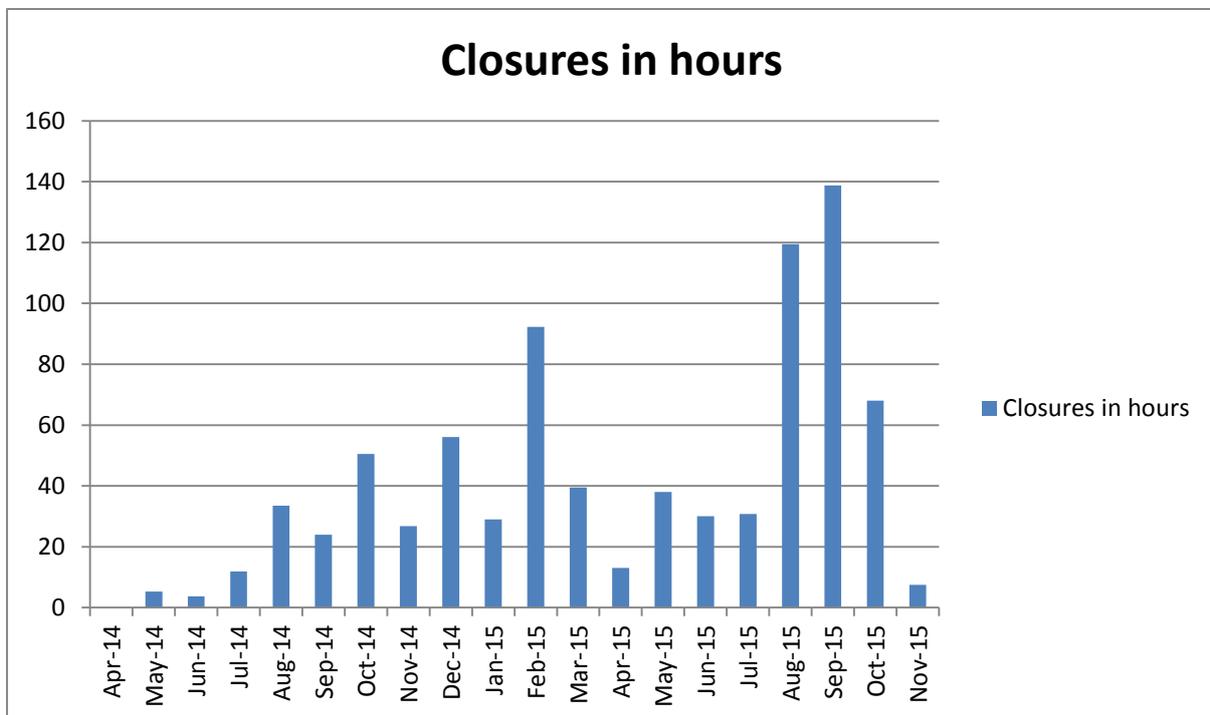
We have also recruited to all three Library Development Officers, who will be starting together in January 2016, after notice periods. We are working on the induction of the new staff and the links with Neighbourhoods staff.

iii. Staff Review

The Managing Change programme to review staff numbers and structure is still in consultation. The staff consultation period will end on January 8th. We are also reviewing job descriptions and working practices in the Central Library

4. Unplanned Closures Review

Following appointment of more casual staff and temporary agency staff, I am pleased to report that the number of unplanned closures has reduced dramatically and we hope this will continue.



5. Buildings - updates

i. Eastville

The Eastville Library building is subject to a community asset transfer process. The closing date for an expression of interest was December 7th 2015. The expressions have been considered by a panel made up of council officers from different departments, local councillors and a representative from the Horfield and Lockleaze Neighbourhood Partnership. South Lockleaze and Purdown Group is the successful organisation asked to do a full business case within six weeks.

ii. Lockleaze

We are still pursuing a physical site in Lockleaze and are talking to property services about the possibility of a temporary unit if a site or building does not become available.

iii. Avonmouth

Avonmouth library will increase its opening hours by 7 to reach the minimum level of 20 hours a week. We are working with officers in community buildings and the community centre trustees to discuss how we might develop library services in Avonmouth and invest in the centre to make it far more flexible. The library currently occupies on separate wing of the building and a possible move within the centre could open up the use of the entire community centre to better use of the space.

iv. Lawrence Weston

Lawrence Weston will have an additional seven hours provision. The current library service is based in Ridingleaze and assisted by customer services staff. There is no library staffing. We usually refer to this provision as a library access point. The service is in a meeting room and very small. There are four computers and a self-service machine and all residents have free library reservations for material.

The additional hours are not intended to staff the Ridingleaze library access point but to do project work with the children's centre and community farm to engage residents in a different way and encourage library awareness as the community led Ambition Lawrence Weston gathers momentum. The children's centre of Long Cross has already been approached.

v. Bishopston

The new Bishopston Library which will replace Cheltenham Road Library is now in the management of the Council. The library building does not require too much work to completion but there will be a natural period of handover from the previous developer to the new contractor. We anticipate opening close to April 2016, but we do not know the exact timescales yet.

We would be keen to form a Friends group quickly in Bishopston to look at the new service and work with the community. We will begin promoting this from the Cheltenham Road site and in the local newsletter of Bishopston Voice and Bishopston Matters.

6. Community Offer

Clifton has a new Friends group/Steering group that is meeting regularly and wishes to start thinking of interesting short term promotions with longer term aspirations for events, income generation and changes to the layout to maximise space.

Redland Friends have held their first AGM on December 1st.

We are reviewing our guidelines for groups so there is some consistency and support for new and existing groups.

7. Capital spend

We realise Members are very interested in more detail for each library, we can commit to more detail in March as plans need to be assessed.

Kate Murray, December 11th