

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET MEMBER STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP, CULTURE AND TOURISM**

**15 May 2020**

**Report of the Executive Director – Commissioning,  
Communities and Policy**

**Changes to Library Opening Hours**

**(STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP, CULTURE AND TOURISM)**

**(1) Purpose of Report**

To seek approval for changes in opening hours at Borrowash Library, in line with the Derbyshire Public Library Service Strategy, and to make changes to staffing levels to achieve required savings.

**(2) Information and Analysis**

At its meeting on 20 December 2018, Cabinet gave approval to implement the Derbyshire Public Library Service Strategy. Included in the strategy were proposals to transfer 20 libraries, and the mobile library service, to community management.

Prior to the Covid pandemic the process for transferring 20 libraries to a community managed model was progressing in nine locations, where a formal expression of interest had been received, including at Borrowash. However, the initial expression of interest at Borrowash was subsequently withdrawn. In approving the Strategy Cabinet agreed that where there were no expressions of interest from communities, the opening hours in those libraries would be standardised at 18 hours per week. This proposal would be subject to a further period of public consultation.

A period of public consultation about proposed changes to opening hours at Borrowash Library, began on Monday 10 February 2020 and concluded on Sunday 22 March 2020. The consultation sought to obtain responses on two proposed options to change opening hours, together with any other alternative suggestions that consultees wished to make. The opening hours at the time of the consultation were:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9-5	Closed	9-7	Closed	9-7	9-1	Closed

A total of 82 responses were received to the consultation, while the proposed reductions to opening hours elicited positive comments about the value of the library service, unsurprisingly a number of respondents were opposed to the proposed changes. However, there were no practical proposals put forward about how savings could be

made from the library service budget without making changes to library opening hours. It is therefore proposed that when Borrowash Library reopens, following the current period of closure, it has the following opening hours:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Proposed	2-5	Closed	9.30-1, 2-7	Closed	9.30-1	10-1	Closed

### **(3) Financial Considerations**

The reduction in opening hours is part of an overall package of opening hours reductions intended to realise approximately £100,000 of savings from the library service budget.

### **(4) Human Resources Considerations**

Informal consultation has already taken place with the trade unions and employees and formal consultation will begin should this report be approved.

Formal consultation will be undertaken in accordance with Section 188 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 and will be covered by the Councils corporate notification to the Secretary of State of potential redundancies under Section 193 of the Act.

The Council will make every effort to avoid compulsory redundancies and also seek alternative employment in line with the provisions set out in the Council's Redundancy, Redeployment, Buy-Out of Hours and Protection of Earnings policies. At its meeting on 21 March 2019 Cabinet approved the use of the Buy Out of Hours (BOOH) scheme, voluntary redundancy (VR) and voluntary early retirement (VER) release schemes if necessary, for library staff as a "pocket of difficulty". If there are insufficient volunteers, then a compulsory reduction selection process will be applied. The selection pool and selection criteria form to be determined through formal consultation with trade unions and employees.

The changes to library opening hours may also impact on cleaning and caretaking staff who currently undertake duties in libraries. Property Services managers are liaising with the library service to identify any possible impact, on these staff.

### **(5) Legal Considerations**

The provision of public libraries is governed by various pieces of legislation, most notably The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. Section 7 states:

*It shall be the duty of every library authority to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof.*

though 'comprehensive and efficient' are not defined.

In fulfilling its duty, the Council should have particular regard to the desirability of:

*i) Securing that facilities are available for borrowing books, records, films etc. sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the needs of all, and the special requirements of adults and children*

*ii) Encouraging adults and children to make full use of the service and provide advice.*

A comprehensive consultation exercise was undertaken on the whole of the Derbyshire Public Library Service Strategy from May to July 2018. An analysis of the results of this consultation were included in the report approved by Cabinet on 20 December.

## **(6) Equality and Diversity Considerations**

A full Equality Impact Analysis (EIA) was included in the original report to Cabinet.

## **(7) Other considerations**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: - social value, prevention of crime and disorder, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

## **(8) Key Decision**

No

## **(9) Call-in. Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report?**

No

## **(10) Background Papers**

Held on file within the Commissioning, Communities and Policy Department. Officer contact details – Don Gibbs, extension 36572.

## **(11) OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Cabinet member approves the implementation of the proposed changes to opening hours at Borrowash Library, as outlined in this report.

**Emma Alexander**  
**Executive Director – Commissioning, Communities and Policy**