

AGENDA ITEM 4

Report title: Essex Libraries Service Update		PSEG/03/19
Report to: Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee		
Date: 19/03/20		For: Discussion
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County Divisions affected: All Essex		

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. Members to receive an update on delivery of the future library service, covering progress on the three main strands of the strategy: community-run libraries, investment and refurbishments and updating of the library management system. Information will also be provided in response to requests from the committee about libraries staffing and volunteers and book stock.

2. Background

- 2.1. Following a call-in process, the Essex Future Libraries Strategy (Appendix A – attached for reference) was adopted on 8 August 2019.
- 2.2. The strategy was last seen by the Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee on 18 December 2019. Here, members discussed the library refurbishment process and schedule, the current library management system and the criteria for a successful bid to establish a community run library. The minutes for this meeting can be found [here](#).
- 2.3. As part of discussions the following formal motion was agreed:

'The Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee Requests early sight of the specification for the new library management system in good time before a decision is taken on it's future direction.'

It is noted that by officers that, as the preferred software option is to join the Libraries Consortium ECC has not prepared a specification for procurement, instead opting to buy into the existing software package. Further details will be provided at the meeting.

- 2.4. It was further requested that an update to committee regarding the Future Libraries Strategy would be required in Q1 2020. It was later agreed that this would take place on March 19, 2020.

- 2.5. The scope for this session includes updates on:
- Library book stocks
 - Library staffing levels
 - Library refurbishment
 - The new Library Management Software (LMS).
- 2.6. Witnesses in attendance will include:
- Cllr Susan Barker – Cabinet Member for Customer, Communities, Culture and Corporate
 - Susanna Shaw, Director Customer and Technology Operations
 - Juliet Pirez, Head of Libraries
 - Liz Sutton, Senior Communications and Engagement Specialist
 - Catherine Barton, Customer, Partner and Outreach Engagement Lead

3. Session Aims

- 3.1. Members are asked to discuss the evidence provided by witnesses and provide feedback. Members are further asked to consider the future scrutiny schedule (if required) for the Essex Libraries Service.

4. Appendices

- 4.1. **Appendix A** – Essex Future Libraries Strategy Cabinet Paper – This is included for reference. The full report and associated papers can be found as part of the 23 July Cabinet agenda pack [here](#).
- 4.2. **Appendix B** - CMA - Criteria for Community-Run Libraries (22 October 2019) – Again, this is included for reference to inform conversations around current and future library staffing.
- 4.3. **Appendix C** – Library Book Stock Levels 2016/17 – 2019/20.
- 4.4. **Appendix D** – Diagram outlining how the proposed Library Management System from the Libraries Consortium will integrate with Current ECC systems.*
- 4.5. **Appendix E** - The form ECC officers will use to conduct the Technical Impact Assessment in relation to joining the Libraries Consortium and of the LMS they have procured to ensure it meets ECC's requirements.*

* Please note: both of these items are highly technical – further explanation will be provide at the meeting itself.