Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills Executive Director for Communities

Report to:	**Executive**
Date:	**02 July 2013**
Subject:	**Library Needs Assessment**
Decision Reference:	**i005019**
Key decision?	**Yes**

Summary:

This Report reports to the Executive the initial results of a review of the Library service and seeks Executive approval to consult on proposed changes to the way in which Library services are delivered in Lincolnshire.

Recommendation(s):

1. That the Executive approve the carrying out of consultations

(i)   with the public on proposals to implement a new model of statutory library provision in Lincolnshire as set out in section 4 of the Report;

(ii)   with the public on proposals to offer certain communities a range of community library provision or support for community library provision as set out in section 6 of the Report; and

(iii)   with recognised Trade Unions and staff on proposals for redundancies arising from the proposals referred to in paragraphs (i) and (ii) above if implemented;

each consultation to last for a minimum of 90 days and to encourage comment on the proposals set out in paragraphs (i) and (ii) above and be generally in the form set out in section 9 of the Report.

2. A final decision on whether to implement the proposals referred to in paragraph 1 (i) and (ii) above be reserved to the Executive, to be made following and in the light of a further Report summarising the outcome of the consultations with the public and staff.

Alternatives Considered:

1. Not to propose any change to library provision

   This would mean that whilst an overly comprehensive library system would be maintained it would also remain financially inefficient. Library services are not immune to contributing to the savings required to be made by the Council as a whole and to maintain the existing system would not provide a comprehensive and efficient library service.

2. Not to consult or not to consult on the proposed preferred model

   The proposals set out in the Report represent a significant change to an existing service of the Council. As well as being appropriate that the public be consulted on a change of such scale, not to consult would leave the Council at risk of challenge under section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999.

   A wide range of approaches are open to the Authority in deciding how to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service. It is both permissible and considered to be more beneficial to consult with the public about a preferred model of library service rather than engage in an abstract exercise about library needs in general, or to consult on a range of proposals without any indication of the Council's preference.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Council has a statutory obligation to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use of it. The Council must, however, provide this service in a financial context of severe austerity and falling Council resources.

Analysis of the existing service has established that whilst it is comprehensive it is inefficient. A restructuring of the service as set out in this Report can be achieved which would continue to provide a comprehensive service, but more efficiently, saving £1.938m.

The Council's statutory duty is to provide an efficient service. It also has an obligation under section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvements in the way in which its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. It is therefore appropriate for the Council to consult the public on the proposed changes.

1. Background

1 Statutory, Financial and Service Context

Legal

1.1 The County Council is library authority for its administrative area under section 206 of the Local Government Act 1972 and under section 7 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 (PLMA 1964), is under a statutory obligation "to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof".

1.2 Although the County Council has a power to make facilities for the borrowing of books and other materials available to any persons, it is only under a duty to do so to persons whose residence or place of work is within Lincolnshire or who are undergoing full time education within that area.

1.3 In fulfilling its duty the Council must have regard to the desirability of:

(a) Securing that facilities are available for the borrowing of, or reference to, books and other printed matter and pictures, gramophone records, films and other materials, sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the general requirements and any special requirements both of adults and children. This may be done by the keeping of adequate stocks, by arrangements with other library authorities or by any other appropriate means.

(b) Encouraging both adults and children to make full use of the library service and of providing advice as to its use and making available such bibliographical and other information as may be required by persons using it; and

(c) Of securing full co-operation between the library function and any other authority carrying out functions within the same area.

1.4 As well as this basic statutory obligation the Council must take into account and have regard to a number of other legal duties including under the Equality Act 2010. These issues are addressed later in the Report and especially under section 7 of this Report.

1.5 In addition there have been a number of recent cases in Judicial Review relating to proposals to change the way in which library services around the country are provided. Consideration of these cases suggests that the following lessons can be drawn from them about the Council's statutory obligations:

- The Courts have expressed a view in these decisions that library services are not exempt from budget pressures facing Councils and are likely to have to bear a share of these spending reductions. Accordingly, Councils are entitled to review current service provision to look at new methods of delivery of 'a comprehensive and efficient' service that can also 'balance the books'.

- The definition of what constitutes a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service is something that is being explored within each case but the Courts are resisting any attempt to provide a definitive list of factors that would constitute S 7(1) compliance, focusing instead on the comprehensive nature of the needs assessments as achieving compliance so each case will be facts specific. In terms of any statutory assistance in fulfilling the S7 duty, a library authority shall have regard to the desirability of the issues set out in S 7(2) of the 1964 Act. This is not a mandatory list of factors but is something the Council must have regard to.

- The views of the Judge in the Brent case was that the S7 duty '...contemplates flexibility in meeting the needs of users' and what appears to be key is that in meeting those needs detailed consideration was given to them and that any relevant available 'mitigation' measures were also employed.

- The Court would only intervene on this issue where something had 'gone seriously wrong' in the information-gathering process. Otherwise, the Courts would defer to the Secretary of State to consider whether to undertake an inquiry into the provision of local library services, pursuant to powers under S 10 of the Act.

1.6 In addition to the role of the courts in judicially reviewing decisions about library provision, the 1964 Act explicitly gives to the Secretary of State a supervisory function with the ability to intervene under S 10 of the Act. Decisions of the Secretary of State under that section are themselves therefore useful guides as to the parameters in which the Council must operate in reaching decisions under S 7.

1.7 In fact there have been two recent decisions relating to the Isle of Wight and the Bolton MBC in which the Secretary of State has determined not to intervene under S 10. Some important conclusions are contained within those decision notices:

   o What constitutes a comprehensive and efficient service is a question involving a significant element of judgement and is best made in the first instance by the local authority with a good understanding of local conditions and needs, who has direct democratic accountability to the local population;

- A wide range of approaches were open to local authorities when deciding how to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service;

- A local authority is entitled to take account of cost in deciding whether the proposal is efficient.

Financial context

1.8   As indicated in the review of the legal cases above, the Council is able to take into account its resources when considering what is a comprehensive and efficient service. When doing so it will want to ensure that the service provided is sustainable and affordable. In this context the Council should reflect on the very difficult and unprecedented financial circumstances it finds itself in.

1.9   Lincolnshire's grant funding was reduced by £26.7m (11.2%) in 2011/12 and a further £16.1m (7.6%) in 2012/13 with further substantial reductions anticipated in the following years.

1.10   At the same time the Council faces pressures due to increased costs such as the county's increasing population and in particular, the impact on the Council's social care budgets of the increasing numbers of older people. Price increases, including energy price increases and landfill tax will increase costs as will new responsibilities including concessionary fares and acting as the lead flood management authority for Lincolnshire.

1.11   Council tax was frozen for 2011/12 and a 2.5% increase has been built into the budget for 2012/13 and beyond. The Council was compensated for the 2011/12 freeze through a Government grant. Council tax was frozen for 2012/13 and the Council again received a Government grant to compensate for the freeze but only for 2012/13. Any increase in council tax above 3.5% would require a referendum. Consequently the Council's ability to raise additional revenue is limited. Taking into account grant reductions and unavoidable cost pressures total annual savings of £125m over a four year period, or 25% of the base budget have had to be made.

1.12   The average reduction in service budgets was 25% over the four years 2011/12 to 2014/15 compared to 2010/11. Over the same period the average overall net saving in service budgets once costs pressures had been built back in was 12%.

1.13   In addition to this, the Council faces further significant financial pressures in future. Although no announcements have yet been made there is an expectation of further reductions in the funding made available to local government over the five financial years 2015/16 to 2019/20 of up to £80m. Although the potential effect of these changes on the Library service cannot be known the service

cannot be exempt from contributing to the savings required to ensure that the Council stays within its means.

Service context

1.14   The Council currently provides its library service through a range of different types of provision including static libraries(which vary in size and usage), mobile library provision, a range of targeted library provision for groups with access issues and on-line services (including internet access from some static and mobile services). In addition to these services the library also provides a range of other services to the community, some of which generate fees.

1.15   The library service has also explored co-location of other services with library services to improve efficiency and access. Partnership working is already in place to deliver efficiency, for example the Community Access Points at Horncastle and Mablethorpe which are run in collaboration with East Lindsey District Council, and Horncastle Town Council. In March 2013 the South Kesteven Community Access Point and Library in the Corn Exchange in Bourne has offered an even more "joined up" approach to service delivery, with the library being operated by South Kesteven District Council.

1.16   Many library buildings are utilised by community groups and public sector organisations as access points to deliver their services to the public. For instance, the service is already being used by Connexions to engage with NEETs, Lincoln College to deliver adult education, Police, Citizens Advice and many other partners. Increasingly, also the public is being signposted to the Library service by Central Government, NHS, Job Centre Plus, Connexions and Adult Social Care for programmes such as Universal Job Search and Universal Credit. Libraries are already a major contributor to GO ON UK 'digital by default' agenda and have helped an estimated 15,000 people get online for the first time in the last 12 months.

1.17   Statutory and policy requirements and financial pressures on public services are an imperative to change and examples of. Increasingly, shared public spaces are now many and varied. These trends are moving library planning from being about library buildings to shaping a library service that can contribute in a number of ways to people's enjoyment of life and learning.

1.18   At the same time, however, the Council must consider the desirability of full co-operation with other authorities carrying out functions in its area, although co-location and co-operation of services and activities is not in itself part of the statutory function of the library service. To rely on such arrangements requires a wide

range of organisations and groups to agree delivery model(s) which are not proven as a sustainable approach for service provision across a County.

1.19   It is only appropriate that in times of financial austerity the Council reviews the desirability and its ability to support such wider functions for the community.   Indeed in times of such great austerity the Council is obliged to fundamentally review its service provision against detailed consideration of the specific statutory requirements of the service.

1.20   Now that service provision has been reviewed officers have concluded it can be delivered efficiently in-house, however, it is possible that in the future consideration may be given to commissioning other third parties to deliver library services on the County Council's behalf as the authority becomes a commissioning council.

1.21   The Council is statutorily required to provide a 'comprehensive' and 'efficient' library for all persons desiring to make use of the service, but what constitutes such a service involves a significant element of judgement based on an understanding of local conditions and needs. It is the role of members, armed with this understanding, to determine the shape that a comprehensive and efficient service should take in Lincolnshire. It is that judgment that the rest of this Report addresses.

2   The Existing Library Service

2.1   The current library service is largely directly provided by the Council through four types of provision supported by certain universal services that form the basis of the other provision:

- static sites;
- mobile vehicle service;
- online services; and
- targeted provision for certain groups.

2.2   There are also some other additional library services offered, which we refer to as 'Other Services' at paragraphs 2.18 to 2.22. In this section of the report we will also deal with the role and use of volunteers in the existing library service as well as usage and performance of the service.

2.3   Before moving on to describe the four main types of library provision, those four types are supported by two main back office functions as follows:

- a Collections Access Team for Libraries whose function is to ensure the effective selection and management of stock and online resources using a variety of performance information and data to guide acquisition and ensure that resources are used effectively. Additional resources are sourced through Inter Library Loans and Lincolnshire material is loaned to other authorities regionally and nationally. The team also support user requests and music and drama and reading groups and ensure stock moves around the service in as cost effective a manner as possible to meet customer demands

- a computerised Library Management System (LMS) which was replaced in February 2013 for the first time in twelve years. The new Spydus system hosted by Civica is far easier to upgrade, offers far greater flexibility in service delivery and will save the authority over £1.3 million to operate over the next decade.

The four main components of the service are set out in more detail below:

Component 1 - Static Library Service

2.4   Lincolnshire County Council currently operates 44 static libraries across the county, they range from small community based libraries to larger neighbourhood and district libraries as follows:

12   District Libraries are open 40 to 55 hours per week
11   Neighbourhood Libraries are open 25 to 39 hours per week
21   Community Libraries are open 10 to 24 hours per week

A list of them can be found in Appendix 1. In addition the library service also supports organisations to deliver three former County Council operated libraries as set out in paragraph 2.6 below.

2.5   Each of these libraries provides a range of services as follows:

2.5.1   Staff who are proficient in the use of the library catalogue and People's Network computer and who are able to assist customers with their enquiries, information and leisure reading needs.

2.5.2   Bookstock, for adults and children ranging from fiction to non-fiction in a range of formats including large print.

2.5.3   People's network computers providing free access to Microsoft Office packages, the library catalogue, a wide range of online reference resources such as resources such as the Times Digital Archives as well as filtered internet access to the world wide web, and access to printing or photocopying facilities.

2.5.4   Community meeting rooms or other spaces according to the size and capacity of the library, in which a variety of activities take place ranging from exhibitions and events to meetings and 1:1 consultations.

2.5.5   Staff work with partner organisations and volunteers to promote an interest in, and love of reading and books. Activities range from regular story times for pre-school children, class visit opportunities for local schools and the annual national Summer Reading Challenge, plus local promotions, often linked to national events such as World Book Day.

2.5.6   The offer is more diverse where space permits. For example larger libraries offer a wider range of stock, newspapers, local history material, and this is often tailored to reflect the needs of local communities, such as Books on Prescription, Skills for Life and items in languages other than English.

2.5.7   Similarly, it is the larger libraries that tend to have audio-visual materials such as tapes, CDs, DVDs and Blu Ray.

2.5.8   Self Service (RFID) technology is used at 29 locations, Wi-Fi facilities are available at 17 locations.

2.6   The library service also supports organisations to deliver three former County Council operated libraries at:

Bourne, South Kesteven District Council
Saxilby, Saxilby and Ingleby Parish Council
Waddington, Lincolnshire Cooperative

2.7   There are also service level agreements in place for local library provision:

Belton Lane children's library in Grantham (since May 2008)
Sutton Bridge community library (since April 2012)
Ingoldmells Parish Council (since September 2012)
Winthorpe, Seathorne School (since November 2012)
Irby and Bratoft Parish Council (since November 2012)

Component 2 - Mobile Service

2.8   Lincolnshire County Council currently operates four different forms of mobile Service with two different types of vehicle (district and access mobiles):

- District Mobiles - 5 vehicles providing library services to rural communities, plus 1 business continuity vehicle.

  District mobiles have 494 stops in 386 different locations varying from weekly, fortnightly or monthly stops over a period of 4 weeks. District Mobiles range from 10 to 13 tonnes in weight and 3 vehicles have satellite technology installed. The business continuity vehicle provides cover for scheduled servicing and breakdowns. This vehicle is also used for outreach work facilitating the delivery of reading development in rural areas.

- Access Mobiles - 4 smaller vehicles provide the following three types of service to:

  People who are housebound

  The vehicle visits 7 to 14 customers per day. The service currently visits 320 customers over a 4 week period. It visited 264 customers in 2011-12.

  People who live in nursing/residential homes

  Book collections are left on the premises. The service currently visits 244 nursing/residential homes over a period of 8 weeks (the Lincolnshire Research Observatory (LRO) reports that in March 2012 there were 273 residential or care homes in Lincolnshire).

  Schools and early years settings

  Service consists of a book drop and an activity delivered by the staff. Since April 2011 schools have had to sign up and pay for this non-statutory part of the service and currently 36 schools and early years settings have done so. In 2012-13 there were 22,410 interactions with this service, up 14% on 2011-12 when there were 19,264.   The service generated £3,060 in 2012-13, and £3,100 in 2011-12.

2.9   The mobile service was used 149,500 times in 2011-12 and 127,260 times in 2012-13.

Component 3 - On-line Services

2.10   The online offering of the current service has a number of elements as follows:

- the library online service on LCC connects provides access to a library catalogue;
- In May 2011 www.lincstothepast.com was launched to provide access to local history, heritage, archive, library records and the Historic Environment Record. Content includes over 500,000 images of material held by the County Council, maps and digitised magazine articles including some from *Lincolnshire Life*. Since its launch it has been viewed over 9 million times by people from over 140 countries;
- In the spring of 2011e-Audio and e-Books were launched as free to download resources. These services have proved highly popular alongside a suite of other online resources including newspapers, the Driving Theory Test, citizenship resources and Ancestry.com. By the end of March 2012 there had been 4,138 e-audio and 14,695 e-book "issues", or loans. By the end of March 2013 this had increased to 4,551 e-audio and 20,562 e-book issues, an increase of nearly 40%; and
- The Peoples' Network enables free internet access to information through a network of 392 computers across the library service. In addition, 16 static libraries were upgraded in 2011 to offer free Wi-Fi access to visitors.

2.11   The library online service on LCC connects was used 3,208,018 times in 2011-12, including 2,979,563 visits to the library catalogue. In 2012-13 this had fallen to 3,094,252 visits, including the library catalogue.

2.12   Additionally, the County Council's Customer Service Centre handled 51,848 library related calls in 2011-12. This had fallen to 44,292 in 2012-13

Component 4 - Targeted Services

2.13   Targeted services are provided for groups who are unable to access the static, district mobile or on-line services.

2.14   The Listening Lincs Service provides audio books to people who are registered blind or partially sighted, with stock being delivered free of charge by Royal Mail. The service issued 24,711 items in 2010-11, 24,949 in 2011-12 and 22,580 in 2012-13.

2.15   The Home Library Service (HLS) provides library services to people who are housebound. It is provided by either the Access Mobile (described in 2.3 above), a partnership with the Lincolnshire Cooperative Pharmacy home delivery service, or volunteers from static libraries.

2.16   The Bookstart Service, is delivered in partnership with the Bookstart Trust, an independent charity dedicated to encouraging people of all ages and cultures to engage with books, with a particular focus on the under 5s. The programme is enabled by funding from the Department for Education and the developed governments in Northern Ireland and Wales with sponsorship from more than 25 publishers of children's books. In Lincolnshire the Bookstart Team works with health visitors and other early years health professionals.

2.17   Additionally the Bookstart Bear encourages families with young children to make the most of their local library. The club is open to children aged between 0 and 4 years, with members receiving a paw print stamp each time they return a book or attend a story or rhyme time activity in the library. As they collect paw prints they are awarded certificates, with a special certificate from Bookstart once they have completed the scheme.

'Other Services'

2.18   The service also offers a range of other services, some of which are fee generating.

2.19   In Lincolnshire there are 163 groups who subscribe to the Reading Group Service by paying an annual subscription of £25 per group per annum. A further 40 or so groups use the library service to source their books on a more informal basis. This means that nearly 2,000 people a month are supplied with book sets, which include large print, CD, e-audio and e-book versions of titles when possible. The book boxes are delivered to libraries and collected by groups. Music and Drama materials are also provided for groups who subscribe to the service which provides music sets or scripts for performances.

2.20   The Library Service also has contracts to deliver a library service to Lincoln Prison, North Sea Camp, and the Immigration Removal Centre at Morton Hall. The provision of these services is 100% externally funded.

2.21   The Schools Library Service is a non-statutory service offering a countywide professional consultancy service to schools in need of assistance with their libraries.

This service was purchased by 28 schools in 2012-13 and generated £6,297, plus £704 from the sale of consumables. In 2011-12 it generated £6,105 plus, £1,178 from the sale of consumables.

2.22   The Library Service runs a number of reading development activities in partnership with different organisations in the private and public sector which aim to promote and increase the love of books and reading. These include:
- The Summer Reading Challenge, a reading scheme for children of primary school age
- Reading Well Books on Prescription Scheme, aiming to promote reading as a benefit in improving and maintaining mental health for adults and children
- Events such as story time and rhyme time sessions, coffee mornings, Information Technology taster sessions and "knit and natter" sessions.

Staffing of the service

2.23   The staffing numbers for each of the various components of the current service are set out below:

Component 1- The static library service is currently staffed by 262 people (113.12 FTE).

Component 2 - The mobile service is staffed by 31 people, (28.38 FTE).

Component 3 – Online services such as the virtual catalogue, computerised library management system, e-books, e-audio, online resources and the procurement and management of all library stock are managed by the Collections Access Team, the libraries section of which is staffed by 6 people (5.81 FTE). Additionally, the County Council's Customer Service Centre handles library related calls seven days a week.

Component 4 - Targeted services are delivered by the Inclusion Services Team which is staffed by 14 people (9.5 FTE) The mobile service staff also have a key role to play in delivering targeted services, e.g. to early years settings and residential homes, as in Component 2 above.

Use and role of Volunteers

2.24   In Lincolnshire there is a long history of volunteering in the library service and the particular contribution that volunteers make to enhancing the service is recognised.

2.25   Recent volunteer survey data from March 2013 revealed that there were 316 volunteers engaged in the delivery of library services. Volunteers undertake a range of activities to add value to customers' experience of the library service. Volunteers also act as 'computer buddies' in libraries and help with story times and visually impaired reading groups. Volunteers also have had a long standing involvement in the home library service (delivering and collecting books to people who are housebound) and now help to extend access to static libraries. For instance in recent years the service has worked with a number of local organisations to extend static opening hours, largely through the use of volunteers, as evidenced at the following locations:

Crowland (since 2007)
Wragby (since 2008)
Caistor (since April 2011)
Pinchbeck (since September 2011)
Sutton-on-Sea (since January 2012)
Woodhall Spa (since March 2013)
Alford (since April 2013)

2.26   In several libraries hours provided by the County Council have had their opening hours enhanced by third parties, and this means that coupled with other partnerships, such as the Community Access Points in East Lindsey, at Mablethorpe, Horncastle and Coningsby/Tattershall, over 10% of the access to static library services is currently provided by volunteers or third parties. A list of these locations is provided as Appendix 2.

Access, Usage & Performance

2.27   During 2012, the service using its own performance information, worked with Experian plc, one of the world's leading information services and data analysis companies and the Lincolnshire Research Observatory (LRO), who provided analysis on the profile of the population in Lincolnshire, the profile of the active borrowers accessing the service and the usage of the service.
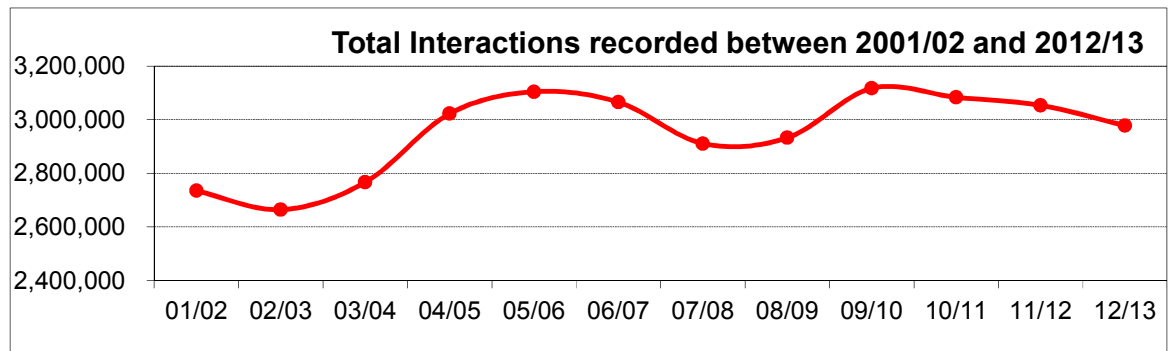
2.28   In particular, a profile was drawn up concerning the accessibility of the static service to Lincolnshire residents generally and to its active borrowers based on certain assumptions about transport. As a result accessibility was modelled for each of these two groups (residents and active borrowers) based on whether they were within 15 minutes drive time of an existing static library, 30 minutes drive time of an existing static library or 30 minutes by public transport from an existing static library. The results are summarised below.

2.29   Every household in Lincolnshire (323,242) is within a 30 minute drive time of a static library;

2.30　313,783 (96%) households are within a 15 minute drive time of a static library.

2.31　300,340 (93%) households are within 30 minutes by public transport of a static library.

2.32　Work by the Lincolnshire Research Observatory (LRO) during the summer of 2012 revealed that between January 2011 and February 2012 the Library Service was used by 135,769 'active borrowers' of whom 130,502 were resident within the county, approximately 18% of the population of Lincolnshire. An active borrower is defined as someone who has borrowed an item of stock within that period of time.

2.33　Of the 130,502 active borrowers resident in Lincolnshire all were within a 30 minute drive time of one of the 47 static libraries operated or supported by the County Council in 2011-12.

2.34　128,343 (98%) active borrowers are within a 15 minute drive time of one of these libraries.

2.35　123,314 (94%) active borrowers are within 30 minutes travel time of one of these libraries by public transport.

2.36　These active borrowers are almost entirely representative of the county's population as a whole, based on work by Experian during the summer of 2012.

　　　Further information about the catchments for the existing static library network can be found in Appendix 8.

2.37　Library Interactions (i.e. the number of times a person connects with the Library Service for any reason) have fluctuated over the last decade. These figures exclude usage of the online catalogue.

Total Interactions recorded between 2001/02 and 2012/13

| | 01/02 | 02/03 | 03/04 | 04/05 | 05/06 | 06/07 | 07/08 | 08/09 | 09/10 | 10/11 | 11/12 | 12/13 |

2.38   Within this headline figure there are two conflicting trends: Lending items, whilst still a significant activity, have been declining, and use of People's Network computers have been increasing.

2.39   Recent library user surveys reveal generally high levels of satisfaction, especially with staff friendliness and helpfulness, presentation, cleanliness and enjoyment. The details are included in Appendix 4.

2.40   The service is popular with generally high levels of customer satisfaction, e.g. 99% for the friendliness and helpfulness of the staff. There are, however, some areas of declining satisfaction, notably the computer facilities (down 20% in 12 months if 2011-12 is compared to 2010-11), information services (down 10% in 12 months over the same period) and the quality and choice of book stock.

2.41   Given the volume of interactions with the public, over 6m in 2011-12 and 5.8m in 2012-13 if the online library catalogue is included, there are relatively few complaints: 34 in 2010-11, and 91 in 2012-13. Further information is included in Appendix 4.

Conclusions about Lincolnshire's Existing Library Service

2.42   There are a number of conclusions that can be drawn about the current library service both in general and in relation to the Council's statutory duties from the above description.

2.43   Firstly, the overall pattern of usage is down with the possible exception of the People's Network Computers where the data set is incomplete because the computerised booking system was only extended to all libraries from August 2012. Interactions have fallen by 2m in the last decade and stock issues have fallen from 5m in 2001-2 to 3.3m in 2011-12 and 2.9m in 2012-13. The Council must take account of the fact that it has a service of 47 static libraries of which 44 are currently operated by the County Council, to facilitate a falling number of library transactions.

2.44   Secondly, and this is a key observation, the geographical spread of static library provision gives rise to a significant overlap of static library catchment areas illustrated by the following:

- Out of 323,242 Households in Lincolnshire 310,485 (96%) are able to access more than one static library within 30 minutes' drive time.

- 164,938 (55%) Households are also able to access more than one by public transport within 30 minutes.

- Out of 130,502 active borrowers living in Lincolnshire, 127,094 (97%) are able to access more than one static library within 30 minutes' drive time (LRO, May 2013).

- 70,842 (57%) active borrowers are also able to access more than one by public transport within 30 minutes. (Source: LRO, May 2013)

2.45   In 2011-12 56% of static library issues were delivered through the 10 largest libraries each of which is located in the county's largest urban centres. This figure was 51% in 2012-13. If the next 10 libraries by size are added to this, the percentage goes up to 76%. The remaining 24% of static library issues, (483,924) were spread over some 26 libraries with some dealing with as few as 5,210 issues (Pinchbeck). These tend to be smaller libraries which are very difficult to sustain.

2.46   One other point should be made before drawing some general conclusions. The Council's library provision provides a number of services which go beyond the Council's basic statutory obligation. Principal among these is the provision of People's Network computers, which as confirmed by the Secretary of State in the Metropolitan Borough of Bolton decision, are nice to have and may very much be part of the Council's wider economic, community resilience and digital development policies, but are not in themselves a library requirement.

2.47   The overall conclusion that can be drawn from an analysis of the existing service is that it is comprehensive, but given the over-lapping catchment areas and the consequent over-provision it can be seen to be significantly inefficient. Exploration of co-location with other public services has met with some success, but is not a sustainable model for a county-wide service. At a time of public sector financial constraint this level of over-provision is a luxury that can be ill afforded and it is incumbent on the Council to address ways in which it can make the service more efficient and thereby more affordable.

2.48   In fulfilling its S7 duties the Council must have regard to the desirability to the matters set out in Section 1.3 (a) – (c) of this report, and it can be concluded that the existing service does indeed provide for such matters, examples of which are the access to lending materials, on-line services, encouragement of adults and children to participate in a range of library services and the co-location of library services with other public services where feasible.

2.49   Before moving on it is important to bear in mind that reviewing the efficiency of the service is not a matter on which the Council has a choice.

It is no less a statutory requirement on the Council to consider the efficiency of the services than it is to ensure the comprehensiveness of the service. Any review of service provision therefore must address this level of overlaps in catchments. This would open the potential of not only providing a comprehensive service, but achieve greater compliance with our statutory duty, by also providing an efficient service for the public. To achieve these ends a fundamental review of the service was required by way of a needs assessment.

3 Service Analysis of Need

3.1 In order to fulfil its duty under S.7 PLMA 1964 the Council has to make an assessment of the needs which the library service should meet.

3.2 In drawing together a needs assessment the Council is not required to carry out a discrete information-gathering exercise, but is entitled to rely upon the expertise and experience of their professionals and on information gathered from a variety of reliable sources, both local and national.

3.3 Whilst not carried out in a strict sequence, the approach has covered 4 stages – stages 1 to 3 cover why and how we have reached the proposals we now propose to consult upon, and stage 4 covers the detail of the proposed changes which we now would like to consult the public and library staff about.

Stage 1 – Context

In addition to the context set out earlier in this Report, we have explored the purpose of the service in a changing world, its outcomes and benefits, and trends and factors affecting library provision nationally and locally. Library services are not alone in needing to adapt to fast-paced technology changes and the way people and society access information, knowledge and entertainment. The service also has a responsibility, however, to serve those who are less able, or willing, to access books or information on-line.

Trends show a decline in interactions, but still high volume activity; the service is valued by those that use it, and many that do not. However, over the years, the Lincolnshire service has expanded in a piecemeal way, responding to various local opportunities and needs and national policies.

Stage 2 – Analysis

We have thought about how the context above applies to the characteristics of Lincolnshire. As a large rural County, Lincolnshire is quite unusual, even compared to other rural areas, because we have large distances between main centres and a very dispersed, very small settlement pattern. We included in our analysis, assessment of catchments of libraries (e.g. households within 30 minute journey time by public transport), the size of settlements, the distances between them. We have analysed this alongside profiles of the population as a whole and library users (using the well-used Mosaic system which defines groups of people in society), and the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

Stage 3 – Rationale for proposed changes

The analysis was used to shape our proposals for changes to the service. We applied the findings of our analysis and factors we think are important for Lincolnshire's library service and the communities they serve. These included assessment of the optimum mix between concentrating services to achieve efficiency and critical mass – and ensuring Lincolnshire's rural character did not lead to people's exclusion from services. It also included balancing achieving efficiency in service delivery through planned LCC delivery to supporting communities who may want more choice in how services are provided.

Stage 4 Proposed changes to the Library Service

From analysis, a range of discussion and testing some possibilities, we have developed specific proposals. These are set out with all proposed changes in Section 4 below.

3.4   In terms of information, the service's own performance data, and usage patterns have been analysed by Experian and the LRO. National thinking from Arts Council England (ACE) and Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) data and analysis, such as the Comparative Profile published in December 2012, have been analysed within the library profession, experience and opinions have been sought from other library authorities and through the Society of Chief Librarians.

3.5   Clearly an important element of any needs analysis is the views of residents and library users themselves. That is why the next stage of the Council's process will be a consultation. However, the basic shape of the issue facing the Council is clear from the analysis just carried out – the efficiency of the service. So are the very real financial pressures facing the Council.

What is needed in engaging with people about what they need from a library is not an abstract exercise about library needs in general but a concrete debate about need in context – i.e. the context of establishing an efficient, affordable service while meeting as much legitimate need (i.e. need within the Council's statutory library obligations) as we can.

3.6   For that reason it was felt that before engaging with the public the Council should develop its internal analysis as far as it could to identify the issues facing the service and identify a concrete, but still very much an emerging proposal, as to how the issues could be addressed. To do that, the process described in this section has been followed.

3.7   To address the issue of over provision identified in the existing service, an exercise was undertaken to map the existing service provision against a model of service provision where there was no overlap.

3.8   The issue of accessibility of the existing and new model were then considered. Although car ownership is high in the County there is still a percentage of the population who do not own cars so both 'drive' and 'public transport' times were considered with a 30 minute by either means of transport being settled upon as a reasonable measure. There is no common service standard in this area, but in conducting this review officers have had in mind the standard used by the Department of Transport in considering public accessibility to services (more detailed information is contained in Section 5 of this report).

3.9   Both the accessibility for households in the county and accessibility for active users of the service was also analysed. Finally, those who may be unable to access any proposed static provision were identified and then a range of mitigation measures in relation to their accessibility to services was considered.

3.10   As it appeared that a large proportion of the library business was being conducted through branches in the county's urban centres an analysis of the performance of the libraries in the county's designated 'economic zones' was undertaken. These economic zones were previously identified by using factors such as how far people travel to work and services (schools and libraries), house prices, and the value of industrial and commercial property. The centres of the 13 economic zones are also where population density is highest, see LRO Map below:

Lincolnshire's Economic Zones

3.11   An analysis of current usage statistics has revealed that there is a close correlation between Lincolnshire's most popular libraries and the 13 economic zones within the county. Performance tables showing the libraries with the highest performance in terms of active users, interactions and issues are shown in Appendix 3.

3.12   Given the above correlation and a desire to reduce over-provision, consideration was given to adopting the 13 libraries within these major service centres in the County (with reasonable travel times) as a core branch network for the static part of the service. This network also appeared to serve the rural geography of the county well with a good spread of coverage.

3.13   However, further analysis of the 13 libraries revealed that there was a significant difference between the usage and coverage of the top 10 and the remaining 3 libraries which merited further analysis.

3.14   The top 10 libraries on grounds of location, usage, including usage by people living in the top 20% of areas using Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and coverage were clearly located in the best place and as such were deemed as 'Tier 1 libraries'. The remaining 3 libraries in the economic zones, whilst sited in the best place for the community, the usage at these branches merited a service of a less comprehensive size, so were deemed as 'Tier two libraries'.

3.15   In addition, a further 2 'Tier 2 libraries' were identified at Long Sutton and Woodhall Spa to improve geographical coverage and fill gaps in the catchment areas. Again, numbers of library users using those libraries and living in areas of multiple deprivation were taken into account.

3.16   Accordingly, it was concluded a Library service consisting of 10 'Tier 1' and 5 'Tier 2' libraries for the static part of the service was the correct level of provision.

3.17   It is evident from the explanation of the above analysis and description of the preferred model, that an argument to proceed with core static service in the 13 economic zones could have been advanced or indeed a number of other combinations could be advanced; a wide range of approaches are open to the Council in designing a service. However, the more libraries that are added to the static service, beyond these sites identified, raises the potential for re-introducing overlaps in service provision and reduce efficiency of the service.

3.18   This core branch network of Tier 1 and Tier 2 libraries, together with online services and targeted provision for certain groups with access issues, is therefore what the service has provisionally concluded and subject to the views of the public in consultation, provides a good quality library service that is both comprehensive and efficient and accessible to local communities thereby meeting the needs of Lincolnshire and being compliant with the S7 PLMA 1964 statutory duty.

3.19   In the next section the proposed model is described in more detail, while in section 5 the rationale for the model is further developed through a detailed analysis of its impact on residents and active users in comparison with the current service.

4   The Proposed Model of Library Service

4.1   It is considered that the proposed model for the Library Service remains comprehensive, but is significantly more efficient in that it will achieve savings of £1.938m per annum.

As set out at the beginning of this report there is no guidance about what a 'comprehensive and efficient' statutory service consists of and it will be a matter professional judgement. It is the professional judgment of officers within the Library Service that this model meets local need in a way that is efficient and comprehensive and therefore compliant with statute.

4.2   At the same time, during this review it has also become apparent that beyond the Council's statutory obligation to provide a library service, other providers and local communities have a desire to provide additional library services in their communities in a range of ways. Accordingly, officers have given consideration to this fact and in section 6 put forward proposals for how the Council, separately from its statutory library service can put in place support to communities to maintain some degree of even more local provision.

4.3   The rest of this section describes the model outlined in section 3 in more detail and is referred to as the statutory service.

4.4   There are 3 components to the statutory service:

1.   Universal services open to all via the internet and Customer Service Centre.

2.   A service delivered through a group of Core Libraries which are described as follows:

Tier 1 Libraries open for 50 hours per week (10 libraries)
Tier 2 Libraries open for 25 hours per week (5 libraries)

3.   Targeted provision for certain groups delivered by use of the mobile vehicles and partnership working.

Component 1- Universal services open to all via the internet and Customer Service Centre

4.5   The most visible aspect of Lincolnshire County Council's universal offer will continue to be the library service's website and "virtual catalogue" (https://lincolnshire.spydus.gov.uk/). This acts as a portal for library users who with their library card number and PIN number can access or alter their borrower information; renew/reserve items; search the catalogue 24/7/365 ; access online resources and download e-Audio and e-Books.

4.6   The new Library Management System introduced in March 2013, offers significant potential to develop this offer with an application that will allow users to self-issue using their own mobile devices; create and share reading lists, reviews, comments and participate in online reading groups.

With the roll out of the new system, the opportunity was taken to update the online catalogue; giving it a fresh, dynamic look and feel and giving more prominence to the suite of online resources.

4.7 This will be supplemented by access to the County Council's customer service centre (CSC), from 9am to 5pm seven days a week. Staff at the CSC have access to the library service's website and can assist customers with loan requests, reservations, etc. This is particularly important for those customers who are unable to access the internet.

4.8 Underpinning these public facing components, there will be the professional and technical support required to procure, process, distribute and manage book stock and other items which can be borrowed by the public. This includes participating in Mid-Anglia consortium with Cambridgeshire, Leicestershire, Leicester City, Rutland and Peterborough (Vivacity Trust) library authorities. This consortium has been successful in securing increased discounts from suppliers, which means that the service's materials budget has gone further than in previous years.

4.9 The distribution of these materials to library sites across the county is also centralised, and a re-procurement exercise in the latter part of 2011 enabled the service to save £56,000 per annum on this courier contract from 2012-13.

4.10 Another part of the universal service are the People's Network Computers in the static and district mobile library network. Peoples' Network computers offer library users access to the library service's catalogue and online resources, including a number which are not available from home, due to licencing restrictions by the owners of the intellectual property concerned (e.g. Ancestry.com).

4.11 Another element of the Universal Offer are the enablers which underpin it, including the management structure within the Library and Heritage Management Team, most of which runs 44 of the existing network of 47 static libraries, plus the Service Level Agreements with the various bodies listed in Appendix 2. With a reduced network this management structure will need to be reduced, but whilst the authority is still considering its approach to commissioning, details are not yet available of this structure.

4.12 The movement of book stock to a potentially larger number of static community libraries and book deposits would need more capacity within the Collections Access Team and so it is proposed that 4 Collections Access Assistants are created, along with a £50,000 budget to transport books to and from the community locations.

Component 2-. A service delivered through a group of tier one & two core libraries

Tier 1 Libraries

4.13   Using the methodology and criteria applied in section 3 above, 10 Tier 1 core libraries are proposed:

Lincoln
Grantham
Boston
Spalding
Gainsborough
Stamford
Skegness
Louth
Sleaford
Mablethorpe

4.14   These are the ten most populous urban areas in Lincolnshire, and have some of the highest indices of multiple deprivation in the county and are thus priorities for retention.

4.15   They also have the highest numbers of library stock issued from static libraries (56% in 2011-12, and 51% in 2012-13).

4.16   Tier one core libraries will be County Council operated static libraries that are open for 50 hours per week over six days including Saturdays and at least one evening offering a wide range of services, popular and more technical book stock along with talking books, large print publications and audio visual. Specifically this means a book stock of at least 18,000 covering adult and junior fiction and non-fiction.   Within this there will be provision for books in popular foreign Languages (Bright Books), and foreign language learning tapes and CDs.

4.17   Facilities would also include: Wi-Fi; a minimum of 10 People's Network computers; self-service (RFID) technology and printing / scanning facilities; a dedicated study area, local and national newspapers, community information and reference resources including a comprehensive local studies collection; children's library; story times for pre-school children; class visit opportunities for local schools and the annual national Summer Reading Challenge and other events.

4.18   The average cost of operating a Tier 1 library is £210,000 per annum.

Tier two Libraries

4.19 Additionally, five Tier 2 core libraries are proposed using the same selection criteria. They are the next most populous areas of the county, they do not provide overlap with the ten Tier1 libraries. They are:

Bourne (as per the new arrangement with South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) where the existing Neighbourhood Library became part of the South Kesteven Community Access Point and Library in March 2013.)
Market Rasen
Horncastle
Long Sutton
Woodhall Spa

4.19 Tier 2 libraries are County Council operated static libraries that are open 25 hours per week (or 46 in the case of Bourne under the new arrangement with SKDC) over 4 or 5 days including Saturdays, with at least one evening offering a range of services including a range of popular book stock, talking books and large print publications. Specifically this means a book stock of at least 9,000 covering adult and junior fiction and non-fiction. Within this there will be provision for books in popular foreign Languages (Bright Books) in the southern part of the County, and foreign language learning tapes and CDs. publications.

4.20 Facilities would also include; a minimum of 5 People's Network computers; self-service (RFID) technology and printing / scanning facilities; study facilities, local newspapers, community information and reference resources including a small local studies collection covering the immediate area; children's area; story times for pre-school children, class visit opportunities for local schools and the annual national Summer Reading Challenge and other events.

4.21 In 2011-12 and 2012-13, 12% of the stock issued from static libraries was issued from these five libraries.

4.22 The average cost of operating a Tier 2 core library would be £76,000 per annum

4.23 Together the 15 Tier 1 and 2 core libraries have a close alignment to the 13 economic zones identified by the LRO and Sheffield University in 2008 and this work has informed the Lincolnshire Economic Assessment ever since.

Component 3 - Targeted provision

4.24   Targeted provision will be aimed at the 83,531 households, and 33,123 active borrowers who fall outside the 30 minute travel time by public transport of the 15 proposed core libraries, and especially the 1.2% (508) of such households who do not have access to a car (see paragraph 4.25 below).

4.25   It will also include those people who live within the catchment zone of one of the 15 core libraries who are unable to access the library because they do not have a car, or are unable to access public transport. The LRO have identified that 17.9% (42,330) of households in Lincolnshire do not have access to a car and that if the 30 minute travel time using public transport from the 15 proposed core libraries is adopted 1.2% (approximately 508 households) would fall outside that catchment (LRO May 2013).

4.26   Two other target groups to consider are:

People who are permanently sick/disabled and non-internet users of whom there are likely to be 5.2% of households in Lincolnshire. All bar 0.5% (approximately 1,616 households) live within the 30 minute travel time using public transport of one of the core libraries (LRO May 2013).

People who are unemployed, have no access to a car and are non-internet users of whom there are likely to be 3.1% of households in Lincolnshire. All bar 0.5% (approximately 1,616 households) live within the 30 minute travel time using public transport of one of the core libraries (LRO May 2013).

4.27   The Home Library Service will be the principal means of reaching the audience identified in 4.25 and 4.26.

4.28   A centralised database of existing users has been created which will be open to Lincolnshire residents who are housebound and who, due to disability, age or ill health are unable to reach one of the Core Libraries. Enrolment will be via an online form on the new Home Library Service web page or by calling the Customer Service Centre on 01522 782010.

4.29   Once registered, users will be contacted by a member of library staff to discuss their eligibility or reading needs, and a monthly visit will be arranged to deliver books, DVDs, CDs large print or audio books to their home. Delivery might be by library staff member using an Access Mobile vehicle, a Lincolnshire Cooperative Pharmacy vehicle or a Home Library Service Volunteer.

4.30   The Listening Lincs Service provides audio books to people who are registered blind or partially sighted, with stock being delivered free of charge by Royal Mail. The service was used by 824 customers in 2010-11 and issued 24,711 items. In 2011-12 it was used by 720 customers and issued 24,949 items.

4.31   The Bookstart Service will continue to be delivered in partnership with the Bookstart Trust and continue to encourage reading amongst people of all ages and cultures to engage with books, with a particular focus on the under 5s.

4.32   Similarly, Bookstart Bear will continue to encourage families with young children to make the most of their local library.

4.33   Finally, the Library Service will continue to run a number of reading development activities in partnership with different organisations in the private and public sector with the aim of promoting an increase in the love of books and reading. These activities will include The Summer Reading Challenge; Reading Well Books on Prescription Scheme: story times and rhyme time sessions, coffee mornings, Information Technology taster sessions and "knit and natter" sessions.

4.34   In conclusion, the universal online services, network of 15 core tier one and tier two libraries, and the targeted provision described above are considered by Officers to meet Lincolnshire's statutory requirements for the provision of a comprehensive and efficient library service pursuant to S 7 of the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act.

4.35   However, this conclusion is subject to on-going testing of the rationale against the Council's Equality Act duties and other duties and subject to the outcome of the consultation process.

5   IMPACT OF PROPOSED MODEL OF SERVICE

5.1   In terms of the shape of the service the impact of the proposed changes can be summarised as follows

- Universal services would remain unchanged, although they will continue to be developed according to need over time.

- The number of static libraries which are considered to be part of the authority's statutory duty would fall from 47 to 15.

- The number of hours that tier one and two libraries are open will be reduced by 15 per week, an average of 1 hour per library. Six libraries would see a reduction in hours, four an increase and the remainder would be unchanged.

5.2   On the point of accessibility and catchment areas, the position under the proposal for 15 core libraries is summarised below

5.3   In terms of 'households', by reducing the static network from 47 to 15 core libraries, the 30 minute drive time catchment overlap in Lincolnshire is reduced from 322,970 (nearly 100%) to 310,485 households (96%) (LRO, May 2013).

5.4   If the 30 minutes by public transport measure is used, overlap of catchments falls from 164,938 households (55%) to 4,689 Households (1.5%).

5.5   In terms of the library service's 'active borrowers', by reducing the static network from 47 to 15 core libraries the 30 minute drive time catchment overlap is reduced from 70,842 (57%) to 1,925 (1.4%) (LRO May 2013).

5.6   If the 30 minutes by public transport measure is used the overlap of catchments for active borrowers falls from 70,842(57%) to 1,925 (1.4%)

5.7   The findings from this detailed analysis can be summarised as follows:

Catchment Area	Library Service	% of Lincolnshire households		% of Active Borrowers	
		Inside	Outside	Inside	Outside
30 min drive time	Current 47 Static libraries	100	0	100	0
	Proposed 15 Core Libraries	100	0	100	0
30 min travel time using public transport	Current 47 Static libraries	93	7	94	6
	Proposed 15 Core Libraries	74	26	76	24

5.8   All households and library service users in Lincolnshire are within a 30 minute drive time to one of the 15 proposed core libraries.

5.9   There is a high incidence car ownership in the county, and all car owners are within a 30 minute drive time of one of the 15 proposed core libraries.

5.10   However, 17.9% of households don't have access to a car and 9.6% of households use public transport for work (LRO September 2012, P19). For this reason a 30 minute travel time by public transport is considered to be the most appropriate measure to use in assessing the maximum impact of the proposal. This is based on the Department for Transport's Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) report "Making Connections" (February 2003). This report highlighted four key accessibility factors:

Access to work
Access to learning
Access to healthcare
Access to 'service centres' (including supermarkets, post offices, banks, **libraries**, leisure centres, community centres)

A library is clearly defined as a 'service centre', and provides access to learning. The 30 minute by public transport measure was used in the Report to assess minimum accessibility.

5.11   Referring to the Department for Transport's own statistics on accessibility and in particular Figure 1 below, whilst the lack of reference to a library as a key service is noted, across England and on average no mode of transport from any area type exceeds a **minimum** travel time of 30 minutes. Clearly though there will be instances where the travel time is over 30 minutes particularly in respect of using public transport and walking.

Figure 1: Average minimum travel time in minutes to reach the nearest key services[1]   by mode of travel, rural and urban areas, England, 2011

Mode	Urban	Town & Fringe	Village	Hamlet & Isolated Dwellings
Transport / Walking	12	17	26	29
Cycle	7	14	20	20
Car	6	7	8	8

Source: Department for Transport, Accessibility Statistics (http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/accessibility/)   Table ACS0103

5.12   As such, the evidence points to a target of achieving maximum catchment within a '30 minute travel time using public transport' area as providing appropriate accessibility, in line with both local policy and national performance, with the knowledge that there will be areas and populace outside of these parameters.

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[1] An average of the minimum travel times to Employment centres, Primary schools, Secondary schools, Further Education, GPs, Hospitals and Food stores.

5.13   If this indicator is applied to the proposed 15 Core Libraries almost all overlap in catchment areas is eliminated, and 239,711 (74%) of households in Lincolnshire are within 30 minutes travel time by public transport. Only 4,689 households (1.5%) would be within 30 minutes travel time by public transport of more than one static library (LRO, May 2013).

5.14   Of the Library Service's 130,502 active borrowers in 2011-12, 97,379 (76%) will be within 30 minutes public transport travel time of one of the 15 proposed Core Libraries, and only 70,842 (57%) would be within 30 minutes travel time by public transport of more than one static library (LRO May 2013).

5.15   The proposal therefore clearly addresses efficiency by removing all overlap of catchment areas. However the percentage of households within 30 minutes by public transport falls from 92%to 74% and the percentage of active borrowers within the same catchment falls from 94% to 76%. This may be considered to raise an issue of comprehensiveness. However, this does not take into universal and targeted services.

5.16   Universal services, through the library service's online offer and virtual catalogue are open to all. This is also supplemented by the authority's customer service centre which is open for library calls from 9am to 5pm daily including most Bank Holidays.

5.17   Targeted services are aimed at specific audiences with specific needs including an inability to access services through one of the 15 core libraries. e.g. Bookstart for under 5s, Listening Lincs for people who are registered as being blind or partially sighted and the Home Library Service Lincolnshire residents with disabilities, temporary illness or caring responsibilities making them housebound, and those who have mobility problems and would be unable to visit a static or mobile library stop.

5.18   When the impact of universal and targeted services is taken into account it is clear that all residents of Lincolnshire and active borrowers can access a range of library services. This is considered to be comprehensive.

5.19   In terms of access to computers, the ability of the service to support government's digital by default and Go On UK agendas, associated with Universal Job Search and Universal Credit applications and the use of libraries as community spaces would be impaired with a reduction of 177 People's Network computers. However, whilst internet access and IT provision has numerous benefits it has been adjudged by the Secretary of State, on 31 May 2013 in her refusal to direct a local enquiry into library services in the Metropolitan Borough of Bolton, not to be a relevant matter under the 1964 Act.

5.20   In terms of buildings, it is proposed that the 30 library buildings no longer required to deliver tier one and tier two core library service would cease to be operated by the County Council. Of these 9 are leased or occupied on terms set out in Service Level Agreements, and these would need to be terminated. 21 are owned by the County Council.

5.21   In terms of staffing implications, the delivery of the new model would require the number of FTE staff to be significantly reduced. In terms of front line staff, 298 posts (142 FTE) are within the scope of the review, and 128 posts (87 FTE) will be created as a result of these proposals, leading to a net reduction of 170 posts (55 FTE). A separate management restructure affecting a further 14 post holders (13.05 FTE) would also be required once the final form of the new structure, and the authority's approach to commissioning had been agreed. Volunteers would continue to have a role in enhancing the service offered, e.g. by supporting people who are housebound to access library services.

5.22   The socio-economic impacts have been addressed through working with Experian and the LRO and the impact analysis can be found in Appendix 7.

5.23   In fulfilling its S 7 duties under the PLMA 1964 the Council must have regard to the desirability to the matters set out in Section 1.3 (a) – (c) of this report, and it can be concluded from the analysis in this report that the proposed model of service would continue to provide for such matters, examples of which are the access to lending materials, on-line services, encouragement of adults and children to participate in a range of library services and the co-location (and continued exploration of such opportunities) of library services with other public services where feasible.

5.24   Finally, in financial terms the effect of the proposals if implemented will be to save the authority £1,937,894 (See section 8 below).

5.25   The attention of the Executive is expressly drawn at this stage to the section in part 7 of this Report dealing with equality and diversity impacts of the proposal and the obligations of the Executive under the public sector equality duty.

6.   **PROPOSALS FOR A NON- STATUTORY SERVICE**

6.1   A detailed analysis of the Council's statutory library function and the needs of communities show that the Council can fulfil its statutory obligations through what has been called in this Report the statutory service.

However, it is clear that libraries or more properly the provision of facilities for borrowing books and other materials are highly valued by communities and can do much to deliver on other Council objectives in relation to investing in infrastructure and the provision of services, promoting community wellbeing and resilience and influencing, co-ordinating and supporting other organisations. .

6.2   It is only right in those circumstances that quite apart from the fulfilment of its statutory duties the Council considers whether it should exercise any of its powers to extend the reach of library services further into communities. There is no doubt that the Council has power under S 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to pursue such initiatives should it choose to do so.

6.3   In recognition therefore, of the fact that libraries are important to the people of Lincolnshire, and that a number of new community partnerships have developed in recent years, providing many new volunteering opportunities it is proposed to go above and beyond the authority's statutory duty and continue to support communities which are engaged in library provision.

6.4   For this reason it is proposed that the following existing partnership arrangements will continue in their current form:

Belton Lane, Grantham (since May 2008)
Ingoldmells (since September 2012
Irby and Bratoft (since November 2012)
Saxilby and Ingham (since October 2012)
Sutton Bridge (since April 2012)
Waddington, Lincolnshire Cooperative Pharmacy (since December 2012)
Winthorpe, Seathorne School (since November 2012)

6.5   In addition, it is proposed to offer the following non-statutory Tier 3 and 4 community library provision for the people of Lincolnshire.

6.6   <u>Tier 3</u>

Where a community currently has a County Council operated static library which would not be operated by the authority following the proposed changes, the County Council will offer Tier 3 library provision at a cost to the Council of £5,167 per annum per community in one of two formats:

Option 1: The opportunity to take over their local library, or create their own. This would be a community-run facility, operated by volunteers with professional support from the County Council (there will be three library development officers covering the county). It would be open for at least six hours per week, offering a range of services, such as book lending and internet access.

Financial support would be offered to that community of £5,167 per annum for them to operate a library, plus up to 4,000 books and the option of either having the People's Network or providing their own ICT facilities and a one off payment of up to £15,000 for building works or equipment.

OR

Option 2: The community could opt for a 'super mobile' - fortnightly visit (for four hours on a week day afternoon and early evening or three hours on a Saturday) from a mobile library with a range of services, such as book lending and internet access. The cost of providing this service to each of these communities would be £5,167 per annum.

6.7 Sixty (60) Tier 3 communities of more than 550 households (e.g. Burton) have been identified for this provision, including the 30 communities that already have a static library.

6.8 If the county council were to deliver the super mobile service to every one of these communities it would require four super mobile vehicles.

6.9 If fifteen of these communities elected to deliver their own library service three super mobile vehicles would be needed.

6.10 The benefit of this approach is that it provides communities with a choice of how they want a library service provided in their location.

6.11 The process of expressing an interest in operating a community library involves submitting a simple expression of interest form by 30 September 2013. If accepted the community organisation would be asked to work up an outline business case which would ultimately lead to a Service Level Agreement (further details can be found in Appendix 6).

6.12 In order to assist these communities who have expressed an interest in operating community provision, two Library Development Officer posts (2 FTE in total) were created during 2012 and they are now in regular contact with the community operated libraries established to date. Should there be wide appeal for communities to operate their own Tier 3 libraries, this resource could be increased to 4 FTE posts. The role of the Library Development Officer is to offer professional expertise to a group of organisations wishing to deliver library services to their community.

6.13 Tier 4

Additionally, a further 66 communities ranging in size from 100 households (Fiskney Eudike) and 549 households (Sturton by Stow) have been identified for a Tier 4 monthly mobile stop of up to one hour, at which a range of 2,000 books and web access would be available.

6.14 Tier 4 provision would require 2 x Access Mobile vehicles and would cost the Council £1,800 per community per annum. These vehicles will also have a role in delivering statutory targeted provision.

6.15 All remaining mobile library stops, 286 of them, would be withdrawn, although targeted provision set out in section 4 above would be available to people in those communities.

6.16 It is worth reiterating at this stage that the Council does not consider that the provision of these proposed non-statutory services is required by its duties under S 7 of the PLMA 1964 and it does not rely on these services to establish its compliance with the Act even though such a service does much to address issues caused by the removal of statutory services. The reality is that these services remain discretionary and must be used if they are not to be withdrawn. That said it represents a significant investment by the Council over and above its statutory duties in the well-being of its communities.

7 Legal Issues

7.1 The legal basis of the Council's provision of library services and the issues emerging from the Judicial Review cases impacting on the Council's decision-making process have been addressed in the first section of this Report. The rest of the report has been a serious and sustained engagement with the parameters of the Council's duties and powers and is considered to represent a rational defensible basis for the proposed solution.

7.2 This section addresses a number of issues that the Executive is required to take into account in reaching its decision.

Consultation

7.3   Under S 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999, the Council is under a duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

7.4   Under S 3 (2) of the Local Government Act 1999 for the purpose of deciding how to fulfil the duty arising under subsection (1) an authority must consult:

(a)   representatives of persons liable to pay any tax, precept or levy to or in respect of the authority,

(b)   representatives of persons liable to pay non-domestic rates in respect of any area within which the authority carries out functions,

(c)   representatives of persons who use or are likely to use services provided by the authority, and

(d)   representatives of persons appearing to the authority to have an interest in any area within which the authority carries out functions.

For these purposes "representatives" in relation to a group of persons means persons who appear to the authority to be representative of that group.

7.5   This is supported by statutory guidance issued in September 2011 in which guidance is given about how to discharge those duties. This statutory guidance makes it clear that the obligation to consult is not optional and suggests that the Council should include local voluntary and community organisations and small businesses in such consultation.

7.6   Given the nature of the decision that faces the Council it is appropriate that the Council consult in this instance and it is the purpose of this Report to seek approval from the Executive to go out to consult. For that reason the proposed consultation is dealt with in greater detail in section 9 below on next steps. That section deals not only with community consultation but also staff consultation.

Equality Act 2010

7.7   The Council's duty under the Equality Act 2010 also needs to be taken into account when coming to a decision. The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

(1)   Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;

(2)   Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(3)   Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it: Equality Act 2010 S 149(1). The relevant protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation:S 149(7).

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

(1)   Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

(2)   Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

(3)   Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

(4)   The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

(5)   Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice, and promote understanding.

(6)   Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.

7.8   This duty cannot be delegated and must be discharged by the decision-maker. To discharge the statutory duty the decision-maker must analyse all the relevant material with the specific statutory obligations in mind. If a risk of adverse impact is identified consideration must be given to measures to avoid that impact as part of the decision making process.

7.9   To test out the emerging proposal for future library services an Impact Analysis of the proposal was undertaken (See Appendix 7). It is clear from the impact analysis a range of groups/individuals have been identified as being impacted by the proposed model and also a range of mitigating factors to address these impacts has also been considered. This impact analysis will be reviewed in light of the public consultation to produce a revised analysis prior to any final decisions about the service being taken.

Child Poverty Strategy

7.10   In reaching a decision, the Council must have regard to the Lincolnshire Child Poverty Strategy. These proposals take this strategy into account because deprivation has been considered in the location of Tier 1 and 2 libraries. For example, Tier 1 libraries are located in areas where there are high concentrations of children living in poverty, mainly in pockets within the major conurbations of Lincoln, Boston, Grantham and Gainsborough.

7.11   If communities develop Tier 3 community library provision, this may increase access to library services for children and young people.

7.12   In those communities where community library provision does not develop the timing of the proposed fortnightly three or four hour super mobile stops has been designed such that it is accessible to children and young people after school or college inside or outside term time.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Joint Health and Well-being Strategy

7.13   In reaching a decision, the Council must have regard to the Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Under these proposals libraries will continue to have role to play in tackling the factors that affect everyone's health and wellbeing, by promoting healthier lifestyles through the universal offer, Tier 1, 2, 3, 4 and targeted provision.

7.14   The proposal to engage 60 communities in the delivery of Tier 3 library provision has the potential to significantly increase the number of volunteers working in libraries with the benefits that brings in terms of individual and community wellbeing.

Experience to date has shown that volunteers working in libraries have participated in training opportunities, developed new skills, and are enthusiastic, work within a team which has a camaraderie and work with the public.

7.15   Where library hours have been extended by volunteers there have been more opportunities for children and young people to access library services and information sources.

Human Rights

7.16   It is not considered that the proposal gives rise to any human rights issues, but this will be kept under review during the consultation and any issues will be addressed in the final report to Executive before a final decision is taken.

8   Finance

8.1.   In Lincolnshire, the Core Offer, based on an initial assessment of the true cost of a revised but still legally compliant service, envisaged savings from the Library Service's front line operations of £2,158,820 from a starting budget of £6,279,435 by March 2015. The budget agreed by Full Council on 22 February 2013 requires the service to save £2,039,000 in the financial year 2014-15, virtually all of which are due from the front line of the Library Service.

8.2   The proposals set out above are all within the financial 'envelope' of a front line library service costing £4.1m in 2014-15. This takes into account £2.8m of savings achieved since 2009-10 on other elements of the authority's Libraries and Heritage operations, and the additional 1% which was required from the 2012-13 budget round in 2014-15.

Universal	Current Budget 2013/14	Proposed Budget 2014/15	Variance
e-books/e-audio	£30,000	£30,000	£0
Online catalogue	£60,000	£60,000	£0
Book Fund	£547,687	£557,687	£10,000
DVD/AV income	-£10,486	-£10,486	£0
Total	**£627,201**	**£637,201**	**£10,000**

Enablers	Current Budget 2013/14	Proposed Budget 2014/15	Variance
Management Staffing	£649,654	£401,267	-£248,387
Transport	£0	£50,000	£50,000
Collections Access Assistants (x4)	£0	£92,064	£92,064
Total	**£649,654**	**£543,331**	**-£106,323**

Core Libraries (Tier 1 and 2)	Current Budget 2013/14	Proposed Budget 2014/15	Variance
Tier 1 and 2	£2,507,827	£2,180,853	-£326,974
Total	**£2,507,827**	**£2,180,853**	**-£326,974**

Targeted	Current Budget 2013/14	Proposed Budget 2014/15	Variance
Bookstart	£50,357	£50,357	£0
Prisons	£0	£0	£0
Schools Library Service	£3,082	£0	-£3,082
Access Mobiles (Tier 4)	£110,296	£110,296	£0
Total	**£163,735**	**£160,653**	**-£3,082**

Community Libraries (Tier 3 and 4)	Current Budget 2013/14	Proposed Budget 2014/15	Variance
Waddington	£20,951	£7,500	-£13,451
Saxilby	£24,718	£5,970	-£18,748
Remaining Static Libraries	£1,179,926	£20,000	-£1,159,926
Super Mobiles (Tier 3)	£720,491	£317,826	-£402,665
Access Mobiles (Tier 4)	£110,296	£110,296	£0
Library Development Officers	£34,069	£117,344	£83,275
Total	**£2,090,451**	**£578,756**	**-£1,511,515**

Grand Total	£6,038,868	£4,100,974	-£1,937,895

9   Next Steps

Public Consultation

9.1   A public consultation exercise is proposed to run from 3 July to 30
September 2013. To explore reactions to the proposal including
the following:

- Whether consultees agree with the number and proposed
location of Tier 1 libraries.
- Whether consultees agree with the proposed range and mix of
services to be provided from Tier 1 libraries.
- Whether consultees agree with the number of proposed Tier 2
libraries
- What priority should be given to the criteria used to determine
which communities should have Tier 2 library provision.
Consultees will be invited to rank their preference for the
following: overlap with Tier 1, match with indices of multiple
deprivation (areas that are economically and socially
disadvantaged), volume of business and areas of increased
population.
- Whether consultees agree with the proposed range and mix of
services to be provided from Tier 2 libraries.
- Whether the proposed amount available to deliver Tier 3 library
provision is appropriate, or if it should be based on the existing
library premises costs, an amount per head of local population,
a proportion of Tier 1 cost or another means. When giving this
option, however, it will be explained that if more funding is
required this will result in fewer tier three facilities being
available as funds are limited.
- Whether consultees agree with the proposal for Tier 4 provision
or whether they would prefer fewer locations to be visited for a
longer period than the proposed one hour.
- The impacts people with a protected characteristics consider the
proposal will have on them and what steps could be taken to
mitigate those impacts

9.2   This will involve the following components:

- online information about the proposals
www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/librariesconsultation
- survey form which is accessible through the County Council's
website
- hard copy freepost survey form available at all library service
points
- 8 x facilitated public consultation meetings at a variety of venues
and times to facilitate access by a wide cross section of the
public

- 6 x focus group workshops with children and young people
- Ability to contact the customer service centre on 01522 782040 to talk the about the proposals or complete a survey form by telephone
- Dedicated e-mail account for the consultation librariesconsultation@lincolnshire.gov.uk

9.3   The consultation will be highlighted to:

- the public, as per 9.2 above
- library users
- all organisations currently engaged in the delivery of library services
- all district councils in Lincolnshire
- all parish councils in Lincolnshire
- Arts Council England
- East Midlands Society of Chief Librarians

9.4   The scope of the consultation, its mandate, plan and execution has been based on the UK Consultation Institute's Best Practice Standards and Endorsement of the consultation process is currently being sought from the Consultation Institute.

Staff Consultation

9.5   Internally 298 front line post holders (148 FTE) are within the scope of the review, and 128 posts (87 FTE) will be created as a result of these proposals, leading to a net reduction of 170 posts (55 FTE). A separate management restructure would also be required once this consultation process and the authority's approach to commissioning were agreed.

9.6   A 90 day staff consultation will be undertaken from 3 July to 2 October 2013 in line with employment law and the County Council's policy framework. This will focus on the proposals for the service and the detailed staffing proposals required to implement the proposals being considered in the public consultation including:

- The scope, purpose and rationale of the proposals
- Impact on the library service existing structures and posts
- Structures, posts, new job descriptions, locations and working practices
- posts for disestablishment, assimilation and ring fencing
- Approaches to ring fencing, selection, voluntary redundancy, flexible retirement and retirement

.

9.7   This process will involve

        •   Providing all staff within the scope of the staffing proposals with
            a copy of the consultation document
        •   5 x staff meetings across the county
        •   Regular engagement with trade unions, notably UNISON

9.8   Staff will have the opportunity to comment on the service proposals
        set out in this Report so that they can influence the decisions giving
        rise to the need for the staff consultation before a final decision is
        taken.

Timetable

9.9   In order to achieve the savings within the budget set for 2014-15 it will
        be necessary to adopt the following decision making timetable:

Action	Date
Community and Public Safety Scrutiny Committee	26.6.13
Executive – authorisation of staff and public consultation on the proposals	2.7.13
Start of 90 day staff and public consultation Consultation events will be held during this period	3.7.13
Deadline for community library expressions of interest	30.9.13
Analysis of consultation feedback starts	1.10.13
Community and Public Safety Scrutiny Committee	22.11.13
Executive – final decision on the future of the Library Service including community expressions of interest	3.12.13
Start of staff implementation process	4.12.13
Deadline for receipt of invited community expressions of interest	31.3.14
Implementation date	6.5.14
End date for Tier 3 option 1 implementation	31.3.15

10.   Conclusion

10.1   After undertaking a needs assessment and exploring of a number
        of models, officers now put forward a proposed model for a new
        modern library service that they consider remains 'comprehensive',
        but having now removed the existing over provision of service can
        also now be considered to be 'efficient'.

10.2　These proposals would not only deliver a Library Service that would comply with the Council's statutory duties under S 7 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, and the Equality Act 2010, but would also deliver a library service that is affordable for Lincolnshire. If implemented it would deliver over £1.9m of savings per annum.

10.3　Officers invite members to accept this proposed model of library service as an emerging proposal and agree that the model should now be subject to public and staff consultation.

3. Legal Comments:

The Council has a duty to "provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof" as described in section 1 and addressed in detail in the rest of the Report.

The Report sets out a proposed new model of library service and seeks approval to consult with the public and staff on that model. The Council has a statutory obligation under section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 to consult on such a change in service.

The other matters that the Executive is required to take into account in reaching its decision are set out and addressed in the Report.

The decision is consistent with the Policy Framework and within the remit of the Executive.

4. Resource Comments:

Similar to all services provided by the Council, Libraries and Heritage are required to make its share of savings that enables the Council to meet the significant financial challenges ahead. The proposals set out in this report would, if finally approved following consultation, generate £1.938m of revenue savings which is consistent with the budget set by full Council on 22 February 2013.

5. Consultation

a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?

n/a

b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?

Yes

c) Scrutiny Comments

The Community and Public Safety Scrutiny Committee will consider these proposals at its meeting on 26 June 2013 and these comments will be reported to the Executive on 2 July 2013.

d) Policy Proofing Actions Required

See Appendix 7

6. Background Papers

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Experian Lincolnshire County Council Library Needs Assessment (August 2012)	Floor 0, City Hall, Lincoln
Lincolnshire Research Observatory: An Analysis of the Potential Impacts of a Proposed Enhanced Library Hub Model of Service Provision in Lincolnshire (September 2012)	Floor 0, City Hall, Lincoln
CIPFA Lincolnshire County Council CIPFA Stats Comparative Profile Public Libraries 2011-12 Actuals and 2012-13 Estimates (December 2012)	Floor 0, City Hall, Lincoln
Lincolnshire Research Observatory Addendum (May 2012)	Floor 0, City Hall, Lincoln

This report was written by Jenny Gammon, who can be contacted on 01522 550511 or Jonathan Platt who can be contacted on 01522 550586.

Library Needs Assessment Appendices

Appendix 1	Alphabetical list of existing LCC operated libraries
Appendix 2	List of Libraries with partnership or volunteer arrangements
Appendix 3	Library performance data
Appendix 4	Library user survey data
Appendix 5	Existing and proposed library provision
Appendix 6	Community library expression of interest process
Appendix 7	Impact Analysis 3.4.2013 and 13.5.2013

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