

**Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson,  
Interim Executive Director for Place**

Report to:	<b>Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>23 April 2019</b>
Subject:	<b>Update on Community Hubs</b>

**Summary:**

This report is to provide an update on the performance of the Community Hub Model to enable the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee to fulfil its role in scrutinising the service delivery.

**Actions Required:**

Members of the Community and Public Safety Scrutiny Committee are invited to consider and comment on the performance information included in the report and highlight any additional priorities for consideration.

## **1. Background**

2016 saw the introduction of a new model of service delivery for Lincolnshire Libraries. The aim and objective was to 'create an affordable Library Service, which meets Lincolnshire's needs.' This required a new way of delivering services and the creation of new partnerships with the communities.

Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) were awarded a 5 year (+5 year) contract to deliver 15 core libraries across Lincolnshire. Community groups were approached to deliver the remaining former Tier 3 libraries under the banner of 'Community Hubs'.

The development of Community Hubs was driven by two council priorities. The first was the desire to give communities more control and a bigger role in delivering services. The second was ensuring services remain affordable within the council's reduced budget.

Community Hubs are community-run facilities, operated by volunteers under a grant agreement with the council (please see Appendix A for details). The hubs receive finance support from the council under this agreement and professional library support from GLL. The Community Hubs are independent and so have autonomy around opening hours, activities available and other potential utilisation of the site. All income received is retained by the hub, for reinvestment into the

site. They are open for a minimum of six hours per week, offering a range of services, such as book lending and internet access.

Agreement was given, that the Service could develop a maximum of 40 Community Hubs to operate for an initial four year period and each to have an allocated a ring-fenced budget to support them during this time.

## 2. Current Position

There are currently 34 Community Hubs in operation, as shown below, with library provision also being provided at a Children's Centre and all three Lincolnshire Hospitals; these are managed by the staff at each location but again supported by GLL.

Ref	Name	Ref	Name
1	Alford	19	Kirton
2	Belton Lane (Children's Centre)*	20	Metheringham
3	Birchwood	21	Navenby
4	Boultham	22	Nettleham
5	Bracebridge	23	North Hykeham
6	Bracebridge Heath	24	Pinchbeck
7	Branston	25	Ruskington
8	Burgh le Marsh	26	Saxilby
9	Caistor	27	Scotter
10	Cherry Willingham	28	Spilsby (Co-op)
11	Crowland	29	Sutton Bridge
12	Deepings	30	Sutton on Sea
13	Donington	31	Swineshead
14	Ermine	32	Waddington (Co-op)
15	Heckington	33	Wainfleet
16	Holbeach (Co-op)	34	Welton
17	Ingoldmells	35	Wragby
18	Keelby	36	Hospital Hub*

Discussions are on-going with two other groups about the potential of establishing Community Hubs in Bennington and Chapel St Lenoards.

### 2.1 Service Delivery Update

The commencement of the Community Hub model saw numerous issues for the sites to overcome at the start of this approach, mainly around IMT and building volunteer confidence in the activities they were undertaking. Since then, the Hubs themselves are going from strength to strength. Many have established customer groups, have invested in redeveloping the sites and have increased the use of the

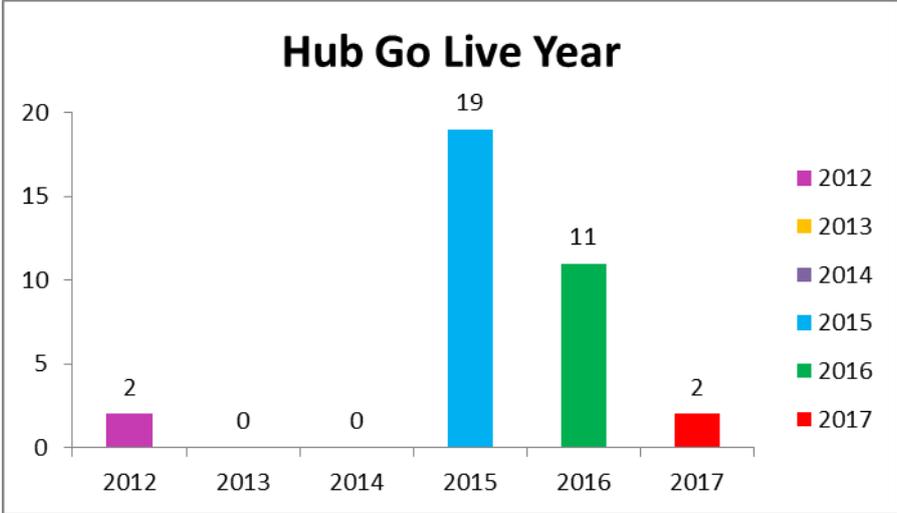
Hubs with the implementation of additional activities. Please see Appendix B for further analysis.

Across all sites, there are various popular activities including storytimes, Lego Club, craft activities, 'Buddies session' for dementia patients and their families. Deepings, for example, have organised a minibus to bring otherwise housebound elderly people into the library once a fortnight to choose books and have a cup of tea together. Saxilby has been awarded a Certificate of Recognition by West Lindsey. Sites such as Branston have a waiting list for volunteers as they currently have sufficient numbers to cover the opening hours and have appeared on Puffin's list of '14 wonderful libraries that will make every kid a good reader'.

The hubs continue to receive support from GLL's Library Development Officers; offering advice on queries, providing information, weeding stock, continually training new volunteers and supporting existing volunteers.

**2.2 Future Considerations**

There are 34 Community Hubs under Grant Agreements with the council. As can be seen in the table below, the original commencement and subsequent end dates for these agreements are varied.



*Table 1: An overview of the Community Hubs and their Go Live year (Belton Lane Children's Centre and the Hospital Hubs are omitted from the illustration)*

Given the positive impact the Community Hubs are having within their communities and the Library Service as a whole, the decision was taken in December 2018 to continue to support this model. All Community Hubs received confirmation of LCC's intentions to continue in line with the original arrangements. This ensures further enhancement of the service whilst also aligning the end dates for the Community Hubs, to avoid any future disparity around this.

The hubs will continue to receive an annual revenue income of £5,167 alongside support from GLL's Library Development Officers. Access to the Library Management System (LMS), IMT helpdesk and property helpdesk (for those in LCC buildings) will remain. As will arrangements around current book stock and IT equipment. With regards to the IT offer within each Community Hub, the council's IMT department believe that this equipment would need to be returned to the council at the end of the grant agreement.

It is not the intention to reinvest in Community Hubs via a capital agreement as it is understood that all Community Hubs will have already invested into their service with the initial £15,000 available to them.

Community Hubs will be monitored to ensure they remain value for money for LCC and areas of joint working will continue to be explored.

**3. Consultation**

**a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?**

No

**b) Risks and Impact Analysis**

N/a

**4. Appendices**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Community Hub Agreements
Appendix B	Community Hubs Update

**5. Background Papers**

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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