

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

Report to:	<b>Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>23 July 2019</b>
Subject:	<b>Performance of the Library Services Contract – Year Three Review Report</b>

**Summary:**

This report is to provide an update of the contract performance information to enable the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee to fulfil its role in scrutinising performance of the third year of the out-sourced Library Contract to Greenwich Leisure Limited.

**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 to:

1. Consider and support the ongoing development and proposed 'Year 4 Developments' highlighted in the report;
2. Highlight any additional priorities for consideration.

## **1. Background**

The decision to outsource LCCs statutory library service was taken to enable the delivery of a cost effective, high quality, library service in an on-going environment of financial constraint.

Key aims of this outsourcing:

- Increase levels of service performance,
- Improved customer's experience
- Service transformation.

The Library Service contract with GLL commenced April 2016. GLL has now entered Year 4 of a 5 year contract with an option to extend the contract by a further 5 years taking us to 31 March 2021 or 31 March 2026 if extended.

GLL have been contracted to deliver the following elements:-

- **Universal Services:** including
  - (a) a website providing an online public access catalogue, e-books, e-audio, e-magazines
  - (b) telephone access to a range of library services via liaison and co-operation with the Council's Customer Service Centre

- **15 Core Libraries in the following locations:**

Boston, Bourne, Gainsborough, Grantham, Horncastle, Lincoln, Long Sutton, Louth, Mablethorpe, Market Rasen, Skegness, Sleaford, Spalding, Stamford and Woodhall Spa

Grantham has not yet transferred to GLL and is still operating as a LCC library, whilst solutions continue to be sought. Bourne Library is in shared accommodation and members of staff at the Bourne site remain employees of SKDC, as they were before the contract with GLL. GLL supplies books and other resources to both libraries, together with professional advice and guidance to support the provision and development of library services.

- **Targeted provision:**

- (a) the provision of Home Library Services to Eligible Users
- (b) services to people who are blind or partially sighted through Listening Lincs
- (c) reading development activities with the aim of promoting an increase in the love of books and reading (including the Bookstart Services)

- **Support for up to 40 Community Hubs:**

- (a) provide, maintain rotate and renew at least 4,000 books to each Community Library
- (b) undertake stock maintenance which requires checking of stock for items to be discarded
- (c) undertake stock cataloguing and processing
- (d) ensure that Community Library users will be able to access the services through the Library Management System (LMS)
- (e) ensure that Community Library users will be able to reserve, collect and return stock at other Community Libraries, the Core Libraries and Mobile Library Vehicles
- (f) deliver a range of free training, advice and support to community organisations. This will include day to day operations, including use of the computerised Library Management System (LMS)

- **A mobile library service**
  - (a) 3 x District Mobiles which take library resources to over 200 Lincolnshire communities which do not have easy access to a library or community hub
  - (b) 2 x Access Mobiles which take library material to housebound residents who cannot travel to a library, a community hub or a District Mobile stop
  - (c) 2 x Community Mobiles which deliver collections of books to care homes sheltered housing complexes, day centres and primary schools
- **The delivery of other paid for services:**
  - Such as reading, music and drama groups and services to schools

## **2. Review of Year 3**

### **2.1 Review of Year 3:**

In year three of the contract GLL has continued to make significant improvements to library services and are particularly proud to have exceeded the 2 million lending milestone.

The GLL Annual User Survey (AUS) was held in core libraries in summer and autumn 2018, with over 1,000 responses received. Overall satisfaction with services was maintained at 100%, continuing to be the highest ever rating by a GLL Partnership.

Library staff ran a total of 5,452 events in core libraries during 2018/9 (an increase on the previous year of 10%) which were attended by over 68,000 adults and children. Over 7,500 hours of community use of core libraries was recorded in 2018/9, with the number of community use events, such as exhibitions and meetings, meaning that the KPI target was exceeded by 310%.

Library staff members continue to build links within their local communities enabling them to participate in local promotions and link to the heart of their community. During the Woodhall Spa 1940s Weekend visitors to the library were treated to rationed loose leaf tea, carrot biscuits and Potato Peel Pie. The window display showed the various roles women took on during WW2 and also on offer were a display of books published in the 1940s, including Poldark, to many visitors' surprise. Stamford Library partnered with the Stamford Arts Centre for their 'Arts around the Town' day and hosted local cartoonist Matt Cutforth and Lincoln University's Steven Fisher who held drawing and Artificial Intelligence cartoon workshops throughout the day.

In collaboration with Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln Central Library co-created and hosted an exhibition linked to the national Vote100 campaign. Using resources from the library's local studies collection and the University archive, as well as other national organisations, the exhibition included Lincolnshire's role in the movement and the local suffragists and suffragettes who influenced the campaign for a woman's right to vote. The exhibition received good media coverage and attracted a wide variety of new customers into the Central Library as well as highlighting the value of the local studies collections.

The annual Summer Reading Challenge took place in all core libraries and mobiles with a 10% increase in starters and 11% increase in finishers compared to 2017. Alongside reading activity, such as visits by Jane Clarke, author of the Al's Awesome Science Series of children's books, mischievous craft events linked to the Beano/Mischief Makers theme were run by staff. These included whoopee cushion making, fake snot, bath bomb and joke dog poo making and workshops in cartoon drawing and making. Celebration events, where children were awarded their certificates and medals for completing the challenge were held across the county and some wonderful feedback was received from the children including (our favourite from Mablethorpe) *'my head exploded with joy'*

In October 2018, alongside usual book lending and information services, nearly 200 events and activities were held in core and mobile libraries as part of National Libraries Week. Linked to the week's theme of Wellbeing, activities included Drop-in Surgeries from Wellbeing Lincs, talks on healthy eating (including a vegan cookery demonstration at Skegness), Mood Boosting colouring and games, a Tia Chi taster session, Poetry readings, a Human Library and choirs at Boston, Lincoln and Sleaford as well as a community wellbeing sing-a-long at Stamford. The mobile libraries also joined in and displayed and loaned out a range of books based around healthy eating, exercise ideas and mindfulness outside Better Gym Sleaford. Collaboration between the Lincoln based mobile library and Better Gym Lincoln also took place where mobile borrowers were offered blood pressure checks and advice on exercise for the older generation.

The Book Bingo family reading challenge in autumn 2018, which invited families to read a range of books from suggested categories to be in with a chance of winning a prize as well as sharing their love of reading, involved nearly 400 families and highlighted the benefits of intergenerational reading.

Working with East Lindsey District Council and Mablethorpe Town Council in January 2019 Mablethorpe Library hosted a Holocaust Memorial and Remembrance Service. The theme for this year's service was 'Torn from Home' focussing on the Rwandan Genocide that took place 25 years ago. The event was well attended with representatives from the British Legion, Police, local Councillors and members of the public.

The annual Harry Potter Book Night was celebrated at libraries across the County with a variety of creative literary themed activities. Lincoln Central Library held the largest event attracting over 1,000 customers. As part of the event the Dome was transformed into an Escape Room for the day and visiting witches and wizards were challenged to solve a number of fiendish puzzles and escape before the Ministry of Magic locked the door for good!

Over the course of the year local crime author Christina James led writers' workshops at Lincoln, Gainsborough, Spalding and Woodhall Spa Libraries. Covering characterisation, point of view and creating the ultimate villain, all sessions were well attended and a number of local writers groups, meeting in the library, have been formed as a result.

In support of Cancer Research UK, GLL's corporate charity partner, library staff organised and ran a variety of fundraising events, raising nearly £5,000 over the course of the year. Activities included literary themed quiz nights, concerts by local folk groups, raffles and community coffee mornings. In addition the Mobiles Team held a competition for customers to guess their total number of miles travelled per year and a number of managers also participated in the Race for Life event at the Lincolnshire Showground.

Working with the GLL North Kesteven Partnership, and their centres in North Hykeham and Sleaford, a range of health walks, healthy eating advice sessions, health checks and Stretch and Flex sessions have been held at Lincoln and Sleaford Libraries. By promoting relevant library stock through these sessions customers have benefited from a wider health offer through their local library.

## 2.2 Performance Review, KPI's:

In order to monitor the progression of the contract, 11 Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) were devised, alongside baselines for performance and monthly targets. This was completed in conjunction with GLL as per the contractual agreement.

Performance against the 2018/19 KPI targets is detailed in the table below.

KPI	Detail	2018/9 KPI Target	2018/9 Actual	KPI Actual compared to Target
1	Number of visits to Core Libraries and Mobile Library Services in a contract year	1,665,479	1,435,541	-13.8%
2	Percentage of scheduled events at Core Libraries in a Contract Year which are delivered	100%	100%	0%
3	Number of hours of use of access to the internet from public access computers in Core Libraries and Mobile Library vehicles in a Contract year	172,096	127,996	-25.6%
4	Number of hours of Wi-Fi Use in a Contract Year	Not available	Not available	Not available
5	Number of visits to the library website in a Contract Year	402,898	481,358	+19.5%
6	Total number of Stock Issues across Core Libraries, Mobile Libraries and E services	1,788,486	2,015,480	+12.7%
7	Percentage of books Requested delivered within 7 days	65%	70%	+5%
8	Percentage of books Requested delivered within 15 days	75%	82%	+7%
9	Percentage of books Requested delivered within 30 days	85%	88%	+3%
10	Percentage of mobile library stops scheduled in any Contract Year which are delivered	100%	100%	0%
11	Aggregate number of hours of Community Use at all Core Libraries	1,845	7,565	+310%

Managing library stock more effectively has had a positive impact on performance with issue figures for core, mobile and e-services exceeding the KPI target by 12.7%, while use of the library website exceeded target by 19.5%. Customers really enjoy the events which take place in libraries, and, year on year, GLL have increased the number of events and activities taking place in Lincolnshire Libraries by 10%, with over 68,000 adults and children attending library events and activities in 2018/9. The libraries themselves have been improved further: Louth Library was redecorated this year and received new furniture, as did Gainsborough Library.

Although the majority of KPIs present a positive picture of progress within the Library Service, there has again been a significant decrease in public access computer use, and a potentially related but smaller decrease in visits against the KPI target. The age and limitations of LCC's library IT provision has presented significant problems for customers and staff alike and continues to negatively impact GLL's ability to deliver high quality services in line with customer expectations. GLL is committed to working with LCC to ensure a resolution to this to ensure a modern, fit for purpose, IT offer is implemented in the near future ensuring that the IT needs of both customers and the Library Service are met.

The exceeding of KPI targets in website use, reservation fulfilment, community use, the 100% delivery of events and scheduled mobile stops, and in particular, exceeding the 2 million items issued milestone, demonstrates the success of GLL's ongoing programme of development and modernisation in Lincolnshire. It is anticipated that the KPIs relating to IT use and to visitor numbers can be addressed with the implementation of the new IT offer.

### **2.3 Service Transformation/Innovation**

Following the implementation of UK Standard Stock Categories in 2017/8 for newly purchased adult fiction and non-fiction existing adult fiction stock county-wide was relabelled and shelf layouts adjusted to better enable customers to locate their genre of choice. Work also commenced on the relabelling of adult non-fiction stock and is expected to be completed by late summer 2019. The re-categorisation allowed further analysis to be carried out to ensure GLL continue to buy more of what customers want. These improvements to stock selection, allocation and promotion resulted in stock issues exceeding the KPI target by 12.7%.

A new online resource Freegal was introduced in 2018 giving customers' free access to online music and streaming services. This new service, together with further development and better promotion of the library catalogue, ebook, eaudio and emagazine collections as well as online information provision saw website usage increase and the KPI target exceeded by 19.5%.

Following extensive testing at Lincoln Central Library, new RFID self service kiosks, procured by LCC, were installed in all core libraries and a number of Community Hubs. Feedback from customers has been positive and staff have been proactive in supporting customers get used to the new machines which have a number of different and new functions.

In addition, an online reader development course provided for library staff across the country by the Society of Chief Librarians, now Libraries Connected, called Talking to Readers was completed by all managers and frontline staff. The learning from this course has proved valuable in up skilling staff to better support customers in expanding their reading horizons and getting the most from their library visit.

## **2.4 Community Hubs**

### **2.4.1 Community Hub Background:**

The development of community hubs was driven by the desire to give communities more control and a bigger role in delivering services, whilst ensuring services remained affordable within the Council's reduced budget.

GLL provide on-going professional support in the form of Library Development Officers [LDO's], including operational management of book stock, volunteer training and development, support of volunteers as well as supporting hubs to be professional and safe places for the members of the public to utilise; ensuring that the national picture in libraries performance and innovation is reflected locally.

LCC provide the provision of computers for public use, volunteer use and access to LCC IT helpdesk. For those hubs that have chosen to remain in Council-owned premises preferable rates of a peppercorn rent for the initial 4 years of their lease between the Community Hub and the Council were applied.

All Community Hubs have been supported financially with the allocation of £15K a one-off capital payment to assist with set-up/improvement works and an annual revenue payment of £5,167 whilst they remain operating as a Community Hub for a minimum of 6 hours per week for 50 weeks per year.

Overall there is a commitment to support up to 40 Community Hubs and during the period 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2018, GLL provided support to 36. Of these 36, 34 are community group run. A library provision is also provided at Belton Lane Children's Centre and all three Lincolnshire Hospitals; these are managed by the staff at each location but again supported by GLL. See Table 2 below:

Table 2: Community Hubs – for the period 01.04.17 – 31.03.18

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

\* These 'hubs' do not receive the £5,167 annual revenue grant nor £15,000 capital grant. They are classified as a hub for the purpose of the GLL support to community hubs contractual payment clause.

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.

In May 2018, following the closure of Learning Communities, and at LCC's request, GLL took on the running of Birchwood, Boultham and Ermine Community Hubs whilst a new provider was sought. Two of the Hubs, Birchwood and Boultham were handed over to a new provider, Ignite, in January 2019, with GLL's Library Development Officer providing detailed and extensive training and support. Discussions are on-going with a potential provider to take over management of the Ermine Community Hub.

#### 2.4.2 Hub Performance:

Whilst Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) are not measured for Community Hubs an annual review is conducted to examine sustainability and the positive impact a Community Hub has on their respective communities. There is a standard agenda to aid discussion covering risk; concerns; service to customers and best possible use of resources/finance. This decision was made to intentionally minimise the emphasis on traditional performance management in order to best enable these hubs to achieve independence and reflect community need.

Community Hubs need to be sustainable to ensure they will be there in years to come. Hubs have achieved this through a range of income sources/funding which they require to cover the costs of running activities, e.g. grants, donations, hiring out space, etc.



## 2.2. Conclusion

Building on the successes and foundations of Year 3 a variety of focused activities are planned for Year 4 (April 2019 – March 2020) which includes:

- **Mobiles:**  
A review of the service as a result of the current leases for the vehicles expiring.
- **GLL 'To Be' model:**  
At the time the contract commenced in April 2016, it was acknowledged by all parties that Libraries ICT would benefit from investment to improve computer access and Wi-Fi availability to the public whilst also aiming to achieve better value for money. A business case has been prepared to enable further discussion and agreement of a sustainable way forward.
- **eBook Platform changes:**  
The current platform for loaning ebooks is changing from Askews to Overdrive; this is a direct result of Askews withdrawing from the library eBook market. Existing customers will be made aware of the upcoming change on the Askews platform and directed to the Overdrive platform. This will enable a soft launch of the new platform, gently easing existing customers into Overdrive.

## 3. Consultation

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

No

### b) Risks and Impact Analysis

N/a

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