

Future Libraries Programme

December 2010 update

This is a summary update on each of the 10 projects in Phase 1 of the Future Libraries Programme. Updated summaries will be provided at the next meeting of the FLP Programme Board in January 2011.

Information on FLP can be found at
www.mla.gov.uk/what/programmes/the_future_libraries_programme

Working Together - Greater Manchester Libraries (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan)

Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan councils are testing the feasibility of a single Greater Manchester Library service, to identify efficiency savings and customer service improvement, and the most appropriate governance and delivery models to achieve this.

Consultancy Shared Intelligence was appointed to provide support. They have organised and facilitated three workshops with the heads of library services. Data has been obtained from all the library authorities and a draft options appraisal report has been submitted to the Greater Manchester project team. The report explores three options and the building blocks that would test these options. The options are:

- Expanding partnership working across library services.
- Sharing strategic management and specialist staff across authorities
- Merging a number of library services to create a new single service

The building blocks for this include:

Frontline services

Customer service staff; Volunteering; RFID; Mobiles

Specialist services

Children's services; Digital; Library specific ICT – LMS; Stock procurement and management; Marketing

Strategic/senior management

Senior management; Corporate recharges; Premises (particularly where these are close to council boundaries); Premises (maintenance & energy)

The project addresses the possibility of 35% savings. Some of these savings could be achieved by individual authority actions (using benchmarking and practice from other library services). This is already going on as part of the budget setting process for 2011/12 in individual authorities. A critical question for the project is whether and how collaborative working could prevent reductions in customer facing services, prevent loss of specialist services and provide a more stable and sustainable way of working for the future.

Governance models have been started to be explored including a mutual model. Councillor Mike Amesbury, Portfolio Holder for Manchester, has taken the lead Member role across GM.

Key milestones

- Agree final report and next steps (22 December)
- Presentation to AGMA Improvement & Efficiency Commission Task and Finish Group in early January.

What will success look like?

- This feasibility study will identify key requirements and success criteria, including:
- Delivering significant efficiency savings
- Ensuring quality standards and best practice – to raise all services to the standard of the best
- Future sustainability of quality library services

Going Digital, Going Local; transforming libraries in Northumberland and Durham

Northumberland and Durham are exploring how IT and alternative delivery models can transform libraries into facilities at the heart of their communities that offer access to council and other services; provide opportunities to learn; make transactions; obtain the best information and help people develop information handling skills, access employment opportunities and enjoy leisure. The project will identify a number of potential delivery models which deliver quality services at a reduced cost. These will be tested in early 2011, with the roll out of new delivery mechanisms (if these prototypes are successful) from 2011/12 onwards.

Shared Intelligence has been appointed to provide support; they have met with the project group weekly. Teams from across both Authorities form the project group and peer support and challenge is being organised with Local Governance Innovation and Development (LGID).

Two workshops were held to scope possible digital solutions and alternative delivery models to rural communities. These involved community partners, IT experts and representatives from interest groups including the Regional Youth Work Unit, Age concern, NHS, Sure start, the mobile post office. A number of innovative ideas were identified and these are now being developed into prototypes for testing in the New Year: Community book points (including ePromotion and People to books) and eReaders and the reading experience.

The project has sought to share learning with officers from other authorities though extending invitations to and assisting other authorities incorporating learning into developments.

What will success look like?

- Documentation of processes and learning on all the including capturing good practice and lessons learned
- Revise scope to shift a gear on professional co-operation across geographic distances
- Improved understanding of digital infrastructure needs and service delivery opportunities
- Both councils will be involving local communities in the development and operation of local library services – tailored to meet community needs, including rural delivery.

Modernising Library Services in two sparse rural counties (Herefordshire and Shropshire).

Herefordshire and Shropshire are looking together at new partnership models for service delivery at individual library level, including community management.

The project has four main areas of work: transformation and locality libraries; the development of an appropriate financial model; the development of governance models; and community engagement.

Both authorities are considering how best to provide library services which are integrated with other services and work differently with partners. How this is achieved will vary to meet the needs of individual places and the people living there.

Additional resources to support the work have been provided by both authorities and consultants Shared Intelligence has been appointed to provide support to the programme.

Meetings and seminars have been arranged with portfolio holders and the chief executives from both authorities. Workshops open to all members have been held in each authority, as have workshops with staff and meetings with the steering committee and the Cabinet members with responsibility for libraries in both counties.

In addition to this, interviews and roundtable meetings have been held with other stakeholders in the two counties as well as focus groups with non-users to build on recent MLA commissioned work. There have also been initial discussions with Audiences Central in terms of understanding users and non-users.

Key milestones

- Interim report 21 December
- Final report mid-January 2011

What will success look like?

- Library services fully integrated into each county's localities approach to service delivery
- Clear understanding of models of community involvement suitable to individual localities and costs and benefits of implementation
- Benefits found from appropriate joint working between the two authorities
- Clear identification of savings achievable from the final proposals

Beyond Boundaries Lincolnshire, Rutland, Cambridgeshire, North East Lincolnshire and Peterborough's Vivacity Trust

The above are working together on a project called 'Beyond Boundaries' that is developing local library service solutions which work across authority boundaries. This project aims to meet the challenge that traditionally local authorities have not coordinated services across shared boundaries, leading to duplication, inefficiencies, over-provision, gaps in service and inconsistent user experience. The project is taking a coordinated look at the needs of users in the "corridors" along authorities shared boundaries. It will create a long- term plan for better joint working and develop a flexible commissioning framework that will allow the services required to be provided by the most appropriate provider – be that communities themselves; third sector; trusts, local authority or private sector.

Initial preparatory work seeking views from all partners was completed at an inception meeting on 17 September and an initial development workshop was held on 4th October. Red Quadrant has been appointed to provide support and facilitated workshop for Partners. A member peer is being sourced with LGID to provide support and challenge. Audiences UK have been engaged to undertake the data analysis on the crossover of catchments of libraries on the borders of the Local Authorities.

The milestones have been set around four development workshops with the fourth one scheduled for 13 January which will review the commissioning framework; agree the innovative outcome-based specification and produce a draft delivery model. It is at that stage that it is anticipated that the learning and potential level of savings from the project will be identified.

Key milestones

- Development workshop 4 on 13 January including member peer engagement.

What will success look like?

- By January 2011 the project will have succeeded in creating a new, long-term coalition of very diverse local authorities which, as a starting point, will be working towards the commissioning of a more efficient service delivery model across their boundaries based on evidence of demand, demographics and travel patterns. The Beyond Boundaries partnership will have created a clear picture of what a shared commissioning approach across boundaries could look like which will have real resonance across the UK and offer an opportunity to transform services to local communities.

Local Libraries (Suffolk)

Suffolk is taking forward community control of libraries and removing management tiers between local library managers and governing bodies. Communities will be given more say and choice over services by delegating budgets and transferring assets so that library services could be delivered outside the council through, for example, town or parish councils or community organisations. The benefits of a network and shared support services would be maintained and developed.

The Council's project board for the initiative set up four work streams (governance, specification, communication and support services) to deal with the different aspects of the project. The work streams have drawn on targeted assistance from the menu of support on offer through FLP to progress their work.

Shared Intelligence was used to facilitate initial framing workshops on governance and specification, and to work with the wider staff to capture their input on proposals. Bevan Brittan has provided advice on various legal aspects of the project, while the Audit Commission has provided an external view on underpinning data required to support the work.

Suffolk libraries is one of the "early adopter" services that are helping to develop the implementation of the New Strategic Direction that is being applied across County Council services. The FLP project has allowed the service to shape and test its proposals, prior to a formal consultation process to start shortly.

Outputs

- Proposed Governance model produced & tested
- Proposed Description & Guidance for interested organisations produced and tested
- Proposed Divestment Process & supporting information produced and tested
- Cost of proposed approach quantified
- Formal Public consultation informed and ready to start

What will success look like?

- Proposals that maintain the value of the library network and shared services
- Proposals that build community capacity and ownership
- Proposals that maximise value from investment and retain strong service delivery
- A well informed formal consultation prepared, leading to responsive and effective implementation

Bexley, Bromley, Croydon, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark

The ambition is a step change across library services in South East London. Through it, the participating library authorities are looking more closely at options and opportunities for improving quality and reducing costs by working more closely together. These libraries – members of the South East London Performance Improvement Group (SELPIG) – will build on individual strengths and distinctive features to retain and improve best practice models and introduce new solutions.

The seven Authorities have agreed a brief and project plan, and are preparing to present their draft proposals to Elected Members. They are investigating a range of different governance and shared delivery options. Bevan Brittan have been appointed to provide support and LGID have sourced an officer peer to support the project.

Key milestones

- Agreement achieved on scope of project options
- Collation of financial information on all areas covered by scope, from all authorities
- Finalising of options to be progressed
- Finalising of business cases to be included in report
- Meetings with portfolio holders (January)
- Production of final report (January)
- Submission of report to MLA with sign off by all (January)

What will success look like?

- Proposed significant efficiency savings
- A cross-borough strategic plan
- A roadmap for step-change implementation
- Increased collaboration in areas where some collaboration exists (eg. Inter Library Loans, Bibliographic Services)
- Development of new opportunities for collaboration (eg. in the areas of Reader Development, Skills for Life, Children services etc)
- Increased confidence in joined work at corporate and political level

Kensington & Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham and Westminster

This project is working towards an integrated Libraries and Archives service planned and managed as a single service across all three boroughs, with local branding and delivery in line with local community needs and requirements as determined by the constituent Councils. This work, which forms part of wider co-operative work between the three boroughs, includes investigating alternative models for delivering library services in what could be an innovative way for all three authorities and which in addition could provide a model for other London boroughs.

Key discussions have been ongoing focusing on the extent of integration that the boroughs want to move towards and the model of delivery that will best suit them. Shared Intelligence have been appointed to provide support. The Authorities are considering the essential features of a “tri-borough” libraries service, how a new service will be organised, and the financial and service benefits of integrated working.

Key milestones

- Analysis of data throughout October, November and December
- Consultant support on site(s) to carry out fieldwork analysis with the Working Group
- Consider the output from the fieldwork to inform a Target Operating Model (December)
- Gather evidence from consultant support and challenge/ confirm where necessary (December)
- Draft a report outlining the areas as agreed (December)
- Completion of Robust business case (January)
- Draw together findings to enable both boroughs to continue work in early 2011 on a Target Operating Model: by mid December

What will success look like?

- A service specification for a library service operating across the boroughs

Library Links (Bradford)

Bradford is developing a remodelled service based on the findings of a Library Review with major urban library facilities supported by a network of library service points located in shared outlets with extended opening hours, and exploring partnerships to achieve this with the retail sector.

The original proposal has been revisited and refined to take into account emerging council transformation processes and the emerging requirements of implementing the CSR settlement. The revised scope and purpose of the project was agreed by Bradford on 30 October. There has been consultation with elected members as part of the on-going Libraries Review process and cross party support for the future direction of the service has been achieved.

LGID have been identified as the preferred supplier of support and advice. Bradford intends to make use of peer support and challenge as part of the programme. The project team are currently developing a procurement framework with advice from retail partners, legal experts and council asset management officers. The Authority has also carried out needs analysis with communities and run focus groups and other community engagement work to determine local needs from these alternative service points.

What will success look like?

- Model process for procuring retail partners to delivery library outlets in retail locations, and vice versa.
- Partnership with retail partner built and way forward identified
- Significant learning from this project shared nationally through FLP infrastructure

Innovation, Collaboration and Efficiency - The South West Peninsula Library Partnership (Cornwall, Devon, Plymouth, Torbay)

Cornwall, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay are pursuing a single library provider to provide services across all four councils as opposed to four of varying capacities, sizes and strengths. They are seeking improved community engagement around the creation, design and delivery of services. They want to see the accelerated development of digital services and are looking at new governance models for a single provider.

The support package has been signed off by Corporate Directors who have also been charged with political consultation on the brief. A parallel piece of work 'Libraries Without Borders' is progressing simultaneously across the SW region which will identify duplication and gaps in provision at the geographic borders of all south west regional library authorities.

Key milestones

- Options generation and analysis by end December
- Draft report and implementation plan by mid January
- Final report signed off by Directors 26 January

What will success look like?

- A single library provider for the South West Peninsula

Delivering Library Services for the Future (Oxfordshire and Kent)

Oxfordshire and Kent are individually managing long term projects to transform public library services for the 21st century in their respective authorities. As both are undertaking similar journeys across a wide geography they are working together on an FLP pilot to produce an analytical tool to help inform the development of a long term model for rural county library services. The work is exploring how best to retain those features which are valuable to customers – good stock, access to information, community spaces and knowledgeable staff – while responding to the Big Society principles of locally driven and community-based activity. The new model will look to deliver modernised library services which include extensive online services such as e-books, e-loans and social networking.

Key milestones

- Analysis of shopping and other travel data to be incorporated into model by 22 December
- Facilitated workshop to be held on 24 January

What will success look like?

- The production of a tool which can be used by similar authorities to help decide rationally, objectively and fairly how a service should be modelled and where service points should be to provide their population with a comprehensive and efficient modern library service taking account of the need for community spaces, books and e-books, customer care, digital and mobile provision.