



Library and Information Service

The 2020 Strategic Plan



Oldham
Council

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Introduction

Libraries benefit everyone. They stand for intellectual freedom, democratic engagement, community cohesion, social justice and equality of opportunity¹

Oldham Council Library Service is a statutory service under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. This requires all local authorities to provide a local library service that is comprehensive, efficient, free at the point of delivery and available to anyone who wants to use it. Located at the centre of neighbourhoods, our libraries offer friendly, welcoming, neutral and safe spaces for people from all sections of the community, including the most vulnerable and so are in a unique position to develop activities that engage communities in a meaningful way.

The past few years have been a challenging time of transition and change for public libraries across the country. Like many public services, libraries have been faced with reduced budgets and have had to look to more innovative ways of engaging an increasingly sophisticated customer base. Notwithstanding this, it is also a time of opportunity for libraries to evidence their potential and thrive.

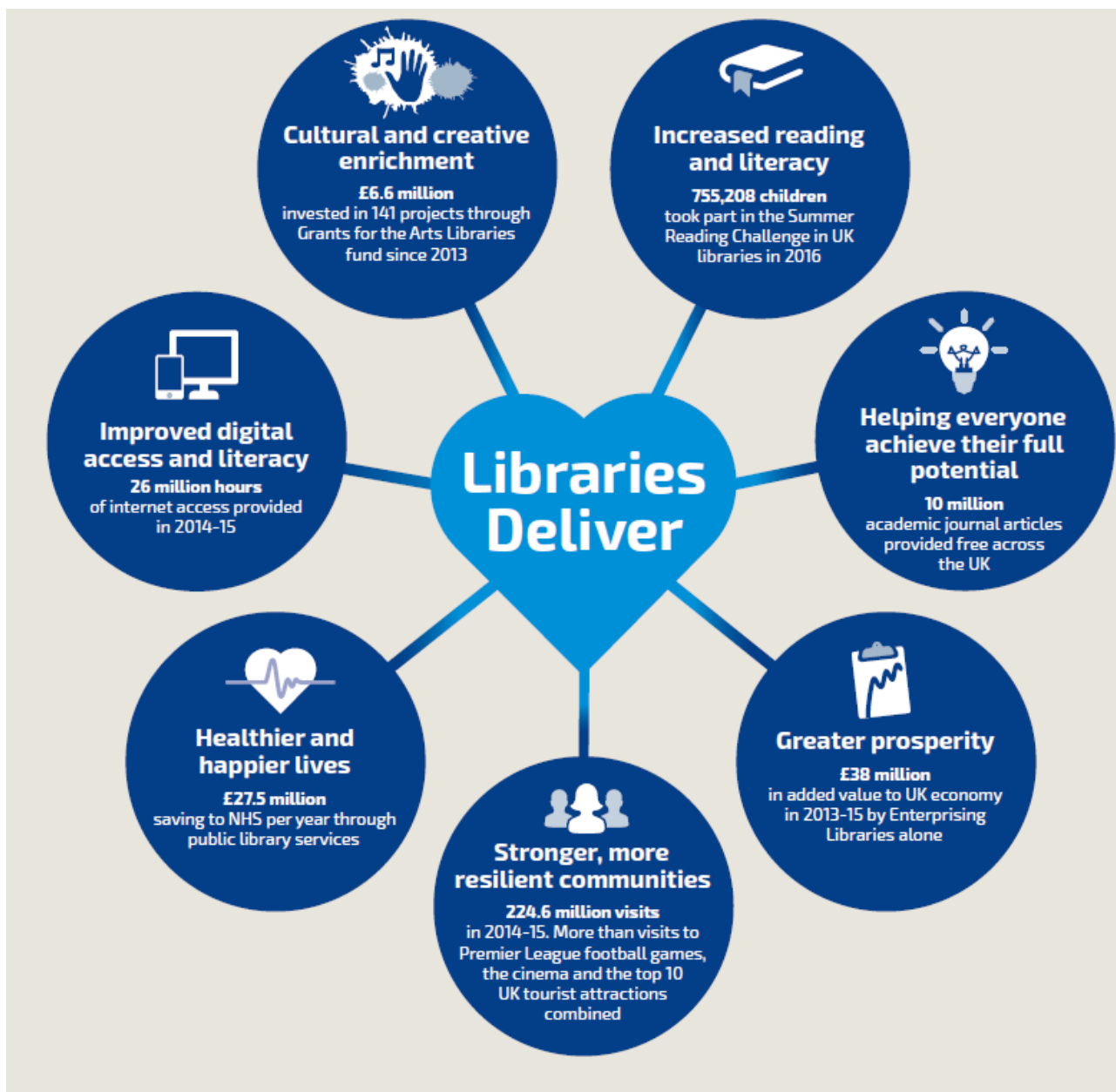
The recent publication by the Libraries Taskforce, 'Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-2021'² sets out the vision for the future of public Libraries in England and outlines the 7 outcomes libraries need to focus on to achieve this vision.

The vision and ambition is for:

- Everyone to choose to use libraries because they see clear benefits and positive outcomes from doing so
- understand what library services offer and how they can make the most of what's available to them
- be introduced to new ideas and opportunities, then given confidence and quick and easy access to tools, skills and information they need to improve their quality of life
- receive trusted guidance through the evolving information landscape and build the skills needed to thrive in a changing world

The 7 outcomes libraries deliver against are illustrated overleaf in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Library services deliver against 7 outcomes



As a 'cradle to grave' service, Oldham Council libraries provides access, through a network of 12 libraries and a Library At Home Service, to a creative and wide range of services, including:

- resources available for loan such as books and audio-visual materials.
- reference titles
- digital resources (including e-books)
- computers and internet access
- community and study spaces
- events and activities

At the heart of our library offer is a high quality information service that supports the development of knowledge, enabling customer of all ages and walks of life to make intellectual journeys and develop their skills.

Access to all these services is facilitated by a skilled workforce and up to date technology

Through this diverse service provision, we aspire to provide the service that Andrew Carnegie wanted when he originally funded libraries as:

- Places that give people a chance, a second chance and even a third chance
- Places that improve the communities they are based in
- Places that respond to the needs of local people, giving them the opportunity to live fuller lives, make more of what they have, discover new worlds and aspire to greater things

Our **Service Goal** is to be among the best library services in the country; a service that is synonymous with high quality, creative and innovative service provision. To achieve our service goal, we will increasingly take a business focused approach to service delivery.

All our programmes of activity are aligned under one or more of the following **Core Purpose** activities

- Books and reading – to provide access to a broad and balanced book stock and a range of activities to engage readers
- Information and digital – to provide access to a high-quality information and digital service
- Learning – to provide access to informal learning opportunities
- Community space and engagement – to provide a welcoming space for community use and a commitment to the provision of a needs based library service through community engagement

Our Core Values are informed by the aspiration to create a high performing business, a recognition of the importance of our customers, and so the need to create a people first, performance based culture.

Our **Core Values** are:

- A 'service' approach – finding out what customers want from our service and then delivering it.
- A customer focused service – providing an excellent service for all our customers that empowers and supports them to help themselves

The key enablers to delivering excellent customer service across Oldham Council libraries have been identified as Space, Stock and Staff. Service Plans and individual Performance Reviews focus on these enablers to ensure that we achieve our ambition of customer excellence.

With high level ambition matched by the provision of an innovative range of services and resources Oldham Council libraries not only has the potential to play a pivotal role in the delivery of key Council priorities but, with significant budget savings still required across the Council over the next few years, the library service is well placed to support the drive to transform how public services are delivered in Oldham.

This Strategic Plan, which includes a full outline of our current resource base, including details of budget, staffing, capital assets and an overview of our performance, also outlines the key drivers for future service delivery. The Plan details how, over the next 3 – 5 years, we will continue to innovate current service provision to ensure we achieve our aspiration to offer, through a network

of community hubs, a creative and responsive local library service for residents in Oldham; one which is among the best performing library services in the country.

Oldham Council Libraries – supporting the Co-operative Borough and the transformation of service delivery across the Council

Oldham Council's ambition is to deliver a co-operative future where everyone does their bit to create a confident and ambitious Borough.

The Oldham Plan, which is, as its name suggests, a plan for Oldham, outlines a shared vision across the public sector, elected members, the business, community and voluntary sectors for Oldham to be 'a place of ambition where people and communities flourish'.

Key to the success of the co-operative agenda is innovation which is stimulated by creative thinking and collaborative working and the empowering of residents to take greater control of their own lives.

As a core district asset providing an essential bridge between the council and residents, libraries are well-placed to support the delivery of the co-operative ambition.

Libraries contribute to the social, educational, cultural and economic well-being of the whole community. They have the potential to inspire and empower people to lead active lives, enriched through cultural experiences and so providing a platform from which to build the co-operative Borough.

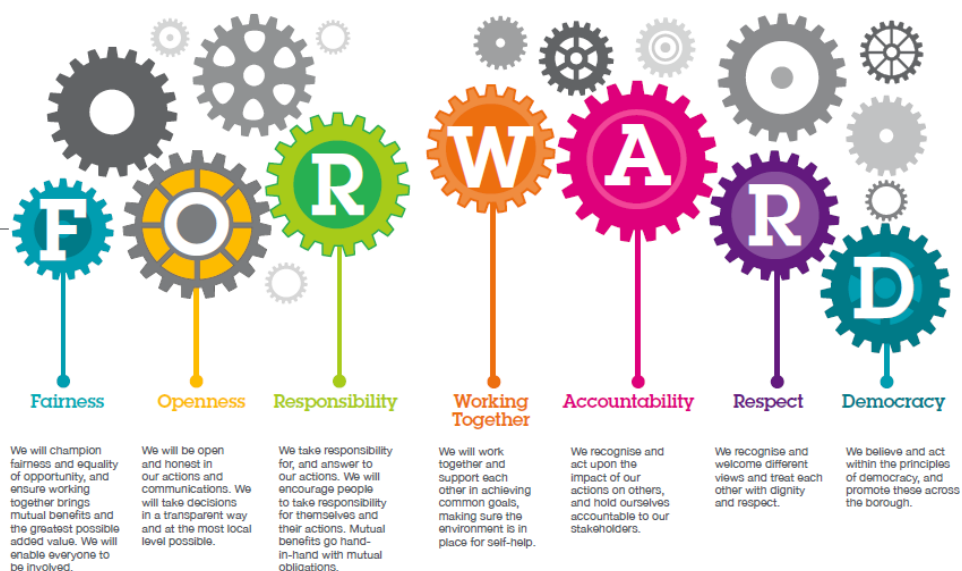
Oldham Libraries specifically supports residents to do more for themselves, so contributing to the co-operative vision, through the provision of

- free access to a range of resources including online resources and free access to IT and the internet enabling residents to find out more about how they can 'do things for themselves'
- a skilled workforce with high level customer service, information and digital skills; able to support residents in accessing relevant information and resources
- free spaces for residents to meet and network

Co-operation is not just about what we do, though – it is about how we do it. Good libraries play an important part in shaping people's views of their local authority. As a key front-line service libraries have the potential to act as ambassadors for Oldham's co-operative values.

Our ambition

To deliver a co-operative future where **everyone does their bit** to create a confident and ambitious borough



We have a clear set of values that outline how we do business. Through our co-operative charter, we share these borough-wide values with our residents, partners and businesses.

Three corporate objectives underpin the delivery of the Co-operative ambition:

- An inclusive economy where people and enterprise thrive
- Thriving communities where everyone is empowered to do their bit
- Co-operative services with people and social value at their heart

These objectives have been developed to reflect the key priorities of the Council including economic growth and regeneration, strong local leadership and delivering value for money services.

Appendix 1 provides an outline of the specific activity delivered through Oldham Council Libraries that directly supports the delivery of Council objectives. Crucially, the Service supports the following key priorities that also link in with the Society of Chief Librarian's (SCL) Core Universal Offers:

Reading, Literacy and Learning
SCL Reading and Learning Offer

“Recently I used the library service to research a PhD proposal. As an unemployed mum of two who had been out of university for some years, the ability to find a number of books related to my interests was invaluable. I had the confidence in my interview and am now in receipt of a fully funded scholarship.”

Libraries were established as ‘the universities of the people’ and learning remains one of our key priorities today.

Libraries are more than just service places; they are active partners in the educational process, promoting lifelong learning, self -improvement and social mobility.

Through the provision of spaces and free resources for study, learning, and reflection, as well as a staff team skilled to support customers to get the most from available resources, libraries are places where communities and individuals can develop, share ideas and learn together.

Reading for pleasure and strong literacy skills are core to economic and cultural life. A recent review found that reading for pleasure is a ‘prerequisite for other outcomes of reading to be achieved (BOP consulting 2015 The impact of Reading for Pleasure and Empowerment)³ Individuals with high levels of literacy are also more likely to vote, participate in their community, perceive their community to be safer, have better mental health and contribute to a better skilled and more flexible workforce (Dugdale, G and Clarke, C 2008 Literacy Changes lives: An advocacy resource)⁴

Evidence from the OECD (Reading for Change 2002, p3)⁵ found that reading for enjoyment is more important for children’s educational success than their family’s socio-economic status.

And yet there remain significant literacy challenges in the UK today where the number of functionally illiterate adults is estimated to be between 6 and 8 million and over 40% of unemployed people in England have low basic literacy skills. (Libraries Deliver, ACE 2016 p 9)

Libraries are ideally placed to support the drive for improved literacy; they ensure that everyone has free and equal access to books and literature regardless of age, wealth or education and are a catalyst for improved reading and literacy. A report by EPPE (Effective Pre School and Primary Education 2008)⁶ found that regular library use was one of the 7 key Home Learning activities that supports better educational outcomes in the early years.

Through libraries, children, families and schools are able to access a wide range of books and other resources, including a high quality events and activities programme, which encourages and fosters a lifelong love of reading, an appreciation of language and, for children, an understanding of the world around them. All of which leads to a growth in self-confidence and strengthens community participation.

Beyond the school years libraries continue to offer support and inspiration for lifelong learning. They offer equal access to education and culture and the opportunity for the constant development of knowledge and skills through the provision of free resources and activities. In addition, a skilled staff team is able to support customers to get the most

	<p>from learning opportunities available either in the library or by signposting to other services.</p> <p>We will continue to develop our reading offer and engage more people through our innovative programmes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bookmark, Comic Con and Time to Read initiatives • Live@thelibrary and Live@theLibraryLocal • Under 5's offer including Story and rhymes and Baby Days • Summer Reading Challenge • Programme of events as part of local, regional and national events for example Festival Oldham, National Libraries Week, Fun Palaces etc • Participatory activities (for example reading groups, Reading Friends, Reading Ahead and writing groups) • Schools Offer; engaging with schools to encourage class visits to the library and to participate in reading initiatives
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Business, Skills and Employability - Get Oldham Working
SCL Information and Learning Offers

<p><i>"I love to read and as I have lost my job, books keep me grounded. I also need a computer to search for jobs the Library is a lifeline to me"</i></p>	<p>Libraries deliver positive economic impact in 3 related areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As economic actors in their own right (economic impact) • As institutions that facilitate the creation of economic value in the adjacent area and local economy (place based economic development) • As organisations that deliver a wide range of services, most of which are valued by both users and non-users when set against the cost of provision (benefit - cost/total economic value approaches) <p>Libraries are in a unique position to help people access business and employment support offering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong high street presence and so providing an accessible gateway to employment, business and enterprise support for the greatest number of potential participants. • Access to a diverse customer base and many residents, who possibly lack confidence, may be more encouraged to seek employment or business support from a library in their local community rather than more anonymous settings, e.g. a business park. • A reputation as independent, free, trusted sources of information in accessible community buildings with extended opening hours. • Access to valuable resources: computers with free internet access, free Wi-Fi as well as fax and photocopier facilities, books, ICT and space for meetings and training.
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	<p>As trusted centres of employment and business support and expertise, Oldham Council libraries will continue to play a key role in local economic growth, entrepreneurial activity and social mobility by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering a first point of contact for pre starts and start-ups where they can get access to a range of help to start them on their journey • Providing a range of business workshops, 1:1 advice surgeries as part of the Greater Manchester Big Ideas Generators Programme • Hosting a series of inspirational talks including TEDx and Ignite • Guiding customers to market research, IP information and electronic resources such as business - focused databases • Hosting programmes of events (e.g. work clubs, c.v. writing) to support those seeking employment • Offering access to formal and informal assistance and networks at community level (e.g. Lifelong Learning, Job Centre Plus) • Expanding the volunteering and work experience placement opportunities across the service
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Health and Wellbeing <i>SCL Health Offer</i>	
<p><i>“Two years ago I was suicidal and a virtual hermit, it was thanks to the staff at the library that I am much better and rebuilding my life.”</i></p>	<p>Libraries contribute to the public health agenda by tackling health inequalities, supporting health literacy, improving mental health and helping with the prevention and early diagnosis of illness.</p> <p>Libraries provide access to health and social care information and signpost users to online information and specialist agencies. They provide a network of local hubs offering non-clinical community spaces where health and wellbeing groups work with the community.</p> <p>Libraries empower people to access, understand and use health and wellbeing information effectively. Evidence shows that better informed people have a better prognosis and greater wellbeing.</p> <p>Research published by The Arts Council in March 2015⁷ quantifies the economic value of the benefits to health and wellbeing contributed by public libraries. It shows that the benefits people gain from public libraries could be valued nationally at around £748.1million per annum. This includes benefits to their quality of life and improvements to health which can save the NHS around £27.5million a year.</p> <p>We will expand our health offer to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • book collections at all libraries, e-books via our 24/7 online library and magazines on health and wellbeing. • health information points at all libraries with access to quality health information in an informal setting, including Books on

	<p>Prescription collections to support those with a variety of common conditions, including anxiety and depression and dementia. Shelf help, a collection of books to support children and young people to understand and manage their emotions was launched in April 2016 as part of the Books on prescription scheme. Reading Well for long term conditions, another initiative under the Books on Prescription scheme will also be available providing information and support for people living with a long term health condition and their carers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free use of computers to access reliable sources of health information and staff trained to help. • a range of health and wellbeing events planned and delivered in partnership with local health and wellbeing services and organisations • dementia and autism friendly spaces with staff trained to be dementia friends • reading friends scheme, supporting those with dementia and their carers, and those at risk of social isolation • Sensory Room – relaxing interactive sensory space for the community
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Culture and Communities <i>SCL Culture Offer</i>	
<p><i>“The library is very important to me, to borrow books and for my social life because I live alone. If I didn't come to the library I wouldn't be meeting people.....stops me climbing up the wall. “</i></p>	<p>Public libraries contribute directly to community cohesion by creating a sense of place and providing an inclusive, free and safe space for all. Libraries help people gain a sense of place and take pride in their neighbourhoods and communities.</p> <p>Current research demonstrates that a majority of library users and non-users consider libraries as important for their community, and it suggests that libraries may play an important role in contributing to the social capital of communities⁸</p> <p>As community and service hubs libraries provide space and a wide range of services at the centre of neighbourhoods. We offer space for partner agencies to deliver their services, across the Borough; libraries are co-located with leisure, youth, health and lifelong learning and five of the six district town halls, adding value to the neighbourhood management model and visible local democracy.</p> <p>Libraries are also essential cultural hubs within communities - places for inspiration, research, creativity, education and enjoyment. Libraries also provide access and signposting to wider cultural activities, encouraging people to explore their own culture and creativity.</p> <p>As an important part of the cultural sector, libraries have a role to play in supporting the government's Culture White Paper⁹, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping to increase participation in culture, especially by giving opportunities for everyone to access culture regardless of background

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling culture to be integral to communities and contribute to the transformation of places • Promoting the contribution of cultural sectors to improved health and wellbeing. <p>Oldham Council Libraries' will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • books and reading programme, including the innovative live@thelibrary programme remains central to our cultural offer. This is being rolled out to all community libraries as part of live@thelibrarylocal • a varied programme of activity is planned in consultation with the community and in partnership with local cultural providers and artists, promoting local and new emerging talents, and celebrating all cultural forms <p>We know that social isolation is as bad as smoking 15 cigarettes a day¹⁰. The local library is a valued facility at the hub of the community with extended opening hours and, as such, can help reduce isolation especially amongst the elderly and provide social, cultural and community links for people who may otherwise find it difficult to socialise.</p> <p>Key to active communities is opportunities for volunteering. Volunteering offers benefits both to the individuals who give their time as well as those who are the recipients. Volunteering can build skills, self-esteem, self-confidence and also offer a sense of achievement as well as boosting career opportunities (ambition p 15).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The library service will vastly expand the number of opportunities for volunteering within the service
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<p>Digital Inclusion SCL Digital Offer</p>	
<p><i>"I took the beginner's computer course at Royton Library. It opened up a whole new world to me, which is now life-enhancing, as I can't get around as well as I once could. I recommend it to everyone"</i></p>	<p>Public libraries are at the forefront of digital inclusion. Fourteen percent of households still do not have internet access but can share the benefits of being online through the library service.</p> <p>Oldham Council libraries provides free access not only to Wi-Fi and over 250 public access computers but also supports customers with ICT access through a trained workforce and the delivery of free courses.</p> <p>Through the digital resources offered by the library service, customers can gain access to information important to their everyday life, including education, work, employability and social networks.</p> <p>Increasingly, digital literacy supports the public to use online government services and the digital by default agenda.</p>

	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue to work in partnership with other training providers and initiatives and train our staff to support residents to develop digital skills through a range of drop in and course programmes; to include all IT formats; PC's, tablets, and smartphones • offer access to new digital technologies and skills including 3d printing and coding • continue to use a variety of digital social platforms to reach new audiences • explore investment in new technologies to provide a high quality digital learning experience including better wifi connectivity.
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Customer Services Transformation

<p><i>As a highly visible front line Council service, Libraries are in a strong position to positively influence public perceptions of the Council. Reputation and customer satisfaction are key priorities for the council.</i></p>	<p>Oldham's Customer Service Strategy describes a vision of providing co-operative customer service for the people of Oldham. Libraries provide the opportunity to embed our resident focus behaviour through re-shaping the relationship the council has with residents, one where we support residents to help themselves.</p> <p>Libraries, as local community hubs, are fundamental to the delivery of the Customer Service Strategy, supporting the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • migration of services to the Contact Centre to enable a greater volume of calls to be answered more efficiently ; • channel shift to self-service through the Resident First programme and online services. Libraries will offer a service point within each community where supported access to Resident First and online services can be delivered through free access to People's Network Computers and introductory ICT courses (Online Basics) to support people to get online; • Customer Information Points – the provision of access to Council information and cash payment for services • Mediated support for residents accessing online services such as Universal Credit, Choose and Book or School Admissions <p>The Co-operative Customer Services Programme will work closely with libraries as a hub within communities. By supporting and empowering staff within a clear framework, staff will develop their knowledge and capability in supporting residents to help themselves.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise all opportunities afforded by new technologies to support service improvement and back office functions and to support customers to get on line • Ensure staff with right behaviours and values (enthusiastic, motivated) are in place through recruitment processes;
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	<p>recruitment strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure staff embrace Oldham’s Co-operative ambition and the Vision for Oldham Council Libraries • Ensure that we develop a ‘one team’ ethos • Develop robust approach to service planning to ensure vision of the Library Strategy is implemented • Develop a Performance Framework and Marketing and Communications plan for the Service (including plans for regular customer consultation), • Embed approaches to Performance Management • Ensure that we continue to upgrade and introduce new technology to modernise the Service and meet the needs of customers
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Value for Money	
<p><i>A single visit to the library has been estimated as worth more than £25.00 per visit to the people who use it; 5.7 times greater than the cost of providing the service.¹¹</i></p>	<p>As already outlined, libraries offer free access to a wealth of resources, including over 427,000 books (as at 31 March 2017 – Cipfa), over 250 computers, over 2565 events & activities programme and community space for groups and individuals to meet.</p> <p>While visitor numbers for many library services are falling, figures in Oldham continue to increase. The Service is visited annually by 1.36 million visitors and Oldham Library is in the top 20 most visited libraries in the UK.</p> <p>Oldham Council Libraries also has one of the most cost effective approaches to staffing across Greater Manchester libraries and has reduced the overall number of staff in post over the past 4 years by approximately 20 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs), while continuing to deliver the same number of service points and activities.</p> <p>The introduction of new technologies such as RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) self-service technology at all libraries has in part enabled us to deliver these savings, though significant efficiencies have also been achieved through adopting a lean approach to service delivery. The introduction of new staffing rotas, for example, in recent years in particular has had a transformational impact on our ability to deliver a more cost effective staffing base.</p> <p>The efficiency programme has enabled the Service to contribute in excess of £900 000 to corporate savings since 2010 and we will continue to adopt a lean thinking approach to driving costs down while improving the quality of what we offer.</p> <p>Future priorities for ensuring Value for Money will include a more strategic approach to the use of volunteers in the Service. We will also be looking</p>

	<p>for opportunities where delivering services for the Council and other partners through the Library Service, with its network of sites across the Borough, can create the potential to reach more people at a reduced cost. We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the budget to ensure that monies are aligned to priority areas• Ensure a regular programme of monitoring for good budgetary management• Adopt a lean thinking approach to service development; ensure an ongoing review of staffing, activities and services provided to identify potential efficiencies and VFM• Develop an enterprising approach to income generation; look to enterprise initiatives and seek additional funding from external sources to enhance service provision• Develop opportunities for volunteers• Develop new external partnerships and harness current partnerships and funding opportunities to develop our offer; ensure all local, regional and national partnerships are formalised through the development of Service level agreements as appropriate• Adopt a culture of forward planning• Invest in technology and services that improve efficiency, for example CollectionHQ.
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A detailed outline of the contribution of the Library Service to the delivery of Corporate objectives is included in Appendix 1

Key objectives for the next 3 years

Within the next 5 years we will have made significant steps on our journey to be the best library service in the country.

We will be delivering an efficient and effective, modern, dynamic and responsive service that excels in the provision of high quality customer service and ensures value for money

Our staff team understand and are fully signed up to the vision for the Service and have a comprehensive understanding of the role of Oldham Council Libraries in supporting the Council's Co-operative vision. All staff will embrace the Co-operative Values.

We will ensure that all our programmes of activity continue to be aligned to the Council's Co-operative vision and we will promote the Service as a key partner in the delivery of Council priorities.

We will raise the profile of the Service locally, regionally and nationally and increase the number of people accessing Oldham Council Libraries. We will achieve our aspiration by focusing on four Core Purpose priorities:

Priority 1: Books and reading

Outcome: an innovative and inspiring Books and Reading service for both adults and children

We will:

- Ensure the delivery of the SCL Universal Reading and Culture Offers
- Use Best Practice to inform service development
- Ensure a high quality resource base
- Develop the artistic policy for a high profile Bookmark Festival and Live@theLibrary programme across all Oldham Libraries
- Explore the potential to develop Oldham as a book hub (book town), establish an annual 'big read' and develop Oldham as a hub for storytelling
- Develop high-quality, innovative arts based events and activities from early years through to teenagers to encourage reading, develop reader responses and a pattern of regular library use
- Ensure a highly skilled workforce, (with particular emphasis on customer service skills and high level product knowledge) through an active workforce development programme

Priority 2: Information and Digital

Outcome: the role of the Library Service is established as a first point of contact for all information needs and a provider of mediated access to wider council and government services; Oldham libraries is at the cutting edge of digital public library provision

We will:

- Ensure delivery of the SCL Universal Health, Information and Digital offers
- Ensure the continued development of our service to support business and employability with specific reference to the Get Oldham Working initiative

- Ensure that the Library Service continues to support the health and wellbeing of the people of Oldham through providing access to authoritative information resources and an innovative activity programme
- Develop a digital strategy for the service, focusing on digital access and development of digital skills for staff and customers
- Ensure all customer facing staff and other staff as appropriate are fully trained and able to use digital and assistive technology

Priority 3: Learning

Outcome: a provider of informal learning opportunities and one which encourages intellectual journeys; ensuring that people have the capabilities and skills to participate and flourish in the digital society

We will:

- Ensure delivery of the SCL Universal Learning Offer
- Promote the role of books in stimulating and supporting all formal and informal learning opportunities
- Embed digital learning as part of the family learning offer
- Work in partnership with internal and external partners to deliver an engaging digital offer from Digital Festival to coding clubs
- Work collaboratively with other learning providers (internal and external) to promote our services, facilities and resources and to signpost to other opportunities.
- Develop and promote our offer to support early education and schools

Priority 4: Community Space and engagement

Outcome: a welcoming space for community use and a commitment to the provision of a needs based library service through community engagement

We will:

- Develop and market libraries as Community Hubs
- Focus on customer excellence and engage the community in the development of the Service through regular consultation and engagement activities
- Ensure that services are fully accessible to all sections of the community
- Develop programmes of activity that meet the needs of local communities
- Identify funding for outstanding library refurbishments to ensure all buildings are open, accessible and welcoming
- Develop links with relevant strategic leads and ensure that libraries have a presence at relevant local networks
- Promote availability of community space within libraries to partners and wider community to maximise use
- Use evidence from Best Practice case studies to improve services to all 'hard to reach groups' e.g. homeless people, young carers, Looked After Children
- Continue to ensure an inclusive resource base and events programme to promote community cohesion
- Develop opportunities for volunteers

Reviewing the Strategy

The priority actions highlighted above will be incorporated into the annual Business Plan for the Service. Our progress will be measured against the outcomes that we have set against each priority; measures and monitoring arrangements for these are included in the Service Performance Plan

We will:

- report on progress of actions
- identify any barriers that may be preventing progress
- adjust the action plans where needed to help overcome any problems with delivery of the outcomes

The key priorities will be refreshed as appropriate. The action plans will be updated in the light of new national requirements. We will refresh the Strategy once every two years.

Appendix 1: Oldham Council Libraries delivering against Corporate Priorities

An inclusive economy where people and enterprise thrive

Oldham Council libraries supports this objective by providing access to:

- Business support, including resources and events to support business start-ups as well as established businesses
- Employment support, including work clubs, jobs fair, resources and information
- Digital services, including free access to PCs, the internet and Wi-Fi ; and a 24/7 digital library service
- Learning support, including support for digital literacy and inclusion with Online Basics sessions at all libraries; books and resources to support learning and encourage 'intellectual journeys', signposting to learning opportunities, a programme of events and talks, including Ignite Talks and Tedx Oldham
- A Tourist Information Service, promoting Oldham as tourist destination and providing travel and transport information
- Reading and literacy support through a wide ranging book / resource collection, reading groups, writing groups, an annual Bookmark festival and other literature events, and a children's and schools programme which includes The Summer Reading Challenge and the Brilliant Books Book Award
- Be part of the town centre regeneration programme and work with a range of cultural providers in the cultural quarter to attract businesses and visitors to the town centre.

Thriving communities where everyone is empowered to do their bit

Oldham Library Service aims to meet this objective by providing access to:

- A network of libraries, some of which are co-located with other key agencies, and all of which are located in prime positions in each major district; libraries fulfil the role of community hubs, providing access to free community space, information and resources (including staffing) so empowering local people to do more for themselves
- Free advice sessions such as CAB and housing support
- Health support, including information and signposting, events (eg Health Awareness Day), resources such as Books on Prescription, and staff trained to help customers access reliable health information resources. All frontline library staff will be trained as Dementia Friends
- Council information, including information to support local democracy
- Volunteering opportunities, work experience and traineeships
- A cultural programme of events and activities through live@thelibrary which includes music, theatre and literature performances
- Local studies collections, and support for those researching their history with access to Ancestry and Find My Past online resources

Co-operative Services with people and social value at their heart.

Oldham Library Service aims to meet this objective by providing access to:

- High quality service provision, including high quality environments, high quality resources and excellent customer service, with a focus on 'getting it right'
- Accessible services, including stock in different formats and languages, assistive technology, accessible buildings.
- An inclusive service for all members of the community, including assistive technology and the Celebrate programme
- Support for older people, including an over 50s programme and Library at Home service
- Support for children and families, including Bounce and Rhyme, Stories and Rhymes, baby events
- Support for young people, including homework help, Get It Loud In Libraries programme and volunteering opportunities
- Value for money service

Appendix 2: Oldham Council libraries where are we now: resources; governance and performance

Buildings

Library services and activities are delivered through a network of 12 static libraries, including a volunteer run lending service at Delph and a Library at Home Service. Outreach activities also take place in the wider community.

Oldham Council libraries benefited from Lottery funding for the refurbishment and development of the Community Hub at Lees Library in 2008. The refurbished library was opened in June 2009. Further investment has seen the relocation of Chadderton Library into the new multi-purpose Chadderton Wellbeing Centre. In 2011 Failsworth Library was relocated into the refurbished old Carnegie Library and Town Hall as part of a regeneration project, and in 2012 Fitton Hill Library moved into the new Neighbourhood Centre as part of a New Deal for Communities (NDC) project. In 2014, Limehurst library was refurbished as a part of a joint project with Regenda which aims to put the library at the centre of the community.

However, despite recent investment in the capital stock of the Library Service there are still a number of buildings (Crompton, Greenfield, Northmoor and Royton) that require capital investment.

Oldham Libraries are now open for a total of 484.5 hours a week and we provide a 24/7 service through the website and access to online resources

Budget

The budget for the Service is £3.9 million [CIPFA Return 2016-17]

Revenue expenditure	(CIPFA Return 2016/17) £ pounds
Employees	1,507,811
Premises	854,121
Expenditure on materials	174,267
Computing costs	83,874
Other supplies and services*	1,351,501
Transport	17,533
Support services costs	929,610
Total revenue expenditure	4,918,269
Revenue income	975,398
Net expenditure	3,942,871

Since 2010, the Library Service has contributed over £900 000 towards the Council's budget efficiencies programme. It is inevitable that the Service will be required to contribute further efficiencies and so the identification of more cost effective approaches to service delivery will be an ongoing activity.

Staffing

The staffing establishment of the Service is 53.7 FTEs (Full Time Equivalent)

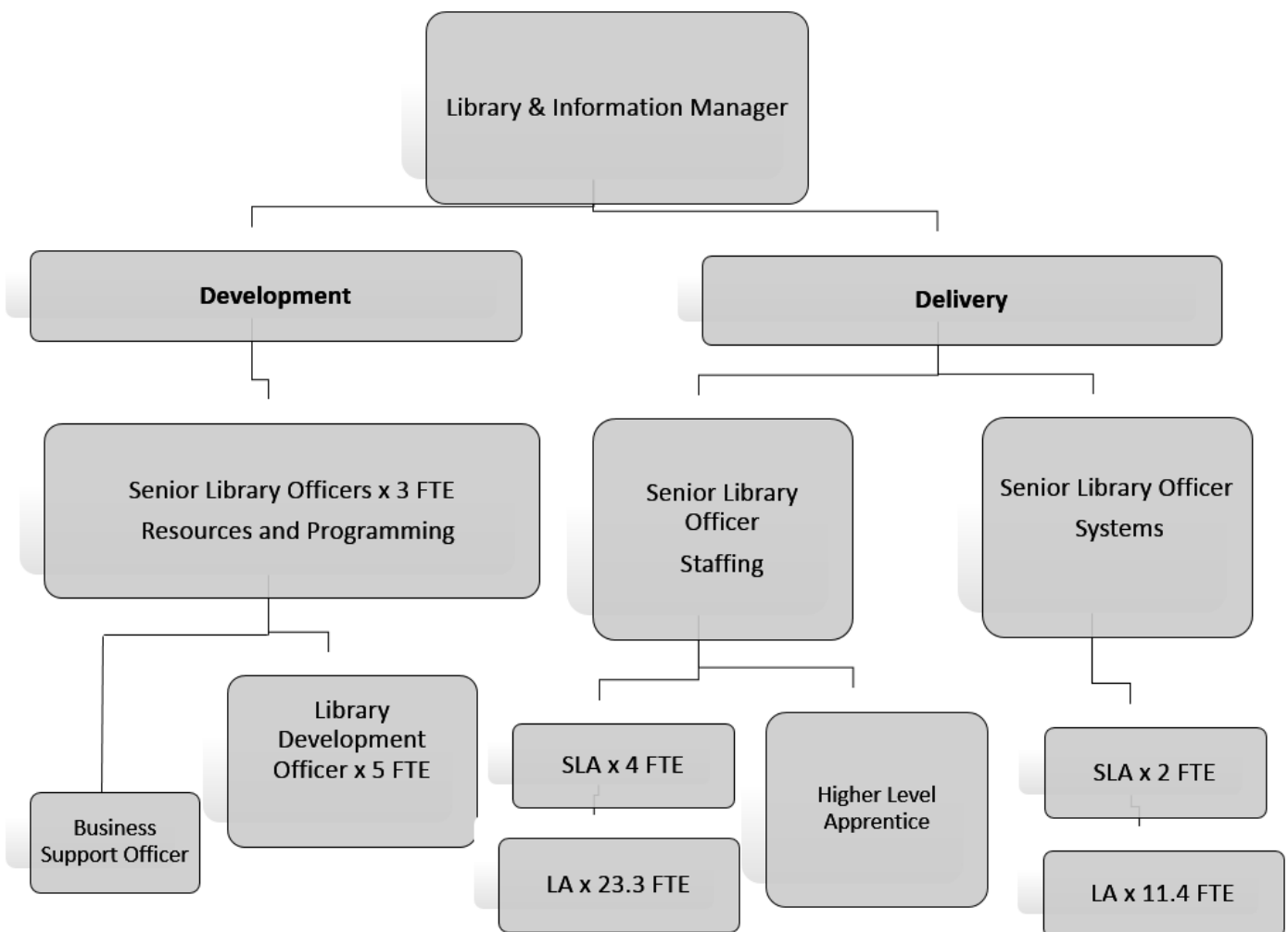
There has been a phased approach to remodelling the staffing structure of the Service over the past 3 years. This has impacted on all levels of staff within the Service. The introduction of generic job descriptions across the Service has been fundamental in developing a more robust and flexible workforce.

In addition to the role of Library and Information Manager, there are now 4 generic job roles across the Service:

- Senior Library Officer
- Library Development Officer
- Senior Library Assistant
- Library Assistant

We also have a library driver.

There are a number of volunteers engaged with Oldham Council libraries. During 2016/17 we had 14 volunteers working in the service and a total of 580 hours of volunteer time was recorded across the service.



Systems, policies and procedures

The Library Service works closely with colleagues from across the Council to ensure that Council policies and procedures are adhered to.

Work is underway to update library guidelines and procedures to support the future direction of the Service. This Strategic Plan forms the cornerstone of that documentation.

Other key strategic documents currently in development include the Marketing and Communications strategy which will outline the detail of the approach to maximise opportunities to present and promote Oldham Council Libraries effectively and engage new and diverse audiences.

A priority for the Service is to develop our digital offer to ensure the best digital customer experience which will support an improvement in overall performance, audience participation and engagement.

The service currently has over 250 public access pcs. A refresh of all public access PCs in community libraries took place in 2014; the refresh of the public access PCs in Oldham Library was completed in 2015.

The Library Management System (LMS) was upgraded in March 2013 as part of a NW libraries shared purchasing arrangement. The new system, Spydus, is provided by Civica. Radio-frequency identification (RFID) was introduced in Spring 2014 to support the delivery of channel shift within the Service and maximise the opportunities for self serve.

Performance

The Service performs well when benchmarked against other local authorities against indicators such as number of loans, visitors and new members. In 2016/17, Oldham Library had over 1.3million visitors, the second highest across Greater Manchester, and fared in the top 3 for computer hours used, and most active customers. Oldham Library was also listed in the top 20 most visited libraries in the country in 2013 / 14.

	2016/17	Change from previous year	2015/16	Change from previous year	2014/15	Change from previous year	2013/14	Change from previous year	2012/13
Visits to libraries	1,360,372	-48,511	1,408,883	-76,563	1,485,446	-21,676	1,507,122	7,087	1,500,035
No of physical visits per 1,000 population	5,889	-210	6,099	-404	6,503	-127	6,630	-10	6,640
New library memberships	10337	-28	10365	-442	10,807	1427	12,234	708	11,526
Loans									
Adult	247,663	-107,192	354,855	-58,584	413,439	-34,433	447,872	-61,465	509,337
Children's	133,129	-32,597	165,726	-12,854	178,580	-7,112	185,692	-17,608	203,300
AV	17,754	-142	17,896	-255	18,151	-13,092	31,243	-3,931	35,174
Total	398,546	-139,931	538,477	-58,908	597,385	-67,422	664,807	-83,004	747,811
Active Borrowers	24,289	-48	24,337	-2,914	27,251	-2942	30,193	-2,882	33,075
New Stock									
Adult	14,266	422	13,844	-4,925	18,769	-2,815	21,584	-1,580	23,164
Children's	12,980	8,064	4,916	-6,483	11,399	978	10,421	-1,405	11,826
AV	2,359	1,016	1,343	324	1,019	-428	1,447	-341	1,788
Total	29,605	9502	20,103	-11,084	31,187	-2,265	33,452	-3,326	36,778

We are currently finalising our Performance Framework which will focus on how we gather information to evidence the outcome of our service provision. This will include the development of a series of logic models which will evidence our contribution to key Council priorities, eg Health and Wellbeing and Get Oldham Working, and which will inform our progress towards our ambition of providing the best library service in the country.

We will also be looking to use the Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) framework to develop a more robust set of indicators to improve understanding of our performance. OBA focuses attention on the results or outcomes that the programmes are intended to achieve, to make better outcomes the primary purpose of our service and the staff team.

Library Standards

Oldham Council libraries provides customers with a high quality and accessible service, including

- Space: safe, welcoming, neutral, extended opening hours
- Stock - Resources (books and dvds) for loan and reference use / Free public access to computers, the internet, and a 24/7 online library service / An efficient, high quality information service, including TIC / An events and activities programme

- Staff - skilled and passionate workforce, driving change and embracing new ways of working

The Performance Framework details the measures for each of these standards and we will report on our compliance against standards annually.

Appendix 3: Oldham Council libraries key drivers for the future

We will ensure that all the evidence gained through research at a national level to inform the strategic direction of libraries, together with research, practice and feedback at a local level, is used to drive forward the development of an innovative, responsive library service in Oldham.

There have been a number of national reports published recently which have implications for the future delivery of library services, including:

Library of the Future: In 2011, Arts Council England took over responsibility for supporting and developing libraries from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and published The Library of the Future in May 2013.¹²

The Library of the Future identifies four priorities to sustain and develop a 21st century public library service:

- Place the library as the hub of a community
- Make the most of digital technology and creative media
- Ensure libraries are resilient and sustainable
- Deliver the right skills for those who work for libraries

Society of Chief Librarians (SCL) Universal Offers: The Society of Chief Librarians launched in January 2013 a programme of Universal Offers. The six core universal offers for libraries - reading, information, health, digital, learning and culture - demonstrate that public libraries have huge potential to contribute to the health and wellbeing of local communities as well as the needs of the most vulnerable within communities, who need access to good quality information and digital literacy skills to participate effectively in an increasingly online world.

Children's Promise: In June 2014, ASCEL's (the Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians (ASCEL) Children's Promise was updated and re-launched. The Promise sets out the public library services offer to children and young people:

- Every child and young person visiting a public library is inspired by an exciting accessible environment which makes reading for pleasure irresistible.
- They have the opportunity to engage with imaginative digital opportunities through public libraries, building their skills, knowledge and creativity.
- They will find a range of inclusive and diverse fiction and non-fiction books and other information resources to support growing confidence in literacy and formal and informal learning.
- They are able to take part in a wide range of literacy and cultural experiences including reading and book-based activities.
- They are actively involved in decisions about service developments and are offered opportunities to volunteer.
- They are supported through library services and activities to improve their health and wellbeing.

The Promise covers children and young people from birth to eighteen and also sets out the "library journey" that children should experience as they grow. It also highlights how the Promise links to the national Public Library Universal Offers

Children's Library Journeys : In January 2014 the findings of the Automatic Library Membership pilot projects were published¹³. The report concluded that whilst giving children a library card is an important first step in encouraging library usage, membership needs to be made real through activities both in and outside the library. The report stated that regular interactions, particularly at key points in a child's development from birth, are needed to build regular participation in library services and activities.

The Children's Library Journeys framework¹⁴ sets out a national framework for the 'library journey', highlighting the key interactions public libraries should have with children as they grow including interactions at such key stages of a child's development as transition from primary to secondary school. The Children's Library Journeys offer will be accompanied where possible by automatic library membership with library membership being gifted to Early Years children and Year 7 pupils

Sieghart Review: In February 2014 an independent report on the public library service in England was commissioned from philanthropist, entrepreneur and publisher William Sieghart¹⁵ by the Culture Department and the Department for Communities and Local Government. Key questions for the report to address include:

- What are the core principles of a public library into the future?
- Is the current model of delivery the most comprehensive and efficient? and
- What is the role of community libraries

The Independent Library Report for England was published on 18 December 2014. The report has three major recommendations:

- To establish a national digital network for libraries
- To establish a library taskforce, led by local government to provide leadership
- For the taskforce to work with local authorities for three to four years to help them to revitalise their library services.

The report then proposes four actions each for central government, local government and the taskforce in order to bring about desirable changes.

Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016 – 2021 by the Libraries Taskforce was published in response to recommendations in Sieghart's Independent Library Report. The Ambition document sets out a vision of the value and impact of public libraries as outlined previously on pages 3/4.

A SWOT and PESTLE analysis (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Legislative and Environmental), undertaken by the Library Leadership Team has echoed the recommendations of these reports. Specifically, we have identified the following areas of activity as key for the future development of Oldham Council Libraries; actions to address each of the areas will feature in the annual Oldham Council Libraries Service Plan

- A high quality digital service; a robust IT infrastructure and a highly skilled workforce, able to actively support residents to get on line
- Provision of support for welfare reform
- Profiling the role of the library service in the early intervention and prevention agenda
- Profiling the role of the library service in supporting health and wellbeing
- Profiling the role of the library service in supporting people out of poverty
- Profiling the role of the library in supporting businesses (including start ups)
- Ensuring value for money and the need to look to opportunities through shared services across Greater Manchester

- Developing the partnership with Delph Volunteers and increasing opportunities for volunteers across the service
- Consideration of enterprise opportunities
- Consideration of service provision for an ageing population
- Consideration of service provision in view of the increase in 0-19 year olds in the Borough
- Need for staff engagement programmes and a robust communications framework
- Need for a high quality workforce development programme
- Need to improve stock management, especially in light of growing digital market and changing needs of customers
- Need to deliver programmes of activity relevant to local communities
- Making sure that a high quality cultural offer is embedded
- Need for an embedded performance framework
- Need for a marketing and communications plan

Appendix 4: References

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- ¹¹ Economic value of library services, ALMA-UK, 2014
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- ¹³ Automatic Library Membership Pilots Final Report, Arts Council England, January 2014
- ¹⁴ Children’s Library Journeys, ASCEL, April 2015
- ¹⁵ Independent Library Report for England, DCMS, 2014

Glossary

ACE	Arts Council England
CAB	Citizens Advice Bureau
CILIP	Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals
CIP	Customer Information Points
CSV	Community Service Volunteers
DCMS	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
DFE	Department of Education
EBSM	Evidence Based Stock Management
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
KSA	Key Service Area
LMS	Library Management System
LSOA	Lower Super Output Area
MLA	Museums, Libraries and Archives Council
NHS	National Health Service
NI 9	National Indicator 9
OBA	Outcomes Based Accountability
OECD	Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development
OPAC	Online Public Access Catalogue
PC	Public Computer
RFID	Radio Frequency Identification
SCL	Society of Chief Librarians
VIP	Visually Impaired People

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