

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

OFFICER EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD (Non Key)

The following decision was taken on 30 October 2019 by the Executive Director, People Services.

Date notified to all members: 15th April 2021

Officer Non-Key decisions are not subject to call-in.

1. **TITLE**

Funding and support arrangements for Associate and Co-delivered Libraries for 2020/21 and 2021/22.

2. **DECISION TAKEN**

That the Council:

- (1) Continue support for Associate libraries until 31st March 2022 to assist their viability and stability with a support package to the value of £209k;
- (2) The support package to include a grant pot, a new book fund, a training package and the operational costs of the Associate libraries remaining on the Library Management System. A breakdown of the support package is listed in Section 1.4 'Specific Requests of the Proposal';
- (3) Continued support for the Associate and Co-delivered libraries until 31st March 2022 where this can be resourced by the Library, Archives and Information Service (LAIS) with existing staff and core budget. This includes support from SCC run Hub libraries, advice and support with local and national initiatives, I.T support and training relating to the Library Management System; and
- (4) Continued support for Co-delivered libraries to 31st March 2022. Co-delivered libraries receive the same offer as SCC's Hub libraries without the staffing and funded from LAIS core funding. Building running costs are paid directly by SLAIS. Co-delivered libraries may be re-charged for running costs that are above the budget due to extended non-library usage of the building.

NB This decision record is being published in April 2021 as there was an administration error that meant the original decision was not logged with Democratic Services at the time. All due consultation was made at the time with Cllr Mary Lea as cabinet member for Culture, Parks and Leisure and reconfirmed with her 12/3/21.

3. **Reasons For Decision**

The reasons for recommendations are as follows:

- The current arrangements for Associate and Co-delivered libraries are due to expire 31st March 2019.
- Continued support will increase the likelihood of all the volunteer run libraries remaining open and vibrant into the medium and long term as they develop and grow in depth of experience and capability.
- Continued support for Associate libraries will give added confidence to trustees and volunteers, at a point they are taking on board lease responsibilities.
- By supporting the volunteer run libraries to remain on the Library Management System, all SCC library members can access any library in Sheffield using a single, city-wide library card.
- Continued support will provide a period of financial stability and growth that will attract more volunteers and trustees, and give them additional time to build capacity and develop external funding opportunities.
- The proposal will ensure the standards and controls relating to the operation of the Council's Library Management System by volunteer libraries are maintained.

4. **Alternatives Considered And Rejected**

Option 2

Decrease the funding and support level from 2019/20, for years 2020/21 and 2021/22, by 10%.

Benefits: Saving for the Council.

Risks: Risk that the funding level is insufficient to enable the continued sustainability of some volunteer run libraries in the wake of taking on additional costs and responsibilities due to leases being signed.

Option 3

Increase the funding and support level from 2019/20, for years 2020/21 and 2022, by 10%.

Benefits: This would enable the volunteer run libraries to develop a maintenance fund and run additional activities, resources or equipment.

Risks: This may reduce the fundraising efforts of the volunteer run libraries.
Increased cost to the Council.

Option 4

Grant funding to be means tested or competitive and not a set allocation.

Benefits: Ensures that the volunteer libraries that need the grant the most, are able to secure greater funds, and those less in need would secure a lower grant level. Ensuring that all libraries are sustainable with the grant level.

Risks: Income generation could be negatively impacted if libraries that are successful at income generation have their grant reduced as a result. Competition for the grant amongst the volunteer libraries may reduce collaboration and co-operation amongst the libraries which is currently strong.

5. Documents used in making decision:

- a) Form 2a 'Library Review 2016 – funding and support arrangements for volunteer run libraries 2020/21 and 2021/22;
- b) Cabinet Report 30th November 2016 'Library Review 2016 – Future support arrangements for Volunteer run libraries';
- c) Appendix 1, New books report – an analysis of book purchasing for associate libraries;
- d) Appendix 2, Support needs of volunteer run libraries – analysis of survey results Oct 2019; and
- e) EIA no 659.

6.1 Any conflict of interest declared by any Executive Member who is consulted by the Officer when making the decision

None

6.2 Any dispensation granted by the Head of Paid Service

None

7. Respective Director Responsible for Implementation

Executive Director, People Services