

Transforming Libraries

Public consultation on a libraries strategy

27 February – 21 May 2017



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Introduction



Thank you for taking the time to learn about our options for the future of libraries in the City of Wolverhampton.

Libraries are a statutory service under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, which means local councils in England have a duty to provide a ‘comprehensive and efficient’ library service for local people. Libraries provide a unique ‘cradle to grave’ service to the public, and are highly valued by communities – even those who do not use them.

Like most places across the country, the way people use our libraries is changing. Visitor numbers are falling and there are fewer active borrowers and book loans, mirroring a national decline. At the same time, there has been a growth in the use of technology and people are also increasingly using our libraries to develop their skills, access support services and attend events and activities.

Over the last few months, we have been considering and developing ideas to improve the provision of libraries in Wolverhampton based on feedback from local people, a review of intelligence and information in relation to the performance of libraries and a review of the national policy framework for libraries, including the recent ‘ambition’ for libraries from the national task force.

As a result of this work, we have developed a draft vision, strategic aims and an approach to delivering our libraries that will form part of a City of Wolverhampton Libraries Strategy for 2017-2027.

The purpose of the strategy is to improve library services for people who live, work, study and visit Wolverhampton and set out how we will deliver local and national priorities, in the context of changing demands and customer needs. Against the backdrop of a wider public sector financial challenge, we also need to ensure that our libraries provide a network of support that is sustainable and provides value for money to taxpayers.

The information in this formal public consultation document has been provided so that you can understand our vision and for libraries in Wolverhampton.

In the City of Wolverhampton we value our libraries which is why our draft strategy proposes to maintain the current number of libraries and enhance service provision.

We want to hear what you think of our draft strategy. You can have your say in a number of ways, including completing a survey online at www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/mylibraryservice or by attending one of the public events which will be taking place over the next few weeks. You can also request a hard copy of the survey by calling us on **01902 552025** or emailing mylibraryservice@wolverhampton.gov.uk.

Your views will help shape our libraries strategy which will be put forward for discussion by Cabinet in the summer of 2017.

No decisions will be made about the future of library services in our city until we have listened to you.

Councillor John Reynolds

Cabinet Member, City Economy
City of Wolverhampton Council

What are we consulting on?



The City of Wolverhampton Council is committed to library services, and so are not proposing to reduce the number of libraries.

We are specifically seeking your views about:

- Our vision for libraries in the City of Wolverhampton 2017 – 2027.
- Opening hours – what times and days each library should be open.
- The physical location of Bilston library.
- The provision of the Education Library Service through consultation with key stakeholders of the service.
- The Home Library Service – we are proposing this will continue, but would like to gain more customer feedback from users of this service to inform future planning.
- Fees and charges for services provided by or within libraries.

Timescales for Consultation:

The consultation will take place over 12 weeks from 27 February to 21 May 2017. All the feedback we receive will be collated and analysed. A report for consideration will be produced and publicly available as part of the decision making process.

Why are we consulting on a new strategy for libraries?

In May 2016 the Library Service undertook a Peer Challenge. This provided feedback on the service and our plans and approach to developing it in the future.

We need to respond to key challenges which we have summarised in our 'case for change' which is:

1. Demand for the library service is in decline and we need to promote use while demonstrating value for money.
2. We need to explore new ways of working as our resources are stretched and we struggle to maintain a quality service.
3. We need to meet the future needs of citizens in order to create a vibrant and modern library service for Wolverhampton, including maximising opportunities in relation to digital technologies.



What local people have told us about libraries in the City of Wolverhampton

In October 2016, the Council undertook an engagement exercise with communities, discussing the case for change and seeking feedback and views on what a modern, vibrant and sustainable library service should look like.

Over 500 people participated in the engagement phase through externally facilitated workshops, an online survey, email and social media.

The key themes from the engagement exercise were:

- Besides offering educational value, libraries were seen to serve an important role as a social hub.
- Adopting a multi-use facility approach. The largest proportion of respondents believed that library services could be optimised and utilised more effectively through co-location and multi-use spaces.
- The majority of respondents felt that library services could improve if integrated into other organisations, in particular community, health and social organisations.
- When asked what would make people use a library more, the most cited theme was more convenient opening hours, a wider number of services and better computing facilities.
- Most participants reported that libraries of the future need a building because they are the hub of the community and motivate people to get out of their houses, relax, and enhance social interaction.

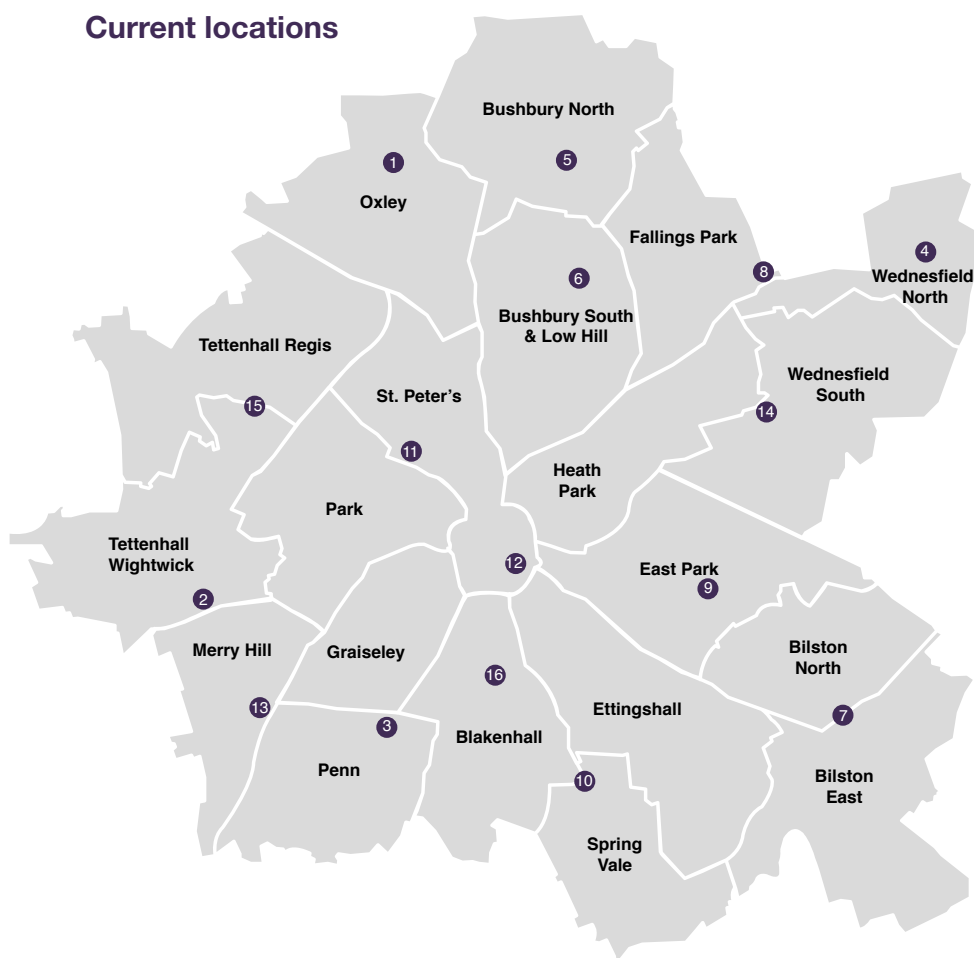
The full report on the findings from the engagement exercise can be found at www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/mylibraryservice

What are libraries like now?

The City of Wolverhampton Council currently provides the following:

- 16 public libraries including the Grade 2* listed Central Library. Some libraries are stand alone, some are part of established Community Hubs, others are self-service only or volunteer run.
- The Home Library service, delivering materials, in a variety of formats, to people of all ages who are unable to get to their local library and don't have anyone to go on their behalf.
- The Education Library Service, providing learning materials to schools.
- On-line Libraries, through which customers can download a wide range of free resources including eBooks, eMagazines, eAudio Books and eResources onto their eReader, desktop, laptop or mobile device.

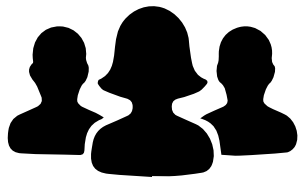
Current locations



Key:

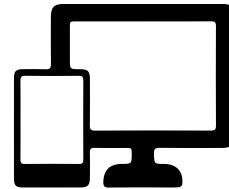
1. Pendeford and Pendeford Community Hub
2. Finchfield Library
3. Penn Library
4. Ashmore Park Library and The Hub at Ashmore Park
5. Collingswood Library
6. Low Hill Library and Low Hill Community Hub
7. Bilston Library
8. Long Knowle Library and Long Knowle Community Hub
9. East Park Library
10. Spring Vale Library
11. Whitmore Reans Library
12. Central Library
13. Warstones Library
14. Wednesfield Library and Wednesfield Community Hub
15. Tettenhall Library
16. Blakenhall Library and The Bob Jones Community Hub

Key facts and figures about our libraries (2015-16)



676,801

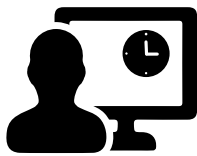
total visits



47,379

visits to the website

Resulting in...



120,610

hours of PC use

138,596



individual borrowers
with loans



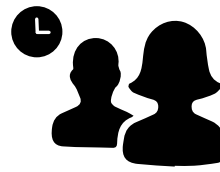
561,250

items borrowed

Staffed by...



The full time
equivalent of
33.9 staff
(37 hrs per week)



46 volunteers
1803.5
volunteer hours

Costing

£1,789,860

2016/17 budget



Performance by library location 2015–16

Library	Number of hours open	Items Borrowed 2015-16	Visits 2015-16	Members as at 31 March 2016
Ashmore Park	24	23393	37875	3678
Bilston	35	31503	38525	7084
Blakenhall	56	1284	2225	1398
Central	47	174258	348026	40602
Collingwood	15	2959	875	768
East Park	15	12558	10100	2518
Finchfield	30	52797	21625	2892
Long Knowle	15	10960	6600	2091
Low Hill	15	13336	8350	3971
Pendeford	24	25829	21850	4183
Penn	24	31784	21925	3484
Spring Vale	15	11464	15475	2493
Tettenhall	30	69281	28700	4510
Warstones	35	43122	37725	4889
Wednesfield	35	47477	58800	9810
Whitmore Reans	15	9245	18125	5068

Services and facilities libraries deliver in Wolverhampton

Library loans

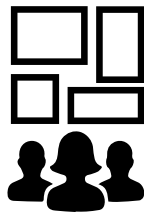


Books including inter-library loans and reservation facilities

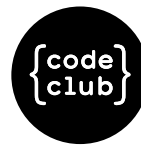


Other lending e.g. audiobooks, e-books

Clubs, events and activities



Local community displays, e.g. photography clubs



Code clubs



Author events, theatre and other art and cultural activities

Advice and support



Blue badge scheme support



Support for job seekers



Health and well-being support e.g. Memory Matters

A community space



A life long learning space



A safe space



Office and room hire



Quiet space to read and study

Resources and information



Reference materials and information



Free public computer facilities



Newspapers and magazines



Free public wifi in all 16 libraries

Financial costs and performance

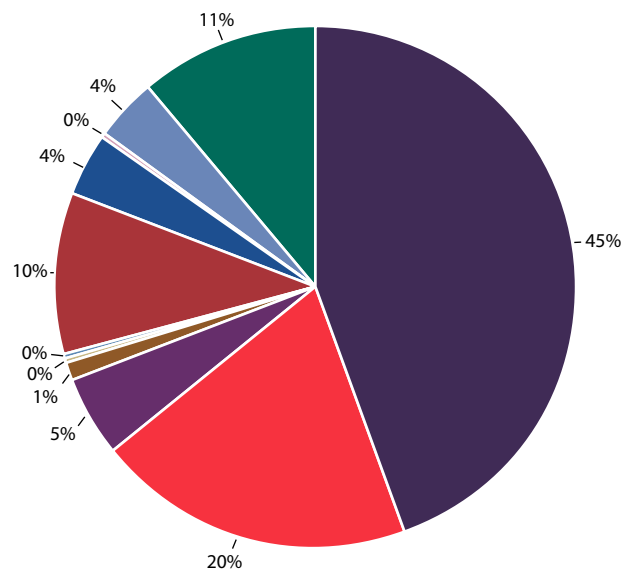
(based on the 2015-16 CIPFA return)

Expenditure

Expenditure Area	2015-16 CIPFA return	% of expenditure
Employees	£1,035,928	45.44
Premises	£445,319	19.53
Books and pamphlets	£106,233	4.66
Newspapers, periodicals and magazines	£17,505	0.77
Sound recordings (e.g. talking books)	£ 5,430	0.24
Electronic subscriptions	£9,972	0.44
Computing costs	£230,101	10.09
Other supplies and services	£81,098	3.56
Transport	£10,600	0.46
Third party payments (for the Home Library Service)	£86,209	3.78
Support services	£251,316	11.02
Total	£2,279,711	100

KEY:

- Employees
- Premises
- Books and pamphlets
- Newspapers, periodicals and magazines
- Sound recordings, e.g. talking books
- Electronic subscriptions
- Computing costs
- Other supplies and services
- Transport
- Third party payments for the Home Library Service
- Support services

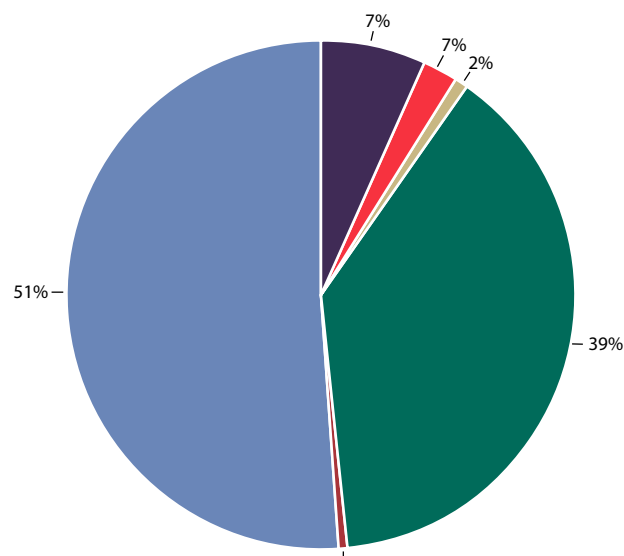


Income

Income Area	2015-16 CIPFA return	% of income
Overdue charges	£19,319	6.59
Lettings	£7,313	2.49
Hire of audio/visual materials	£3,829	1.31
Grants	£113,124	38.56
Provision of library services to other local authorities	£630	0.21
Miscellaneous (including photocopying)	£149,136	50.84
Total	£293,351	100

KEY:

- Overdue charges
- Lettings
- Hire of audio/visual materials
- Grants
- Provision of library services to other authorities
- Miscellaneous (e.g. photocopying)



2015–16 financial summary

Total Expenditure	£2,279,711
Total Income	£293,351
Net Expenditure	£1,986,360

A summary of the performance, finance, demographic and building asset information by library is included in our 'needs assessment' which you can access [here](#).

Our vision for libraries in the City of Wolverhampton

We are seeking people's views on our vision for libraries in Wolverhampton. This has been developed based on national best practice and the feedback we have received from local people during October 2016.

Our vision is:

Modern, vibrant and sustainable libraries for the City of Wolverhampton

What should a modern, vibrant and sustainable library service provide?

We are proposing six strategic aims for our libraries that form our core offer to all people who live, work and study in Wolverhampton. These aims incorporate the 'National Universal Offer' framework recommended by the Society of Chief Librarians and are:

- **Supporting reading and literacy**
- **Promoting learning and improving skills**
- **Increasing the use of digital services**
- **Promoting and enabling health & wellbeing**
- **Widening access to quality information**
- **Broadening access to culture**

To deliver this, over the course of the strategy **we will:**

- Improve the quality of physical library spaces to ensure they are vibrant, welcoming and safe and meet the needs of local communities.
- Ensure there is a good quality book (including large print, audio book and e-book) stock that is well rotated across the network. Stop investing in 'old technology' such as CDs/DVDs.
- Support people to access new and emerging digital technology.
- Wherever possible, increase opening hours, accessibility and convenience for library users through working with other services and the community to increase co-location, use of self service facilities and use of volunteers.
- Hold and promote a variety of events and activities in libraries to support the delivery of our six strategic aims.
- Ensure there are professional well trained staff that can support individuals and communities to improve their life chances.
- Increase the number, use and roles of volunteers in the library service to increase skills and employability for local people.
- Increase income generation and commercialisation in the service (such as room hire) to improve sustainability of the service.

Outcomes for local people

Libraries in Wolverhampton play a significant role in supporting the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan, and also the wider Vision 2030 for the city. We will measure the success of this strategy through the delivery of outcomes for local people.

The outcomes for local people which will be delivered through the City of Wolverhampton's Library Strategy 2017–2027 are:

- Improved skills, learning and life chances for local people
- Improved health and wellbeing for local people
- Local people's lives are enriched with improved access to culture, literature and quality information
- Increased civic and community participation through:
 - Visiting and engaging in activities in libraries
 - Volunteering



Opportunities for our libraries

Local people told us that libraries play an important role in communities

The City of Wolverhampton are committed to library services, and so are not proposing to reduce the number of libraries.

We are committed to transforming our libraries, responding to feedback from local people and enhancing service provision to meet modern demand.



Service wide transformation

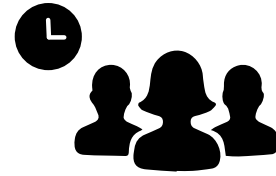
Our proposal is to improve every library through...



professional well trained staff



increasing volunteering opportunities



working with the local community to extend opening hours



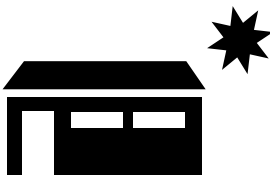
high quality book offer



access to latest technology



increasing events and activities



improving physical library spaces



increasing income generation



co-locating/providing other services

New library management system

The City of Wolverhampton is procuring a new Library Management System with the three other Black Country library authorities - Sandwell, Dudley and Walsall.

This is so we can work more efficiently, make improvements to the service we provide, and directly respond to feedback from customers.

For example, the new system will enable library users to access library services across the Black Country with just one library card, improving the amount of choice and increasing accessibility to a wider range of materials.

The new system will also enable improvements in customer service such as email and text alerts.

The new system will be implemented from Summer 2017.

Central Library and the City Learning Quarter

In addition to meeting the service wide vision in each one of our libraries, there are some specific opportunities for our libraries:



The Grade 2* listed Central Library is one of the city's most treasured buildings, designed in an arts and crafts style in 1896 by Henry T Hare and built in 1902.

There are some specific physical improvements we want to make to Central Library.

Local people have provided feedback to us that they value Central Library in its current location, but want to see an improvement to the poor appearance inside the building, including more comfortable seating, space for events and activities and better access to technology.

In addition to these improvements, there is a unique opportunity in the area in which the Central Library is located, near to the Ofsted rated 'Outstanding' Adult Education Service and City of Wolverhampton College to look at how we develop a 'City Learning Quarter'. This would involve working closer together to improve the offer to local people around learning.

A feasibility study into the City Learning Quarter has commenced, and includes how we could make further improvements to the Central Library building to improve the wider offer, including café facilities.

Branch libraries

Bilston

Bilston library is currently located at Mount Pleasant with the Craft Gallery. It is not easily accessible from public transport, and is not near any other services – something we know from engagement that people value from libraries.

Bilston library is currently open 35 hours per week – regardless of its location, we are proposing that it will remain open for a minimum of 35 hours per week. As part of the consultation we are also keen to hear what times you think certain libraries should be open.

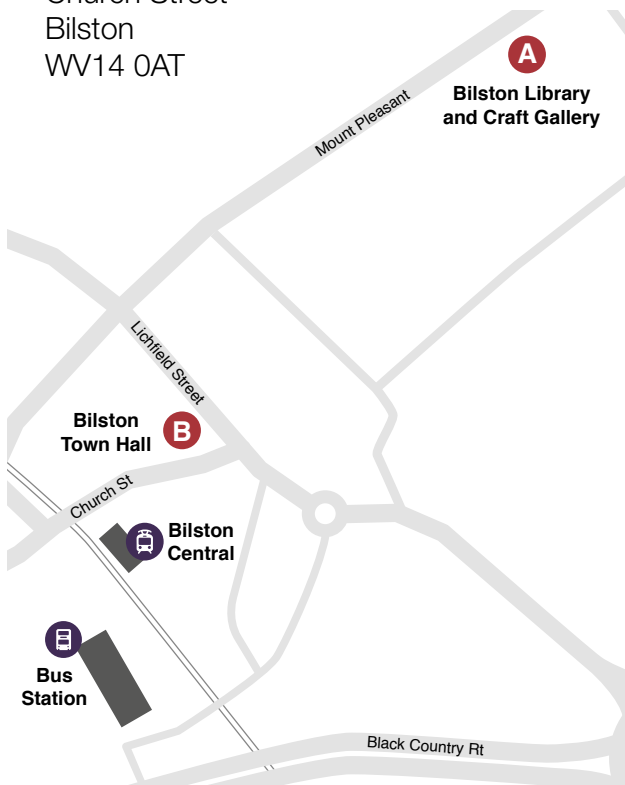
Built in 1872, Bilston Town Hall is a Grade II listed building which was originally home to a ‘free library and reading room’.

As part of the consultation, we want to know your views on the location of Bilston Library and Craft Gallery:

- **Move to Bilston Town Hall**

One possibility would be to relocate the library and a museum to Bilston Town Hall. This would mean the library and museum is better located for public transport, such as the bus station and Metro.

The address is:
Church Street
Bilston
WV14 0AT



- **Remain where it is**

One possibility would be to leave the library and craft gallery where it is. This would mean that there are limited opportunities to improve accessibility as it is not located near public transport, other services and facilities.

The address is:
Mount Pleasant
Bilston
WV14 7LU

- **Move to another location**

You may have an idea for another location for the library and craft gallery – if so, we’d like to hear them so we can consider them as part of our plans.



Ashmore Park

Ashmore Park library is co-located within the Ashmore Park Community Hub and is open for 24 hours a week.

In addition to the proposed service wide transformation, we would like to explore opportunities to extend the amount of time the library is open to the public by providing more 'self-serve' only periods when there are no staff and the Community Hub is open.

Library staff would still be available for 24 hours a week. The 'self-serve' only periods would mean that there were no library staff on site, but customers could access the library, take out and return items using the self-service machine, and book and use PC's.



Long Knowle

Long Knowle library is co-located within the Long Knowle Community Hub and is open for 15 hours a week.

In addition to the proposed service wide transformation, we would like to explore opportunities to extend the amount of time the library is open to the public by providing more 'self-serve' only periods when there are no staff and the Community Hub is open.

Library staff would still be available for 15 hours a week. The 'self-serve' only periods would mean that there were no library staff on site, but customers could access the library, take out and return items using the self-service machine, and book and use PC's.



Low Hill

Low Hill library is next to the Low Hill Community Hub and is open for 15 hours a week.

In addition to the proposed service wide transformation, we would like to explore opportunities to move the library to a different part of the Low Hill Community Hub site to extend the amount of time the library is open to the public by providing more 'self-serve' only periods when there are no staff and the Community Hub is open.

Library staff would still be available for 15 hours a week. The 'self-serve' only periods would mean that there were no library staff on site, but customers could access the library, take out and return items using the self-service machine, and book and use PC's.



East Park

East Park library is a stand-alone library and is open for 15 hours a week.

In addition to the proposed service wide transformation we would like to explore opportunities with the community to extend opening hours.

We welcome any expressions of interest from local people and groups to support the running of the library or co-locate it to improve the offer. This might include making better community and commercial use of the whole building. If there are no proposals the library will remain open for 15 hours a week.



Finchfield

Finchfield library is a stand-alone library and is open for 30 hours a week.

In addition to the proposed service wide transformation we would like to explore opportunities with the community to extend opening hours.

We welcome any expressions of interest from local people and groups to support the running of the library or co-locate it to improve the offer. This might include making better community and commercial use of the whole building. If there are no proposals, the library will remain open for 30 hours a week.



Pendeford

Pendeford library is a stand-alone library and is open for 24 hours a week.

In addition to the proposed service wide transformation we would like to explore opportunities with the community to extend opening hours.

We welcome any expressions of interest from local people and groups to support the running of the library or co-locate it to improve the offer. This might include the development of a Community Association to manage the meeting rooms and community spaces at the back of the library. It also might include making better community and commercial use of the whole building. If there are no proposals, the library will remain open for 24 hours a week.



Penn

Penn library is a stand-alone library and is open for 24 hours a week.

In addition to the proposed service wide transformation we would like to explore opportunities with the community to extend opening hours.

We welcome any expressions of interest from local people and groups to support the running of the library or co-locate it to improve the offer. This might include making better community and commercial use of the whole building. If there are no proposals, the library will remain open for 24 hours a week.



Spring Vale

Spring Vale library is a stand-alone library and is open for 15 hours a week.

In addition to the proposed service wide transformation we would like to explore opportunities with the community to extend opening hours.

We welcome any expressions of interest from local people and groups to support the running of the library or co-locate it to improve the offer. This might include making better community and commercial use of the whole building. If there are no proposals, the library will remain open for 15 hours a week.



Tettenhall

Tettenhall library is a stand-alone library and is open for 30 hours a week.

In addition to the proposed service wide transformation we would like to explore opportunities with the community to extend opening hours.

We welcome any expressions of interest from local people and groups to support the running of the library or co-locate it to improve the offer. If there are no proposals, the library will remain open for 30 hours a week.



Warstones – Health & Social Care Hub

Warstones library is a stand-alone library open for 35 hours a week.

In addition to the proposed service wide transformation at Warstones there is an opportunity to include a brand new library in the same location, within a potential new Community Health Hub. A feasibility study is underway to determine other services (Council, Health and others) that could form part of this hub to create a mixed use community facility for the South West locality. This is currently in feasibility stage, with build costs being established. Should this go ahead, it is likely to take place by 2019.



Wednesfield

Wednesfield library is an iconic and award winning building, built in 2010 and is a library and community hub facility. It is open for 35 hours a week.

In addition to the proposed service wide transformation, we would like to explore opportunities with the community to extend opening hours.

This might include making better community and commercial use of the building. If there are no proposals the library will remain open for 35 hours a week.



Whitmore Reans

Whitmore Reans library is a stand-alone library and is open for 15 hours a week.

In addition to the proposed service wide transformation we would like to explore opportunities with the community to extend opening hours.

We welcome any expressions of interest from local people and groups to support the running of the library or co-locate it to improve the offer. This might include making better community and commercial use of the whole building. If there are no proposals the library will remain open for 15 hours a week.

Bob Jones Community Hub, Blakenhall and Collingwood Libraries

These libraries are currently community led/self service only, and no changes are proposed in addition to the proposed service wide transformation.

Other areas we would like your views

Opening hours

As part of the consultation, we would like to know your views on when libraries should be open – what days and at what time of the day.

Library fees and charges

As part of the consultation, we would like to know your views on fees that the library currently charges, and what it could potentially charge for such as:

- PC hire
- Printing and photocopying
- Refreshments
- Room hire
- Retail

Education Library Service

The Education Library Service is an optional service provided to schools that they can choose to buy from the City of Wolverhampton Library Service. It involves the provision of learning materials to schools (and is not about libraries within schools). The Education Library Service is located at the Parkfields Centre.

Take up of the service has declined over the last three years, as schools move to Academies, school budgets are put under increasing pressure and technological advancements support teaching the curriculum in new and different ways.

As part of the consultation, we are keen to hear from users of the service about their views on the Education Library Service – primarily teachers, governing bodies and children, young people and families as beneficiaries of education services in Wolverhampton.

Home Library Service

The Home Library service delivers materials, in a variety of formats, to people of all ages who are unable to get to their local library and don't have anyone to go on their behalf. We are proposing that this service continues.

However, as part of consultation we are keen to understand the views of customers of this service to understand how we can improve provision going forward.

Any other ideas?

We are committed to consider any other suggestions for improving libraries in Wolverhampton. This may include alternative delivery models for any of our libraries.

We will give genuine consideration to any alternatives put forward by people.

Over the course of the strategy, there may be other opportunities that present themselves to improve the offer from our libraries. This might involve moving a library or co-locating it with other services to enable longer opening hours or an improved service. If these opportunities do present themselves, we would consult with local people at that time.

Equalities analysis

An initial equalities analysis has been conducted, and is available here:

www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/mylibraryservice.

As part of the consultation we want to know if you feel you are adversely affected by the proposals, and why. You may also wish to give suggestions for individual libraries or for the service as a whole.

How you can give your views

Complete our online survey

Completing our survey online saves time, postage and the environment. Please help us by staying online if you can.

www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/mylibraryservice

Complete a hard copy of the survey

You can ring **01902 552025** or email mylibraryservice@wolverhampton.gov.uk to request a hard copy of the survey.

For deaf and speech impaired callers, please call **18001 01902 552025**. This is the Next Generation Text Service. More information on this service is available here:

www.ngts.org.uk/business.php.

Hard copies of surveys can be returned to any library or posted to:

Central Library
Snow Hill
Wolverhampton
WV1 3AX

Attend our public events

The following public events have been planned:

- **Wednesday 22 March, 6pm**
Bilston Library, Mount Pleasant
WV14 7LU
- **Thursday 23 March, 6pm**
Bantock House, Finchfield Road
WV3 9LQ
- **Saturday 25 March, 10am**
Wednesfield Library, Well Lane
WV11 1XT

You can book on to these sessions here:

www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/mylibraryservice or by calling **01902 552025** or asking at your local library. Don't worry, you don't need to print off any ticket – just register, let us know of any special requirements you might have and turn up on the day.

Next steps

We are asking for your views for 12 weeks from **27 February to 21 May 2017**.

What happens to responses?

All feedback will be collated and analysed. A report for consideration will be produced and publicly available as part of the decision making process.

Your views will help shape our libraries strategy and the options for their transformation, which are scheduled to be discussed by Cabinet on **19 July 2017**. No decision will be made before this date.

We anticipate that any changes that were agreed would come into effect from **August 2017**.

Data Protection Statement

We take the protection of any personal information you give us as part of the consultation seriously. Please see the supporting 'data protection statement' for further information on this or contact data. protect@wolverhampton.gov.uk.

Supporting documents

You can access supporting documents on our website here: www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/mylibraryservice

Need more information?

Visit our website

www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/mylibraryservice

Telephone

01902 552025

Email

mylibraryservice@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Next Generation Text Service for deaf and speech impaired callers

More information on this service is available here

18001 01902 552025

www.ngts.org.uk/business.php.

For more information on our work visit:

wolverhampton.gov.uk 01902 551155

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Wolverhampton WV1 1SH.

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