

Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Wednesday, 13 July 2016, County Hall Worcester - 2.00 pm

| | | Minutes |
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| Present: | | Mr C B Taylor (Chairman), Mr S R Peters (Vice Chairman), Mrs P E Davey, Mr C G Holt and Mr R C Lunn |
| Also attended: | | Mrs L C Hodgson, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Localism and Communities |
| Available Papers | | Neil Anderson (Head of Community and Environment), Dave Corbett (Information and Performance Officer), Jodie Townsend (Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager) and Samantha Morris (Overview and Scrutiny Officer) |
| | | The members had before them: |
| | | A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated): B. The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2016 (previously circulated). |
| | | Copies of documents A and B will be attached to the signed Minutes. |
| 174 | Chairman's Announcements, Apologies and Welcome | The Chairman announced that sadly Cllr Maurice Broomfield had passed away on Tuesday 7 June 2016, following a period of ill-health. Apologies were received from Stuart Cross, Paul Tuthill and Liz Tucker. |
| 175 | Declarations of Interest and of any Party Whip | None. |
| 176 | Public Participation | None. |
| 177 | Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting | The Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 May 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. |

**178 Future
Proposed
Changes to
Library Opening
Hours**

The Cabinet Member with Responsibility (CMR) for Localism and Communities and the Head of Service for Communities were invited to the meeting to discuss the responses to the County Council's engagement process on the proposals around the reduction of public library opening hours and in turn, the reduction in front line staffing hours.

At its meeting on 25 May 2016, the Panel discussed the proposals to reduce library opening hours by 76.5hrs in total across the county (excluding The Hive) and agreed that a further discussion would take place when the analysis of the public engagement process was available.

The CMR explained to the Panel that since the previous discussion, there had been further public engagement resulting in the proposed reduction in library opening hours being reduced to 55 hours (not 76.5 as previously proposed). Comments made by Councillors, Stakeholders, staff and library users had been taken into account alongside the comments made at the previous scrutiny panel to arrive at the current proposals.

During the discussion the following main points were made:

- No changes were planned for the Hive or Catshill, Pershore, Wythall or Warndon Libraries.
- In terms of the process for gathering views, it was confirmed that public engagement (rather than consultation) had been carried out. Public engagement sessions, timings of which were decided by the Library Manager had been held in every library. Library Managers also talked to service users as and when the opportunity had occurred.
- There was concern that little or no feedback had been received for Bewdley, Broadway, Bromsgrove, Droitwich, Evesham, Tenbury or Upton Libraries in comparison with some of the other libraries. In response, the Panel were advised that there was confidence that if there had been any real feeling about the suggested changes, Library Managers would have been made aware,
- It was confirmed that all local Councillors and stakeholders had been asked for their feedback.
- A suggestion was made that all District, Town and Parish councils should be notified of the final changes to opening hours.
- Up to date signage for libraries also needed

addressing.

The Panel was satisfied with the information provided and the changes proposed to the reduction in library opening hours.

The meeting ended at 2.25 pm

Chairman