



HULL LIBRARIES

**BUILDING STRONG
KNOWLEDGEABLE COMMUNITIES**
A strategy for libraries in Hull 2020 - 2030

**A STRATEGY FOR
LIBRARIES IN HULL
2020 - 2030**

The main object of a free library is not only satisfying a thirst for knowledge, but to create a thirst where it is now absent.

- Sir James Reckitt



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WELCOME



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The Council recognises the important role our public libraries have in communities and the contribution they make to improving outcomes for local people. Often they are the only place in an area where communities can come together, find things out, learn new things or simply enjoy themselves, as such we want to see them develop and be a focus for place-making across the city.

However, it is important to us that people in communities are involved in the delivery of the strategy by working with the Library Service to develop library provision in their area. This strategy aims to develop and improve the library services we offer and to ensure they remain relevant to local people.

Hull Culture and Leisure are proud of the work our public library service does across the City. Their work is wide-ranging and caters for residents of all ages and backgrounds, encouraging and supporting them in many aspects of their lives. The range of services and activities offered goes far beyond the common perception of libraries as providers of books and we want all residents to benefit from them.

This strategy provides a framework within which we can continue to develop our public library services over the next 10 years so that they can continue to encourage and support residents, and improve outcomes for the city.

1

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Hull's library service has a rich and strong history, having served the people of Hull since 1889, when Sir James Reckitt funded and opened the first free public library in Hull to demonstrate to the city's leaders the benefits and popularity such a facility would have.

Such was James Reckitt's belief in the personal, social and economic value of public libraries he established a Trust fund, which has played a key financial contribution in assisting Hull's library service to evolve and prosper, developing many innovative facilities and services and making some positive changes to what already existed.

Hull's library service is open to anyone who lives, works, studies, or is visiting Hull. Its primary purpose is to help people and communities to achieve their potential, by inspiring and stimulating curiosity, creativity, empathy and learning. This is achieved in many different ways including:

- A network of library buildings across the city,
- Visiting people's homes both physically and virtually when they are unable to get out
- Producing big library led events such as The Big Malarkey Festival, Hull Children's Book Awards and Harry Potter Night
- Working with local and national partners to offer opportunities locally such as the Business and Intellectual Property Centre, Back To Ours, BBC Contains Strong Language, Humber Mouth Literature Festival and many more as opportunities arise
- Delivering library services within HMP Hull, including programmes to reduce reoffending and to support the families of prisoners
- Providing support, resources and training to Hull Schools, to set up and manage their own in-house libraries
- Setting up 'pop-up' library activities at other events such as BizWeek, Play Day, Freedom Festival and in other locations such as health centres, community centres, children's centres, parks and leisure centres

- Offering services and resources online via our website and social media wherever possible, including e-books, e-magazines, online databases and encyclopaedias, searching the library catalogue, renewing loans, reserving items and information about events
- Providing free and low cost arts and cultural activity that stimulates and encourages a love of reading and learning, provides a sense of connection and reduces social isolation



2 THE NATIONAL PICTURE

Hull’s libraries are funded through local government and services are determined at a local level, within the statutory framework of the 1964 Public Libraries Act. There are three national organisations which have an impact on local library services: the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS), Arts Council England and Libraries Connected.

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (and other ministers on their behalf) has a duty under the 1964 Public Libraries Act to:

- Superintend and promote the improvement of the public library service provided by councils in England.
- Secure the proper discharge by councils of their functions as library authorities.

Libraries Connected is an organisation which represents and advocates for the sector at a national level. Its aims are to:

- Communicate the value of libraries
- Connect partners to local libraries by brokering national relationships with a wide range of organisations and individuals,
- Improve library services by developing and sharing best practice,
- Provide training for library staff and facilitate a network of library leaders in the UK,
- Drive innovation and new thinking on the role of libraries in a modern society.

Hull is represented within this organisation by the Library Services Director, who plays an active role at a regional and national level.

One of the key work strands of Libraries Connected is the Universal Offers. These aim to support members to deliver their core library offer and provide a framework within which to develop new services.

All services offered by Hull Libraries fall within one or more of these Universal Offers, which are:

- Reading
- Digital and information
- Culture and Creativity
- Health and Well-being

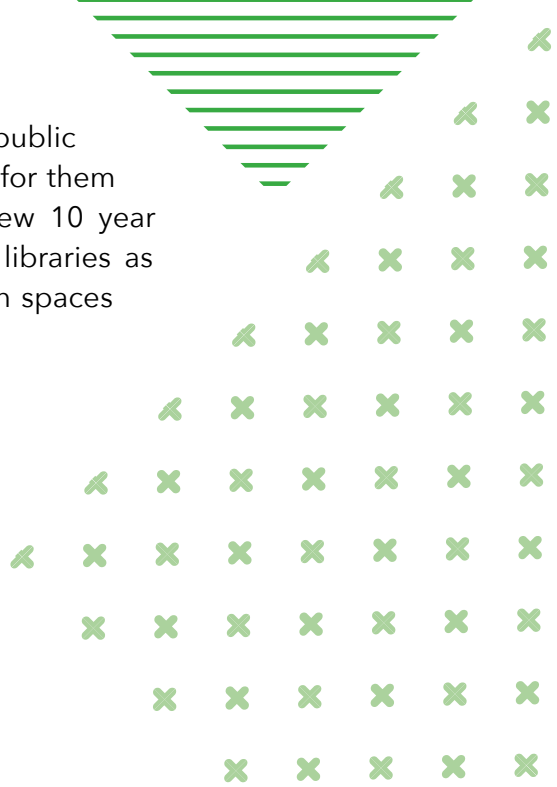
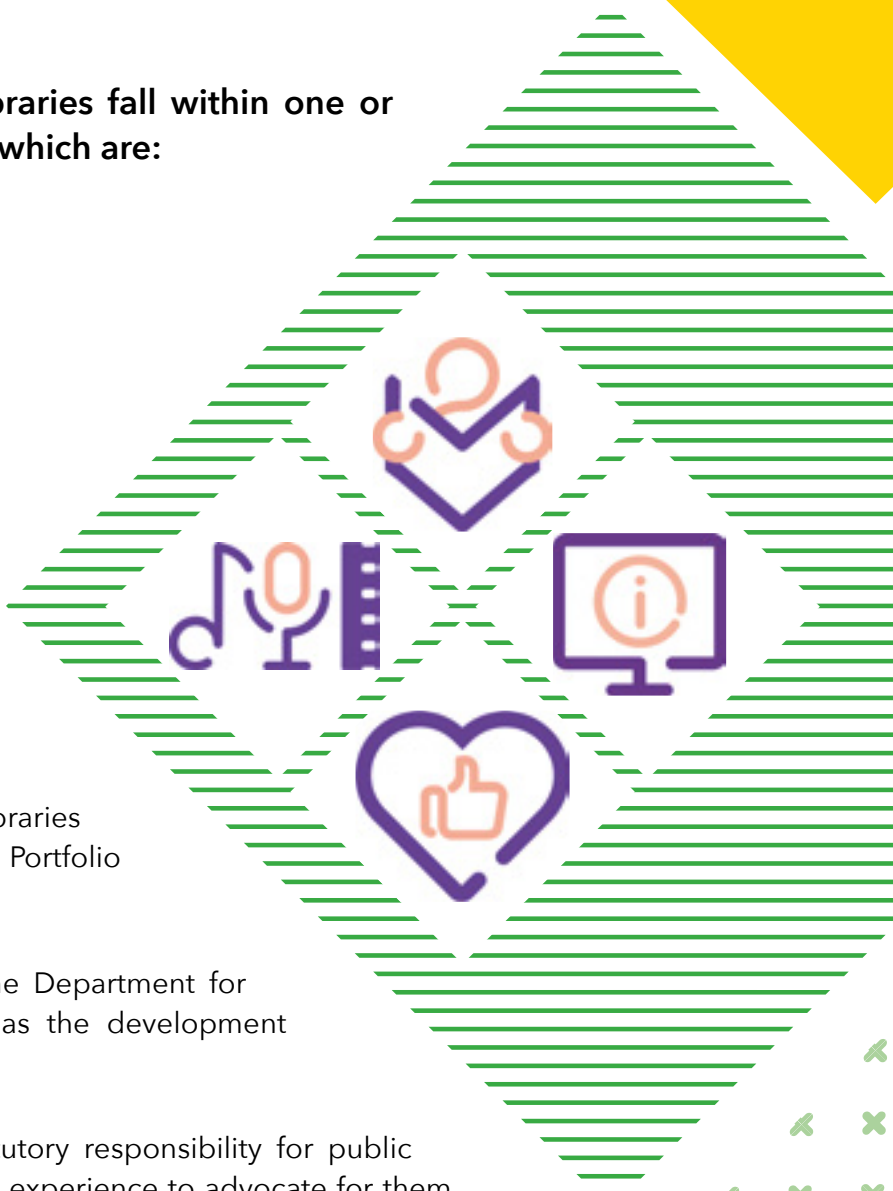
The Universal Offers are used as a framework for developing and delivering library services in Hull, as will be evident later in the strategy.

Arts Council England (ACE) funds Libraries Connected, as one of its National Portfolio organisations.

ACE also has a role, agreed with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), as the development agency for public libraries.

Although ACE does not have a statutory responsibility for public libraries, they use their resources and experience to advocate for them and to support and encourage their development. ACE's new 10 year strategy 'Let's Create' is rooted in community and identifies libraries as anchors at the heart of the community they serve and as open spaces that belong to those communities.

All three of these organisations were consulted during the development of the strategy.



3 LOCAL ISSUES

Hull is a proud city that has seen its fortune change since it was announced in 2013 that it would be UK City of Culture in 2017. The city has grasped the opportunities presented to it and is seeing significant investment. In 2019 Hull experienced its highest level of employment on record and visitors continue to seek out the unique culture and history of the city. However Hull still faces some big challenges in terms of life expectancy, educational attainment and levels of deprivation.

Improvement in educational attainment at all levels is happening but not as rapidly as we would like. There are too many children who are not ready for school, meaning they are likely to struggle to keep up with their peers and to reach their potential. It is also likely that

they will not reach their expected reading level by the time they reach primary school and some will leave unable to read. We want to change this for the children of Hull and the Library Service is critical to helping to achieve this.

Visiting the library has a positive effect on health and well-being for people of all ages and backgrounds.

Hull, like many places, has an ageing population which brings challenges to health and social care services. A positive effect on health and well-being is visiting the library and engaging in the high quality, low cost opportunities offered and plays a huge role in tackling and preventing social isolation and inequality - for people of all ages and backgrounds.

A legacy of Hull's year as UK City of Culture is a renewed sense of pride in the city and local communities. There is a huge desire to increase the momentum with which the prospects of the city are improving, the library service is an important part of this journey.



4 CURRENT SERVICE DELIVERY

Hull Library Service consists of a large Central Library, providing a range of specialist facilities and support for the whole city and 11 branch libraries, which are spread across the city within local communities. In addition it runs a Schools' Library Service, Home Library Service, Language and Literacy outreach, a library at HMP Hull and an extensive engagement and events programme, which all adds up to a comprehensive and engaging offer for Hull residents.

The use of libraries in Hull varies across the city - some libraries are well used and give good value for money, whilst others show an ongoing decline in use and membership, the latter are generally in areas of high deprivation and in areas where populations have changed or moved away. Residents across the city highlighted two distinct barriers to using Hull's Libraries: restrictive opening hours, and the charging of fines for the late return of materials borrowed. Library opening hours are constantly cited as a barrier to people using the library, particularly for those who work full-time or are in full-time education. Opening hours are inconsistent across the city and furthermore no library in Hull is open on a Sunday, which is often a day when people want to access services for leisure or cultural activities.

Hull Libraries offer some innovative services that lead the way across the country, including the Makerspace, Business Lounge, The Big Malarkey Festival and the Music Library with its digital resources for creating music and an extensive collection of printed music. Hull also has a thriving Schools' Library Service, when many other parts of the country are closing this service.

The Central Library houses large collections of older material in the stacks, much of it rare and unique; however, a significant proportion is not on the digital catalogue and is therefore inaccessible to the public and staff working with customers in community libraries.

There has been substantial investment in developing collections of e-books, e-magazines and online information sources, many of which are under used. Consultation with users highlights a lack of awareness that these resources are on offer.

189,647



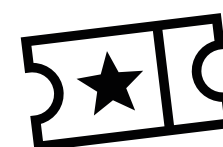
LIBRARY MEMBERS

889,037



LIBRARY VISITORS

2,442



EVENTS PRODUCED

49,642



EVENTS ATTENDED

2018-2019

5 WHAT RESIDENTS SAY

A broad consultation exercise was conducted in the development of this strategy. Both library users and non-users were interviewed to find their views on the current service and what they might like for the future. Staff currently working in libraries were also consulted, as it was felt these were the people who really understood local communities. A further consultation exercise was conducted on the draft strategy.

We know that our customers are diverse and from all ages, backgrounds and abilities. Each have their own preferences for how and when to access services and the range of services they use, we will therefore over the next ten years, strive to transform the public library offer, by listening to what customers want to improve services, access and availability and to meet the needs of all local people.

The main findings from the consultations, were lack of knowledge of the range of services offered, and location and opening hours of some of the current provision.



I've had more help and useful information from the BIPC in 3 days than I've had elsewhere in 3 years! They've helped me to find my way through everything to patent my product, utterly professional and trustworthy! Brilliant!

Mr B, Hull Central Library

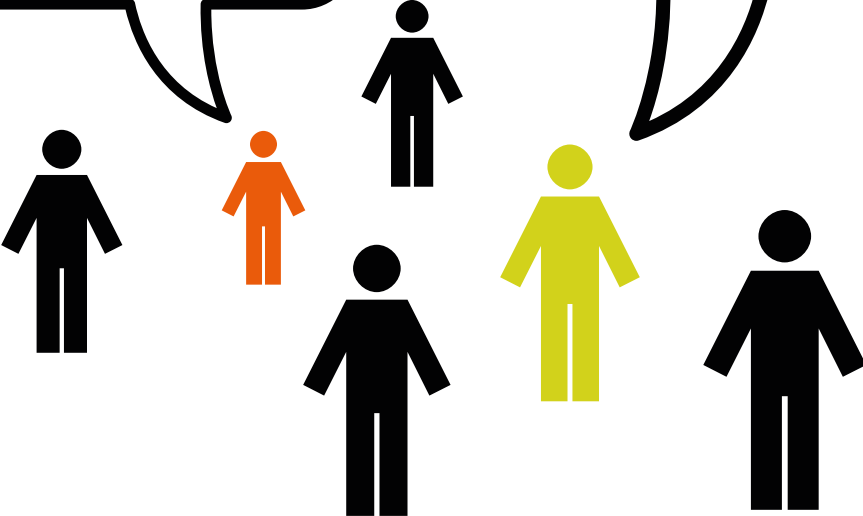


It's amazing, it makes my brain bubble!

Yr 8 pupil, The Big Malarkey Festival

You've no idea how much I love coming here, the staff are brilliant, they're always so helpful. I don't get much company so it makes my day.

Mr S, Greenwood Avenue Library



6

OUR VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

OUR VISION

Hull's libraries are highly valued contributors to the development of strong, knowledgeable inclusive communities. Bringing together the physical and digital worlds, they are the welcoming heart of our communities, providing a platform for learning, participation, creativity, innovation and well-being.

OUR MISSION

Hull's libraries provide programmes and services to help people and communities to achieve their potential, by inspiring and stimulating curiosity, creativity, empathy and learning.

OUR VALUES

Hull's libraries are underpinned by the following values:

- Equality of access - anyone regardless of race, age, gender, socio-economic background or ability is welcome.
- Safe, neutral spaces - our physical and virtual spaces and collections are free from bias.
- Freedom of expression - a diversity of points of view is represented in our collections.
- Right to know - learning and access to ideas and knowledge is a universal right.
- Trust and confidentiality - in the quality of the information, services and staff.



7

ACHIEVING THE VISION

Our vision for Hull’s libraries in 2030 illustrates the central role they have in helping the City to achieve its aim of being a place of community and opportunity for all. ^[1]

Libraries are uniquely placed in that they provide the connection between people, place, knowledge and technology. No other community or commercial place brings these things together for community and society’s benefit, or provides such a powerful platform for individual and community learning, participation, creativity, innovation and well-being.

To achieve our vision we need to focus our work and resources. Our strategic priorities will therefore be:

- + Transforming public perception of and engagement with our libraries,
- + Creating connected community spaces - Libraries as physical and virtual spaces
- + Transforming the Library Offer to stimulate and encourage a love of reading and learning
- + Collaborating with people, communities and partners
- + Creating a sustainable future

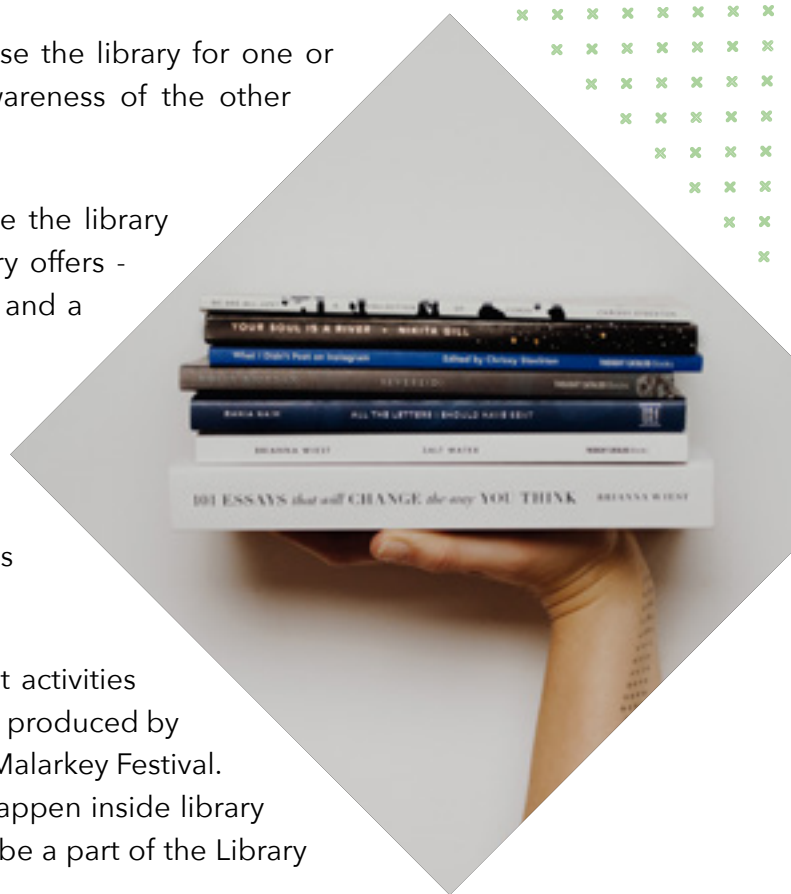
We have prepared a strategy that provides a framework for development, one that is about the art of the possible, about a library service which will continue to innovate in their quest to support people and communities, to achieve their potential.

7.1 TRANSFORM PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF AND ENGAGEMENT WITH OUR LIBRARIES

The need to transform people's understanding and perception of libraries in Hull was made clear, during the consultation. The research clearly showed few people were aware of the range of opportunities and resources available from the library. However the majority of people valued their library and felt strongly that there should be one in their neighbourhood.

Public consultation highlighted the following challenges:

- Most regular library customers use the library for one or two distinct functions and had little awareness of the other opportunities their library offers.
- People who do not, or rarely, use the library had an outdated view of what the library offers - they invariably referred to lots of books and a few computers.
- There was a general awareness by library users of many of the activities and events delivered, by or on behalf of the Library Service, but a lack of awareness in how to engage
- There was no real awareness that activities delivered outside of library buildings was produced by the Library Service, for example The Big Malarkey Festival. Indeed there were some activities that happen inside library buildings that people did not believe to be a part of the Library Service, such as the Makerspace.



In recent years the Library Service has made significant improvements to the quality of the promotional materials it produces and in its use of social media, particularly Twitter. However, the scale of unawareness requires a marketing and communications campaign of a kind never before undertaken by a UK library service.

We will raise awareness of the modern public library offer and encourage more people to engage in it. We have explored withdrawing use of the word 'library' as the narrative and images generally portrayed are old fashioned and outdated.

However, when tested with the public and stakeholders there was a distinct view that the word 'library' is understood across the world as a welcoming place of connection and knowledge. It has brand recognition that many organisations spend millions to secure; it would be foolish to lose not only recognition of the terminology but the trust that is placed in the library brand.

Whilst we need to make some fundamental changes to the Library Service and its offer, we will not wait for all to be in place before embarking on this element of the strategy. There is a great deal of excellent work being done by the libraries in Hull, some of which is leading the way for libraries nationally. It is imperative we ensure that local communities are aware of these opportunities.

OUR GOALS

- + To seek and secure the resources to engage with an agency, or agencies, to form a long-term collaboration that can help us to achieve our ambitions.
- + To design a bold and ambitious marketing and communications strategy and to have an action plan that focuses on modernising perceptions and increasing engagement.
- + Incorporate staff development into the strategy as staff are vital for the success of a marketing strategy.
- + Place the customer at the centre of everything we do.



7.2. CREATE CONNECTED COMMUNITY SPACES

Our vision of bringing together the physical and digital worlds to provide a platform for learning, participation, creativity, innovation and well-being has been developed through our consultation.

Library users, non-library users, politicians, council officers, partners, and other stakeholders made clear that there is a distinct desire to retain libraries as physical spaces. The reasons given for this were many, including:

- There are few or no other community facilities in many areas of the city.
- People value the range of services and opportunities available in libraries.
- People want somewhere they can interact with others that is independent and impartial.
- There is an increasing need from people for 'third space' – space outside of the home (1st) and work (2nd) for study, reading, socialising and having fun.



Why did people believe a library is the solution? The answer for most, was simple: it is the only impartial communal space one can visit without having to spend money or justify their visit; people can learn new skills, read, meet others, share skills and knowledge or take part in an activity; give their time to help others; and for many individuals the library provides social interaction they would not otherwise get. It is a venue of choice that fulfils many different needs.

Despite this strongly voiced desire for physical library spaces our consultation also made clear that people want, and expect, to be able to access their library where and when they need it, either in their local community or online. The likes of Google and Amazon have raised people's expectation of the online experience, as well as creating a sense of being overwhelmed by the scale and validity of what is available. People of all ages expressed a desire for a virtual space, that operates under the same values as a physical library and one that offers the same opportunities for interaction and content creation.



The value placed on both physical and digital libraries, and their ability to enable people and communities to achieve their potential, is such that we will ensure people in Hull have improved access to library spaces and services in their communities. This will include testing new ways of taking libraries to people, both physically and virtually.

Sometimes dealing with issues and investment in facilities will mean a 'library' building is not the answer; it might be that we consider a different type of library provision, that is more appropriate, but we will make these decisions by working with the community.

Our commitment to maintaining libraries in the community, puts them at the heart of Hull's place-making agenda. They provide a platform on which we can achieve the City's ambition of being 'a place of community and opportunity for all' and contribute to improving the City's outcomes for all Hull residents to be:

- able to participate in and benefit from a vibrant economy,
- part of resilient and sustainable communities,
- safe and feel safe,
- able to fulfil their potential through skills and learning,
- healthy and well.

The principles within which libraries operate, combined with the range of facilities, activities, skilled support and investment in them as places, will enable us all to deliver the City's ambitions at a quicker pace.

The current network of libraries is significant, particularly for the size and population density of the city. However, there are two critical issues that impact on usage and engagement that we must deal with:

- almost all of the buildings are in a poor state
- all have limited opening hours; there is very little time when the working population and school children can use a library in Hull

7.2.1 COMMUNITY LIBRARIES

Where there has been investment in community libraries we have seen significant improvements, not only in the take-up of library provision but of community engagement in that local area. The Western Library is a good example of this.

Shared investment by the Council, Townscape Heritage Initiative and the James Reckitt Library Trust transformed the building and was a catalyst for the Library Service, the community and new partners to co-create the space and the activities that happen within it. The key ingredients to its success have been community involvement and partnerships. We want other communities to benefit in this way.

Many of our other libraries are in poor condition, internally and externally and some are simply in the wrong place. They do not draw people in to experience the wealth of activity and opportunity that can be found there, in fact some are unnoticeable and some are not providing for the needs of their specific community.

Community libraries however still attract a combined footfall of over 246,000 visits per year but we want this to be significantly higher - access to opportunities to help achieve one's potential is critical to improving the City's outcomes.

We should be clear that we will not invest in our buildings simply because they are there. We will consider and may need to rethink completely, how we provide the library offer in each community.

OUR GOALS

We will:

- + In partnership with communities specify three or four Community Hub Libraries that will support and lead library developments within their geographical areas of the city.
- + Create an investment programme that will see community library provision transformed to improve access and encourage participation to help deliver the City's ambitions. This will include a plan to maintain the buildings and their furniture and fittings in the future.
- + Co-create this transformation with communities. Establishing community structures to support community participation in this programme. Establishing staff teams and a skills development programme (for staff and

the community) to deliver this vision.

+ Make the best use of community assets, acknowledging when they are not fit for purpose and take action quickly to find solutions, including considering the location and community needs, before investing in buildings. Prioritising the work required to improve access in communities by identifying areas of high need and low take-up of existing provision.,

+ Collaborate with other organisations to realise shared outcomes and improve the offer to residents.

+ We will not be able to achieve this overnight and therefore need to prioritise our approach. We will do this by creating a realistic and aspirational 'Community Library Plan' that expresses each community's priorities.

7.2.2 THE CENTRAL LIBRARY

Hull's Central Library has historically been considered a sub-regional centre of excellence, which stems from its previous position within Humberside County Council. It offers a vast range of resources, expertise, events and space.

It is well used with almost 590,000 visits each year, an average of 11,300 each week over 41 hours. Whilst the main thrust of this strategy is around community libraries and the importance of strengthening our library network across the city, we also need to ensure sufficient care is taken to provide excellent 21st century library facilities in the city centre, where there is always an expectation for a centre of excellence.



OUR GOALS

We will:

- + Formulate a plan for the presence of 21st century public library facilities in the city centre.
- + Work with partners, such as the James Reckitt Library Trust to test new models of delivery for all of our library provision, not only the city centre presence.
- + Address the issue of restricted opening hours possibly using technology to extend access.

7.2.3 . . . VIRTUAL LIBRARY SPACE

Physical and digital spaces will frequently be used simultaneously by many people, some however will only ever use one or the other. The consultation we have undertaken was clear, that people have high expectations of digital access, technology opens endless possibilities.

It is difficult to imagine where technology might take libraries in 10 years' time, especially as we are entering a world where people and machines will work in harmony and the 'Internet of things' is developing rapidly. We will take advantage of developing technologies, to create digital and physical spaces, that intertwine to form a platform for utilisation by people and communities for whatever their purpose.

We will continue to invest in digital technology and infrastructure for the Library Service and will utilise the skills and knowledge of its staff, to explore new ways of using technology, data and the internet.

Partnerships will be important to achieve our vision for the digital future of libraries. We will be active in the local digital community, Hull has some of the most progressive and innovative tech companies in the UK, we will seek their help to find solutions to issues that hamper digital access, to help us to create world leading digital access.



The Library Service will focus on developing and curating their digital spaces, to improve access and stimulate the creation of new content and opportunities. This will include continually improving our websites to meet people’s expectations, by making them more interactive and to enable people to tailor what they see and to curate their virtual library.

We will collaborate with other library services, regionally and nationally, on any elements of the libraries’ digital offer which can offer significant economies of scale or that contribute to creating a single digital presence for libraries.

OUR GOALS

We will:

- + continue to invest in digital services and technology to ensure equality of access for everyone.
- + be active in the local digital community and actively seek partnerships with local tech companies.
- + create virtual spaces that people value and can trust to provide access to validated sources, and are free from bias and commerciality.

7.3 TRANSFORMING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OFFER

The following section will set out examples for a much bolder and more transformative vision for libraries in Hull than has previously been presented and sets out our commitment and ambition for the future of library services, new and old.

7.3.1 DIGITAL, INFORMATION AND LEARNING

DIGITAL

“The very existence of libraries affords the best evidence that we may yet have hope for the future of man”

- T.S. Eliot

Technology has transformed libraries of all types. Search functionality is now hugely powerful and access to knowledge is available at the touch of a button or by voice command. The work of the librarian has been revolutionised and welcomed by librarians in their quest to connect people and communities with knowledge and ideas.

A key focus for the Library Service will be to support residents who need help to use new technologies by providing opportunities for skills development, confidence building, motivation to utilise technology and be connected, and to provide access for those who find the cost of equipment and connectivity prohibitive.

However, the Library Service will also focus on supporting the digitally and technologically adept by providing opportunities for debating, networking, co-production and innovation.



OUR GOALS

We will:

- + Increase the pace with which we build our collections of e-resources and content, such as virtual library experiences.
- + Provide programmes and support to help bridge the digital divide.
- + Offer opportunities for people to innovate, debate, network and co-produce digital and technological solutions.
- + Facilitate community access and use of public sector Big Data encouraging the creation of digital solutions to community problems.
- + Use technology to engage older people. The next wave of older people will be more digitally savvy and therefore IT will help them access services from home, when physically visiting a library is no longer possible. The new functionality described above will create personalised virtual space, that allows them to interact with library staff and online activity groups, continue reading even with eyesight difficulties and access information from an armchair at home. Use of machine learning technology could even identify when the individual might be experiencing difficulties and alert appropriate help.



+ Create functionality and content that will allow not just the elderly but all customers to personalise their online library experience.

+ Work with partners to ensure equipment is available for those who cannot afford their own.

+ Investigate uses of augmented reality devices e.g. when a reader selects a magazine they will have instant access to back copies, or if reading a print book, the ability to select a link, that then leads by touch to other related content or web search, keeping information up to date and relevant.

+ Adding augmented technology to enhance the library experience and content for example, in children's story times or to enhance local history materials. Use of such technologies enables libraries to add an extra layer of engagement and quality to services they already deliver.

+ We intend to utilise technology to its fullest extent. Foreseeable ideas are described above but there will be other opportunities that arise, that have not yet been conceived and that we will take advantage of if it helps us to deliver our mission.

+ We will ensure library staff and volunteers have the skills and understanding to utilise the technology; this will be a key focus for our workforce development.

INFORMATION AND LEARNING

"Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation"

- Walter Cronkite

Our consultation indicates that libraries continue to be a trusted information source, a place people turn to when they are unable to find answers elsewhere.

One of the very real issues society faces is the increasing volume of fake news and inaccurate

information being created and pushed out through social media and over the internet, using common reference points such as Wikipedia. It is our ambition that people in Hull will be both equipped to navigate the plethora of information available to them and are able to identify legitimate information sources.

We will do this by improving our curation of information and by ensuring residents know that the information and learning opportunities available to them through the library platform have been verified. We will also guide people on what to look for to identify validated information.

Adult learning provision has changed significantly as Government funding has been directed at employment skills. However, our consultation tells us that people still want access to informal and first steps learning. We will continue to develop our existing programme, ensuring it is relevant and responds to community need.

We will also curate access to the enormous range of online learning that is available, so that residents can be confident that an online course has been validated. Currently we only offer online learning programmes at entry level and level 2 - we will extend this to include higher levels of learning.

Business and Intellectual Property

Hull’s Library Service is one of only 13 Business and Intellectual Property Centres (BIPCs) in the UK and one of 15 UK Patent Libraries providing access to unique support for local businesses that isn’t available from other business support services. It utilises the skills of information professionals and information sources that are only available behind expensive paywalls, making them available to businesses to help them to build strong, resilient organisations that are able to commercialise their Intellectual Property. We will continue to invest in this area of work.

Further support to start-ups and small and medium sized businesses will be offered through Business Lounge spaces, providing a state-of-the-art environment with specialist advice, workshops and networking events, short term desk hire, meeting rooms, and exceptional Wi-Fi and broadband capability.

We will ensure these services and facilities continue to evolve to ensure they meet the needs of businesses in Hull. We will continue to work with the UK BIPC and Patent Library networks to improve local access to skilled staff, information sources and online databases, expert clinics, networking events and workshops.



Makerspaces

All of our libraries are makerspaces of varying degrees - spaces where people can create, collaborate, share ideas and be resourceful. We will continue to evolve this part of our offer ensuring that we continue to respond to community need and involve communities in how they develop. In addition to providing space for making and collaborating we will extend the range of resources we loan to people to include tools, baking equipment and other items where there is a need.

Innovation

We will extend the work of the BIPC and Makerspace to provide opportunities and support for individuals and businesses that are seeking to invent and create new products and services. This work will connect people to research organisations and larger corporations where appropriate. In addition, we will encourage and support small and medium enterprises to commercialise their Intellectual Property and to protect their rights.

OUR GOALS

We will:

- + Ensure there are opportunities for people of all ages to explore and satisfy their curiosity and develop activities that stimulate curiosity.
- + Improve our curation of information and ensure residents know of the trusted resources available to them through the library platform.
- + Advocate for information literacy and research skills to be taught in schools to all children and continue to offer this training to schools and colleges through the Schools' Library Service and in libraries to residents.
- + Offer learning programmes that provide opportunities for people to learn new skills, develop their interests or try something new. We will work with other learning providers, to ensure people's needs are met and that there is a co-ordinated offer across the city.



7.3.2 READING

“The more that you read, the more things that you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you will go”
- Dr Seuss

Reading will continue to be a key priority for the Library Service over the course of this strategy - that is reading in all its forms and formats. Literate, curious and creative citizens are critical to the future success of the city - reading is a basic foundation of all learning.

We have been clear throughout this document that libraries are not only about books. Books are simply one of the many tools that libraries offer to help people to fulfil their potential. Equally books are not the only tool used for reading.

Reading for pleasure is the single most important thing a child can do that will have a positive impact on their future, even more so than socio-economic background.⁽⁵⁾

The same applies to adults - it is never too late.

Our reading offer will cater for everyone, including those with low literacy levels, to support a health or learning need and for those people who simply enjoy reading.

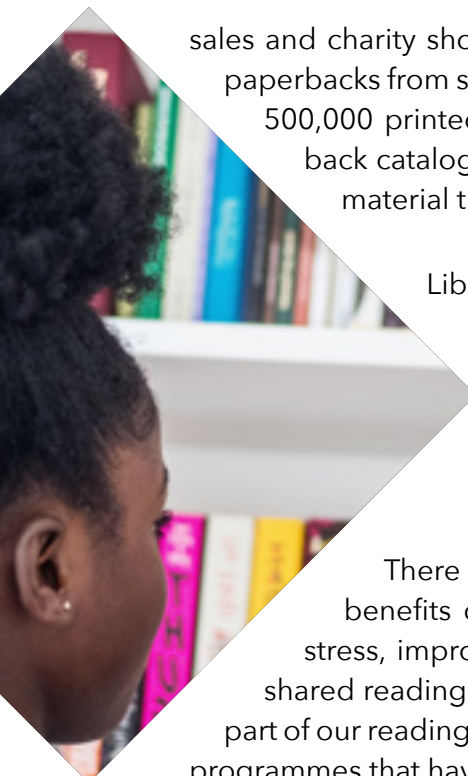
Using the library has significant environmental benefits too; they are free and green - books are borrowed and returned and then used by someone else. You can try different things from your library and not worry if you do not like it, or feel you have wasted your money. The choice of reading materials is far greater than that of a bookshop and includes out of print treasures, as well as popular new titles. Our smallest libraries are connected to an international network of libraries, giving access to almost any published materials.

Through both community and Schools' Library services we will transform our reading offer, to win back those lost users who have struggled to access libraries since the reductions in opening hours, encourage a new generation of readers and make a significant contribution to improving literacy levels in the city.

We believe being read to and being able to read, gives every child the best start in life and will continue to grow and develop our offer, to encourage parents to read with their babies from birth and to encourage all children to love reading and be curious.

Our consultation exercise has shown that there are still a significant number of voracious readers out there, who do not use libraries. They buy books from sources such as car boot





sales and charity shops, people swap reading material with friends, or they buy reduced paperbacks from supermarkets; we need to let them know that Hull Libraries have almost 500,000 printed items that are available for loan, from the latest best seller to rare back catalogue and out of print titles, as well as an increasing catalogue of digital material that is growing daily.

Libraries give the impression that they fail to evolve and modernise, largely because what people see is large volumes of books in serried rows, usually with little signage and little to entice people to explore the collections. It takes particularly avid readers to find things they want to borrow. Our digital reading offer is much the same, albeit some of the issues are a result of licensing and provider restrictions.

There is a huge amount of research evidence on the health and well-being benefits of reading, for example it helps to improve communication, reduce stress, improve memory and helps people to feel better about themselves. Our shared reading programmes are highly valued by communities and are an important part of our reading offer. We will continue to develop these and other imaginative reading programmes that have a positive impact.

We will expand, or develop and trial, ideas that have been developed in conversation with local communities. Using UX Design methodology and creative minds to create physical and virtual library experiences, from book spas, click and collect points, interactive bookshelves to an Imaginarium – a new kind of library, created with and for children, where knowledge will be curated for exploration, experimentation and creation in an environment that will shift perceptions of what a ‘library’ is and should be – a centre of excellence for children’s reading, learning and creativity.

OUR GOALS

We will:

- + Create imaginative events and programmes that encourage children and young people to enjoy reading for pleasure.
- + Remove barriers to borrowing by removing fines for the late return of items and giving people access when and where they want it.
- + Transform the way our libraries present the materials people can borrow by creating library spaces, physical and online, that are flexible and have the ability to create reading experiences that will make collections more visible and appealing.

- + Offer programmes of events for people who love reading and literature.
- + Focus on reading from an early age and encourage parents to read with and to their babies and children.
- + Make book and e-book borrowing simple and easy.

7.3.3 . . . CULTURE AND CREATIVITY

"Libraries store the energy that fuels the imagination. They open up windows to the world and inspire us to explore and achieve, and contribute to improving our quality of life. Libraries change lives for the better."

- Sidney Sheldon


Libraries are centres of cultural experiences. Importantly, they are places in communities where people can access free, or low cost, but high quality cultural events and activities.

Libraries are cultural hubs within communities, as well as gateways to wider cultural activities locally. In and through libraries, people identify with, experience, participate in, create, as well as lead culture, at a range of different levels; from excellent and inspirational, international, national and regional arts and culture, to brilliant local and community arts and projects inspired by people's place, culture and heritage.

Our libraries encourage people to explore their own culture and that of others, fostering community harmony and understanding. They encourage self-expression and creative enrichment. All this happens through diverse means, and a range of activities such as:

- *Cultural space* for creativity such as computer labs, makerspaces, study areas, exhibition space, and hiring out space for groups and artists



- 
- *Cultural resources* including free books, multimedia collections, newspapers and supplements, history and ancestry, access to computers and free Wi Fi, information and signposting to culture and cultural activities, music lending services (scores and orchestral sets), and business support for local creative businesses.
 - *Cultural activities* including parent and toddler sessions, group reading, music, arts, crafts, creative writing, performances and photography.
 - *Cultural programmes and events* consisting of book talks and workshops, artistic exhibitions, film-screenings, dance, plays and drama, and, in some libraries, regular theatre and concert seasons.

Hull Library Service has developed a strong reputation for the work it does in this area both as a producer of activity and as a partner or host. We will continue to develop this work that will necessarily evolve over the course of this strategy. We will offer activities that include performance, exhibitions, workshops and other opportunities that have yet to be created.

Supporting and encouraging writing and writers is also important to our work, and for the city. We will develop this work further by providing facilities, support, advice, opportunities for sharing and collaborating, and support and guidance on publishing.

An important part of our culture offer will be to contribute to the living memory of the city through Untold Hull, a substantial and eclectic collection of stories of the people of Hull that anyone can enjoy, contribute to, or use to create new work.

OUR GOALS

We will:

- + Continue to programme imaginative and inspiring activity that stimulates imaginations and curiosity.
- + Collaborate with cultural organisations to co-produce activity that enhances the offer of both organisations.
- + Submit funding applications to deliver and develop new and inspiring work for the benefit of local people.
- + Provide inspiring spaces and opportunities that people can simply enjoy.

7.3.4 HEALTH AND WELLBEING

"A library in the middle of a community is a cross between an emergency exit, a life raft and a festival. They are cathedrals of the mind, hospitals of the soul; theme parks of the imagination"

- Caitlin Moran

Hull's public libraries help local people be healthy and live well. They promote healthy living, help to reduce loneliness, support people to have good mental health and provide support to people to manage other health conditions.

We do this by providing welcoming staff and spaces; quality assured health information; free and low cost activities; effective signposting to appropriate help; targeted programmes for those caring for, or living with, long-term health conditions and access to community health initiatives. These all help to reduce health, social and economic inequalities.

Our staff know their communities, they are imaginative and form partnerships to offer social and support groups which engage and connect individuals and communities, to help combat loneliness and improve wellbeing for people of all ages.

OUR GOALS

We will:

- + Increase awareness of the role libraries play in improving health outcomes for the people of Hull and encourage health organisations to 'think libraries first' as community hubs for delivering services in localities.
- + Seek different ways to empower communities in managing their own health and well-being.
- + Continue to develop our programmes which support individuals and carers.
- + Explore the expansion of our lending offer to include health-related equipment.

8

CREATING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

8.1 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Librarians and library staff have a wide range of skills - including expertise in organising and disseminating knowledge, helping people access information, listening, interpreting and understanding what someone really needs, inspiring and supporting people in a love of reading, culture and learning and highly developed customer care skills - that enables them to help and support all people in society, from the youngest to the oldest.

Hull Library Service is committed to ensuring all staff have the skills and competencies they need to help deliver the future vision. Developing and investing in our workforce to ensure they have the skills to effectively support local people is crucial.

Over the next ten years, libraries will require a workforce that is people and community orientated, with an adaptable, creative approach to service delivery that is flexible, cost effective and able to change quickly, to meet the constant changes in society and technology.

High levels of customer care, the ability to identify customer need and connect them with the most appropriate means of satisfying that need, will continue to be of the utmost importance, although the tools to help deliver this will continue to evolve.

Our staff will be required to embrace and understand the power of technology, be digitally adept and have the ability to create spaces where the digital and physical coalesce. They will develop and create content, curate physical and digital collections and develop partnerships to do this.

Leadership will be a skill required at all levels of the organisation and therefore will be incorporated into the development programme for all staff roles. In addition we want to ensure there are opportunities for staff to develop their skills, experience and career progression. We will create structures that facilitate staff opportunity and personal development using apprenticeships, sector specific leadership training and coaching and mentoring.



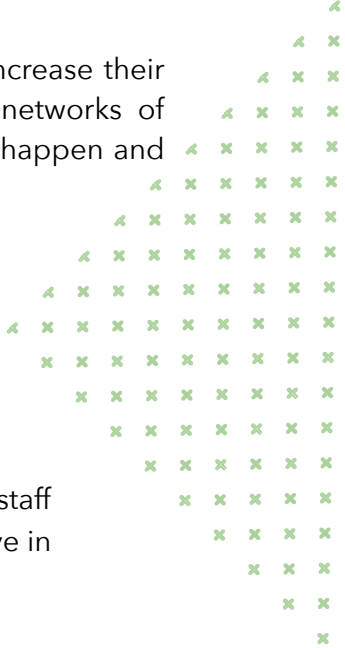
Skills to market the range of services available to customers and partners is essential to delivering this strategy and to achieving our ambitions for the city. Staff will be supported to shadow and mentor at all levels across the service.

Capacity for staff training will be addressed as a priority and more opportunities for staff development will be available.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers are an important part of our workforce. Volunteering will not replace paid staff roles; it will add value and capacity to our teams in roles that will be clearly specified.

Volunteers will be given opportunities to develop their employability skills, increase their confidence, try and experience new things, meet new people and build networks of support. Specific projects and opportunities offer a valuable place for this to happen and will contribute towards a healthier, happier more vibrant city.



OUR GOALS

We will

- + Provide development opportunities and support that encourage staff to embrace technology, understand how it can be used and be creative in utilising it to improve and enhance library spaces and services.
- + Create spaces where the digital and physical coalesce to provide customers with the best possible services.
- + Develop future library leaders by providing opportunities and encouraging personal development.
- + Ensure all staff have the skills and knowledge required for marketing and promoting the library
- + Support staff to shadow and mentor at all levels across the service.
- + Increase the capacity and opportunities for staff training

8.2 PARTNERSHIPS

New and existing partnerships are essential to the delivery of this Strategy and we are committed to continuing to collaborate with individuals and organisations to help us improve what we do and to improve outcomes for the people of Hull.

Each partnership will be developed for its own unique reasons and each will differ in terms of what each party contributes, some may develop and deliver new services that help us to achieve our vision, others may be commissioned to deliver a specific function or service, and some may work side by side with us.

We will also seek to bring partners together working as part of multi- agency teams, that will improve outcomes for residents.

We will be clear with partners and potential partners about what we want to achieve and how we can help them to achieve their ambitions.

We envisage our partnerships will be wide-ranging: examples of those we currently work with include other public library services (national and international), arts and culture organisations, community groups, businesses and education providers. We intend that these will continue and are open to opportunities to develop new partnerships.

OUR GOALS

We will:

- + Be clear on the benefits of a partnership for the Library Service and the partner or partners.
- + Have clearly defined responsibilities and accountability between the partners.
- + Ensure our staff teams are proactive in seeking partners and are skilled in collaborative working.



8.3 FINANCE

The Hull Culture and Leisure board and the Council have agreed they do not wish to see any further reductions in the Library Service budget and have ring-fenced it at its existing level. This is a very positive move and reflects the belief that public libraries in Hull have an important role to play in improving outcomes for the city's residents.

However, there is much more that could be done with additional investment, specifically, towards preventing the need for more costly health and council interventions further down the line, by extending the Library Service's work in school readiness, improving literacy, combating social isolation and loneliness, improving life and employability skills, providing non-clinical support for mental health conditions and much more.

The Hull Culture and Leisure board and the Library Service will advocate the potential for change the Library Service can achieve and will seek to persuade commissioners and funders of the return on investment that can be realised, by investing in Library Service programmes such as Reading Rooms, Reading Well and Under 5s language and literacy sessions.

In real-terms a commitment not to reduce the Library Service budget will mean a decrease due to pay increases and inflation. Income generation will therefore be a key priority.

We will continue to ensure key services remain free with a specific view to remove charges for the late return of materials, for all customers by 2022, as a statement of the value placed on reading and learning.

To help reduce the financial impact of this we are building a stronger understanding amongst library members of the 'sharing principles' of public libraries, principles which also contribute to sustainability and protecting the environment.

8.3.1 FUTURE APPROACH TO INCOME GENERATION

Seeking and securing new sources of income will be critical, to ensure we are able to provide Hull residents with the best possible public library services.

It is our ambition to secure strategic partnerships with health and social care services, by demonstrating, with research evidence, the impact of the programmes we are able to provide and which achieve the outcomes and benefits they are seeking.

Private sector partnerships will also play a critical role in the future of Hull's libraries. We will continue to develop those currently in place, some of which may change as the priorities and financial situation of those organisations alters. Through the Business and Intellectual

Property Service and Business Lounge we aim to build reciprocal partnerships with those small and medium enterprises we help and support. The nature of the partnerships we have, and will build, may vary but will focus on knowledge and skill sharing between staff and customers, using pro bono support and skills exchange. We will trade skills development, business support and employee benefit programmes, in return for financial contributions or skills support and development. We have a strong record as a good business partner with organisations such as KCOM, Santander, Page Consulting, Chapter 3, Yorkshire Accord Coaching & Mentoring Scheme, Federation of Small Businesses, Department of Industry and Trade, Barclays and others. We will continue to develop these and to build new partnerships where we can demonstrate mutual benefit for the people of Hull, the Library Service, the business partner and the local economy.

INCOME FROM NEW SERVICES

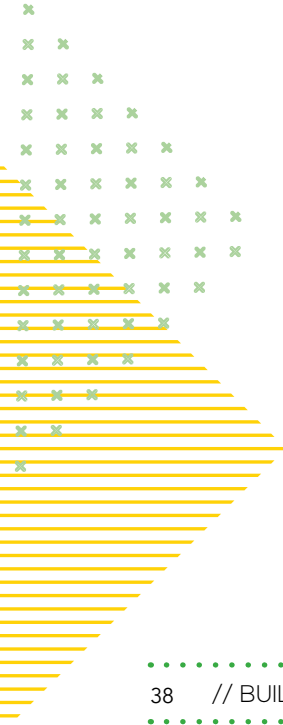
The Library Service will consider opportunities to generate income by taking on new work or projects that meet the following criteria:

- Sufficient income can be raised to increase capacity within the team
- A contribution is made to the overall cost of the Library Service
- New customers will be introduced to the Library Service
- There is a good fit with the ethics and principles of the Library Service

INCOME FROM SALES

Income from retail sales is increasing and we will continue to develop this area in line with the following criteria:

- Products will have a connection with the library, its collections or programme
- Merchandise will be unique to the library and not sold by another retail outlet locally, except books published by Kingston Press (our own publishing brand)
- Collections, programme and branding, unique to the Library Service, will be used to create new products
- They meet Hull Culture and Leisure’s pricing policy



INCOME FROM UTILISING SPACES

As we seek to improve the spaces we occupy, or by creating new spaces, we will seek partners who can work with us to enhance our offer to meet community need and help to reduce our costs. Sometimes we might offer our space on a commercial basis, if the opportunity fits our ethos.

SPONSORSHIP

We have secured sponsorship for various aspects of delivery and intend to increase this where it can help us to achieve our purpose. We will develop opportunities for sponsorship, that will be clear to customers, sponsors and other funders why we consider it to be beneficial.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

Applications for external funding will be essential to achieving the ambitions of the Library Service. However, applications will only be made for funding that enables the delivery of those ambitions, rather than designing projects because funding is available.

Developing and submitting funding applications is time-consuming and capacity needs to be developed to support this. The Library Service team have developed their skills in writing funding applications and it is important that staff working on new developments lead this work.

8.3.2 SECURING REVENUE FOR HIGH VALUE WORK THAT IS CURRENTLY SELF-FUNDED

THE BIG MALARKEY FESTIVAL



The Big Malarkey Festival is one of our successes developed during Hull's year as UK City of Culture. It is our ambition to establish the Big Malarkey as a regular event in the Hull calendar and that it becomes a world-leading family festival celebrating reading and stories.

It is currently funded by Arts Council England, the James Reckitt Library Trust with staffing and other practical support from Hull Culture and Leisure and Hull City Council. The Big Malarkey has quickly established itself to be one of the leading UK children's literature festivals and is currently funded to 2020. It is our intention to apply to become an Arts Council England, "National Portfolio Organisation" in 2021 giving a greater level of stability to the planning and delivery of the Festival.



SCHOOLS' LIBRARY SERVICE

The Schools' Library Service is a subscription based service to schools, almost 68% of primary and secondary schools in the city subscribe. It provides a significant return on investment for schools enabling them to provide children with access to high quality, up to date resources to support their reading and learning.

This facility has to remain relevant to teachers and to the needs of pupils. We are currently in the process of improving the offer to schools and will ensure the offer continues to evolve. It is our ambition to develop a digital presence for the Schools' Library Service that will be accessible for subscribing schools 24/7, including access for pupils outside of school, and one that can be seamlessly embedded into a school's virtual learning environment.

ENCORE MUSIC SERVICE (EMS)

Encore
music services

Encore Music Service is a partnership with North East Lincolnshire Library Service, managed and delivered by Hull Library Service. The service consists of a large and comprehensive collection of sets of vocal scores and orchestral music that is loaned for a fee to choirs, orchestras, schools, universities and others. Organisations in Hull and North East Lincolnshire can borrow them at a preferential rate. Organisations in other parts of the country are also able to borrow them in an effort to reduce the cost of the service to Hull and North East Lincolnshire. This service is well used but has potential to achieve a higher level of income. We will improve the systems, processes and marketing of this service, to ensure it covers its costs and can be maintained for the music communities of Hull and North East Lincolnshire.

8.4 CAPITAL INVESTMENT

LIBRARY MATERIALS

The Council has committed to continuing to fund the purchase of library resources with a capital budget of £400,000 per annum.

TECHNOLOGY

There is to be significant investment in new library systems and hardware as this strategy is published, including new hardware for all library members to utilise.

There is also a commitment to maintain and replace this equipment on a regular basis to avoid out of date hardware and software being in place.

The Library Service’s aspirations for its digital offer requires up to date equipment and fast access to broadband, that is updated and developed as necessary.

INVESTMENT IN BUILDINGS

Section 2 describes the ambition for public libraries in Hull to be the focus of place-making in our communities. Whatever shape or form this takes there is a commitment to provide capital investment to realise those ambitions. Where this has already been done, for example at the Western Library, there has been a huge increase in community engagement and involvement, volunteering and partnerships. It is our intention to seek to stimulate similar results in more communities, by investing in the library where this is appropriate. Sometimes this will mean investment in provision that is not a traditional library, but a more cost effective and engaging opportunity for the community.

OUR GOALS

We will:

- + Develop an evaluation tool that provides the necessary evidence required to advocate the benefits and impact the public library service provides.
- + Remove the charges for the late return of materials in 2022.
- + Develop commercial opportunities that fit with the ethos of the public library service and provide revenue that supports its development.
- + Seek longer term financial support for The Big Malarkey Festival.
- + Create a capital programme that supports the delivery and development of public library services.



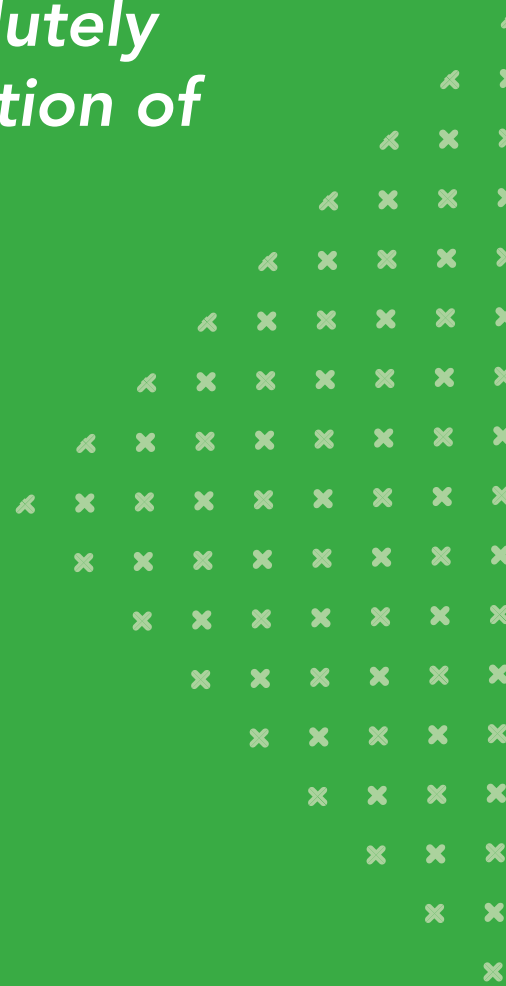
REFERENCES

A great deal of research and consultation has been undertaken in the development of this strategy, below are some of the key documents that have been used.

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*The only thing you absolutely
have to know is the location of
the library.*

- Albert Einstein



HULL LIBRARIES

...everything, and the books...



Hull
City Council

Working in partnership

www.hcandl.co.uk/libraries