

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CARE AND INDEPENDENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 July 2009

New Look, No Shush!
Library and Information Service Strategy 2008-2023

Report of the Corporate Director – Adult and Community Services

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The aim of this briefing is to introduce the final version of the Library Strategy to Members of the Committee and to ask Members to consider how libraries can assist the Committee in achieving its aims.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The draft Strategy was consulted on widely. Members will remember that we brought the draft Strategy to this Committee as part of our consultation. We also took it to the area committees, several strategic/thematic partnerships, learning disability partnership boards, and various other interest groups. The draft Strategy was available to the general public on the website and in libraries and emailed to corporate colleagues, schools, parish councils, district councillors and circulated to voluntary and community groups via North Yorkshire Forum for Voluntary Organisations.
- 2.2 We received over 50 written responses in addition to comments made at the various presentations and discussions. The majority of people were positive about the draft Strategy and the service provided by our libraries and keen to work in partnership with us.
- 2.3 The draft Strategy was amended in the light of comments made and then successfully launched on 3 April to an audience of Members, representatives from other directorates and other library authorities, Adult and Community Services staff and people from partner organisations such as health, district councils and the voluntary and community sector.
- 2.4 All Members will recall having received the Strategy as it was signed off at County Council in June so a copy has not been attached to your agenda. Should you need another please contact Carol Gibson in Adult and Community Services on 01609 535852. Alternatively a copy can be downloaded from the Libraries section of the NYCC website www.northyorks.gov.uk. We have also produced an “easy read”

version and a “Facts, figures and the future” document, which gives a few statistics and plans for 2009.

- 2.5 Our vision is that the Library and Information Service provides an excellent service that is accessible, relevant to and used by everyone who lives, works or studies in North Yorkshire.

Aspects relevant to this Committee

- 2.6 There are a number of things happening in libraries which promote the health and well-being of the community.

- Libraries provide many activities which particularly attract the older age group. For example, the Library Service was an active partner in this years Theakston Old Peculier Crime Writing Festival 2009 “Big Read” – distributing information to reading groups and hosting author events at Ripon, Harrogate and Knaresborough libraries. Feedback forms showed that a high proportion of attenders were over 60.
- Over 40 reading groups across the county are run or supported by the library. Audio books and most recently books in MP3 format, enable those with sight problems to participate.
- Engage North Yorkshire is aiming to include information on all local groups and activities and will prove a useful resource for all.
- The “Feel Good Friday “group, a reading group for people with mental health problems, meets in Selby library each week.
- In conjunction with the Hambleton and Richmondshire Learning Disabilities Partnership Board, libraries are piloting the Safeguarding Project, which will see all libraries being established as safe places to support those with learning disabilities.
- The new library in Catterick and the Harrogate Library refurbishment will both contain a “changing place” for people with disabilities.
- People can join the North Yorkshire Credit Union in libraries and make deposits there.
- The police have drop in surgeries at a number of libraries.
- Libraries are being developed as hate crime reporting centres for people who would rather not report things directly to the police.
- The Library service will shortly be opening the first of its Library outlets. This will be in the extra-care scheme in Bainbridge. It will

provide a facility for tenants of the scheme and the local community, as well as the opportunity to be involved in running the library outlet.

- The Home Library and Information Service operates across the county, taking books and information to people who cannot easily leave their homes and providing opportunities for volunteering. It is going from strength to strength. A recent publicity drive resulted in more volunteers and two part-time volunteer coordinators have been recruited.
- The library service organised Over-50s Roadshows in each district, details of which are contained in the next report. Further events are planned for the autumn.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 The Committee is asked to:

- (a) Note the Strategy.
- (b) Consider how the Library and Information Service can further assist you to meet the aims of your Committee.

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Background Papers: New Look, No Shush! –Library and Information Service
Strategy 2008-2023

- Easy read version
- Facts, figures and the future