

Proposal 3: Willenhall Library

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1	What is the proposal?
	To end delivery of library services (and not renew the lease) from the current Willenhall Library facility and to continue discussions with the Haggard Centre about a more cost effective community library being located within the Centre.
2	What is the rationale for this particular proposal and what are the key messages?
	<p>The Council leases the building in which Willenhall Library is based from a private landlord. The landlord of the building has served notice on the Council following the end of the current lease in October 2013 and court action for a new lease has so far been deferred. In the current financial climate, a lower cost alternative in a community facility would be sought.</p> <p>The proposal is to relocate a staffed library and develop a strategic partnership with the Haggard Centre to maximise the benefits of library resources to local residents and to explore the potential for joint work. The buildings are opposite each other on Remembrance Road. The distance between the two locations is 0.2 miles</p> <p>A key objective for the Library and Information Service is to promote the digital offer and the range of library services that are available 24/7 for people to access from their own home rather than from a specific library. For example, renew and reserve books, access online reference and information services to support children with educational attainment.</p>
3	Service Description
3.1	What does the service do?
	<p>The Coventry Library and Information Service provide a wide range of services. The core services provided in Community Libraries include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Book lending, including books in large print and in community languages• Space for activities and events• Information• Internet access• DVD lending including box sets• Newspapers, magazines• Readers' Groups <p>Willenhall library has a wide range of events and activities operating from the library. For children and parents there are Rhymetime, Homework clubs and a youth group that are all held at least once a week. Excluded pupils and their teachers use the library on a regular basis.</p> <p>For adults and older people there are computer classes twice a week, Age UK run a friendship group aimed at older people that meet once a week and there is a knitting group that meets weekly.</p> <p>Some other Council Departments and partner organisations use the library to provide a drop in service or to support specific library events throughout the year, for example careers advice sessions are held weekly in partnership with WEET Centre.</p>
3.2	How many people use the service?
	3,408 people registered with the Library and Information Service at Willenhall Library. In 2014/15 there were 150,186 visits to the library. It was the third busiest for visitors, and had the sixth most book issues in 2014/15. The number of visits has increased by 5% from the previous year (2013/14). Willenhall Library provides access to thirteen computers. In 2014/15 there were 20,244 computer sessions. A session is where one person has used the computer. The length of a session will vary person to person depending on the reason that are using the computer, for example someone may

only use computer for 15 minutes to check emails and someone else may use the computer for one hour because they doing their school homework or applying for a job.

3.3 When is the service open?

Library	Current Opening Times
Willenhall	Monday - 1pm till 7pm Tuesday - 9am till 7pm Wednesday CLOSED Thursday - 9am till 7pm Friday 9am till 7pm Saturday 9am till 4pm Sunday CLOSED

3.4 Are service users currently charged for using the service?

Libraries offer free access to:

- reading
- book borrowing (initial loan 4 weeks)
- information
- IT resources – (2 hours free internet use)
- Events and activities

There are small charges made for the loan of CD's and DVD's, computer printouts, photocopying and use of the fax machine. Additionally any computer usage over the free two hour period, a charge is applied.

Charges are also made where items are returned late.

3.5 What is the history and background to the service?

Coventry is a compact city and has seen a large population growth over the past 100 years, from 62,000 in 1901 to almost 330,000 in 2014.

There are three “Carnegie” libraries situated in Coventry – Earlsdon, Foleshill and Stoke.

The Carnegie libraries in Coventry are the libraries built with money donated by Andrew Carnegie. Carnegie, a Scottish American industrialist, held a special interest in local libraries and had given away a huge amount of his wealth to charities and foundations by the time of his death in 1919.

The central library opened in 1986 in its current location. Up until the 1990's library services were operated from a mixture of buildings across the city. Willenhall Library opened in 1995 as part of a redevelopment of the retail area and housing redevelopment in Willenhall.

Following the publication of National Public Library Standards in 2001, it was stipulated that unitary authorities should provide a footprint of public library facilities ensuring that no resident had to travel more than 2 miles to access a service¹.

In 2001 'Best Value' inspected Coventry City libraries and awarded them 'no stars for the quality of its service' and outlined eight recommendations for improvement.

Coventry City Council committed to provide a modern vibrant library service to meet the needs of Coventry. Libraries were refurbished and modernised as community hubs, ready to lead on information, education and digital inclusion.

¹ PLSS1- Proportion of households living within specified distance of a static library. Unitary 2 miles

Investment from the Council was used to create new library facilities, libraries in shared buildings and to redesign existing libraries. Stoke, Arena Park, Bell Green and Cheylesmore were some of the first libraries to be part of the change.

The new style of libraries was successful and informed the further modernisation of Earlsdon and Foleshill. Property development opportunities saw the creation of Caludon Castle, Tile Hill, Stoke Aldermoor, Arena Park and Allesley Libraries; all of which have opened since 2000.

Central Library was modernised and refurbished in 2012.

3.6 Is there any additional relevant service information? (e.g. value of service/interdependencies etc.)

The Arts Council plays a significant role in supporting and developing the libraries sector. The Art Council's vision for libraries is that they inspire and empower people to lead active lives, enriched through cultural experience. Recent research 'Envisioning the library of the future' was a major project undertaken by the Arts Council in 2012/13 in order to understand the future for libraries, and how to enable them to develop.

The research found that public libraries are trusted spaces, open to all, in which people continue to explore and share the joys of reading, information, knowledge and culture. It is clear that people value the services that libraries provide and will continue to do so. Indeed, there is a clear message that there is a compelling and continuing need for a publicly funded library service.

The research also highlighted that public libraries face many challenges in the coming years, including advances in technology, which affect the ways in which people want to connect to information and culture, reduced public expenditure, the increasing involvement of citizens in the design and delivery of public services, and the needs of an ageing population.

Willenhall Library also provides books for the Housebound Service and provides collections of books to ten residential care homes in the city, the books used by this service will need to be accommodated at another library.

Part of the proposed space identified by the Haggard Centre is currently being used by a youth club.

4 What are the proposed financial savings?

The Council can save a total of £46k from this proposal.

5 What is the potential impact on service users (see Equality and Consultation Analysis) and what is the potential mitigation?

This proposal will affect children, adults, older people and disabled people who visit and use the current Willenhall library facilities. Willenhall is an area of the city where a greater number of the local population are library members. Willenhall is also an area where there are a greater number of households with no access to private transport. The close proximity of the Haggard Centre, a potential alternative location means that extra travel times could be minimized.

A potential transfer of the library to the Haggard Centre, a busy community space would potentially enable current Willenhall Library users to access a wider range of community resources and potentially increase. This would also provide the Library Service with the opportunity for greater partnership working and for expanding the range of partners the library will work with.

6 What is the impact on staff?

The current budgeted staffing establishment of the Library and Information Service is 118.8 full equivalent (FTE) contracts. This proposal would mean that staff working at the current Willenhall

Library would transfer to the new community location.	
7	What are the potential options are there for the use of the buildings?
The current Willenhall Library building is not owned by the City Council and therefore we do not have any control over its future use, unless this was via the planning application process.	
8	What other service alternatives have been considered?
The proposal about Willenhall Library is one of a number of current proposals affecting the Library and Information Service. Other proposals include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal 2 - To end delivery of library services from the Arena Library facility (and not renew the lease) and to enter into discussions to relocate reduced library provision at an alternative community location in Holbrooks. • Proposal 4 – To end the mobile library service. • Proposal 5 - To cut the library media fund of £658,000 by £100,000 in 2016/17. The media fund is used for the purchase of new books, including books in large print and talking books, DVDs, newspapers, magazines and materials in other languages. • Proposal 6 For Central Library to continue to open seven days per week, but to close one hour earlier on weekdays – closing at 7pm instead of 8pm. • Proposal 7 To standardise opening hours across all community libraries. All community libraries will be closed on Wednesdays and Sundays. 	