

**NEW LIBRARIES FOR  
TAMESIDE**

**MAY 2005**

## 1. Background

The public library service is a statutory service covered by the **1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act** with a duty to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' library services for those who live, study or work within the Borough.

Only in 2001, with the publication of the **Public Library Standards**, did the Government, working through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport define what was meant by 'comprehensive and efficient'.

The Standards cover accessibility of services in terms of location of libraries and opening hours, IT services, satisfaction levels and stock levels. Libraries' performance is measured against the standards every year through the **Annual Library Plan** which has now been superseded by the **Library Position Statement** and library services are graded accordingly.

In 2003, the Government published **Framework for the Future** which is a long-term strategic vision for the public library service incorporating a series of national offers which all services will be expected to provide.

Most importantly, these standards and the Government's vision form the basis of the new **CPA performance measures** which will be introduced in September 2005. Three out of the four 'killer' performance indicators in the new Culture block relate to libraries and link directly to 7 out of the 10 revised standards which cover IT provision, stock levels and satisfaction with services.

Unfortunately, recent performance has deteriorated with the library service falling from a 'good' to a 'fair' assessment largely because of an insufficient bookfund. A long-term solution to sustaining the computer centres in libraries also needs to be found and satisfaction levels improved in order to maintain the Council's 'excellent' status.

Consequently, a vision for the library service has been developed and costed which will lead to improvements in library services within the existing budget.

## 2. Key drivers and rationale for change

2.1. The Library Service **Best Value Review** (2002/3) identified key issues including:

- The need for a 'Vision' for the future of the library service so that we could take a longer-term perspective and start to prioritise and focus resources now on achieving that vision
- Modernisation of libraries
- The need for investment in buildings
- Performance standards and targeting of resources

2.2. As a result of the Best Value Review, **Instant Library consultants** were chosen to undertake a service review with the brief to:

*'...evaluate and analyse the information from the Library Plan, as well as the future of libraries as indicated in the "Framework for the Future" document.*

*‘...critically appraise the nature and distribution of our existing library facilities. To assess the existing level and range of provision, its dispersal and take-up and the present overall deployment of the services’ resources.*

*‘...assess the future of the library service within both the wider social and economic context and that of the Council and its financial position.*

*‘...take a longer-term perspective to determine the shape of libraries in the Year 2010 and to start now to prioritise and focus our resources in achieving that vision.*

*‘...produce a plan for the medium term up to the year 2010, supported by a sound market assessment and business rationale that will result in a library service able to take forward and deliver on both Central Government and Tameside Local Authority priorities and objectives. ‘*

2.3. The Consultants produced a report in October 2003 **‘New Libraries for Tameside’**, and their conclusions and recommendations form the basis of some of the recommendations in this report.

2.4. There are other drivers for change, not least is **the deterioration of achievement against the Public Library Standards**. In previous years we have achieved 21 out of the 26 targets giving us a ‘Good’ rating in the DCMS assessment of the service. In 2004/05 however, we achieved 18 which will give us a ‘Fair’ score. All 3 standards affected relate to stock – acquisitions per 1000 population, replenishment rate and a Cipfa survey question giving percentage of users reporting success in obtaining a specific book. The first 2 of these are a direct result of losing capital funding which formed a 3-year programme for providing education books for local pupils in public libraries. The revenue budget for library materials is insufficient to attain these standards and there has been no inflation for over 10 years. It is estimated that we need at least an additional £60,000 on the materials fund to hit the DCMS standards. Funding is also required to sustain the Computer Learning Centres and improve satisfaction levels overall.

Books and library stock, ICT and satisfaction levels are the 3 areas of performance which now feed in to the **CPA assessment** of the authority from 2005/6, however, it appears that under the current proposals (May 2005) we will only score high enough to maintain our ‘excellent’ status if we exceed the Public Library Standards.

2.5. Our performance against the **‘Stock Quality Health Check’** showed that we only had a ‘Fair’ representation of titles. This is a recently introduced exercise linked to the standards, the results of which will feed into the CPA assessment in the future.

2.6. The appearance of many of our **buildings** does little to attract new customers; 4 out of 5 of our main libraries are over 100 years old. Condition surveys identify over half a million pounds of work which needs doing at Denton, Mossley, Droylsden, Audenshaw, Waterloo and Stalybridge; half of which is urgently needed. Accessibility audits identify £350,000 of work which needs doing in order that libraries comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.

- 2.7. In order to attract more customers, libraries must modernise and present a more vibrant and relevant image to local communities. The Government states that to achieve the ambitions of the priority themes in 'Framework for the Future', libraries must 'transform so they can deliver what communities expect'. They must be seen as a valuable community resource, and to this end we have co-located Customer Services Offices at Dukinfield, Mossley, Droylsden and Stalybridge libraries. We are also looking at co-locating Mossley Library in the George Lawton Hall, an exercise included within the Council's 'Value for Money' exercise. Haughton Green Library has also been included in the PFI bid for the new Two Trees Community School.
- 2.8. **Budgets** are under a lot of pressure – as well as the shortfall for library stock and repair and maintenance, there is a £20,000 income deficit. It is also estimated that an additional £20,000 is needed to enhance the DVD, Video and sound recordings collections to provide choice for customers. Tameside is amongst the lowest spenders on audio-visual library materials when compared to other Metropolitan authorities. After 2006, we will also need £70,000 p.a. to sustain the Computer Learning Centres in libraries.
- 2.9. Capital funding is also needed:
- to replace the Library Management System which is coming to the end of its useful life (£100,000 within the next 2 years),
  - to improve layouts and modernise libraries to incorporate, refreshment areas, toilet facilities, 'quick choice' browsing and display areas, reducing counters, introducing self-issue for customers etc.
  - to move Mossley Library (est. £110,000 – BUT if the library stays in its present building £250,000 will need to be spent on repairs and maintenance and accessibility work),
  - to improve access at Denton Library by providing an attractive entrance to the building from what is currently the back of the building – in line with the footpath developments to the Wilton Street retail park (£70,000),
  - to expand and refurbish Hyde Library

Capital bids have been submitted for these last three projects. The Hyde project is now in the capital programme spread over the next 3 years and the Denton and Mossley bids are on the reserve list pending the outcome of this report.

- 2.10. In total, an additional £230,000 revenue per annum and at least £305,000 capital is needed to begin to address these issues (see table in section 6). This is in addition to the work at Hyde, Mossley and Denton, for which capital bids have already been made.
- 2.11. **Opening hours** have not changed substantially for many years, however, a modern library service should be offering access on Sundays and some late evenings beyond 7.30pm

### **3. The vision for the library service**

3.1. The vision we have is one that will take the service forward, helping it to meet the many challenges that face public libraries in the 21st Century.

- We want to have a network of libraries based around 2 flagships at Ashton and Hyde, several medium sized libraries beneath these, plus satellite libraries based in local communities and book access points in more remote areas using community facilities such as Post Offices.
- We will co-locate where possible, starting with Mossley Library and the George Lawton Hall. We will also work towards incorporating libraries in selected extended schools; a public library is being included in the PFI bid for Two Trees High School.
- Libraries will be well-maintained, attractive buildings that are welcoming and pleasant to use.
- They will reflect a modern approach to the delivery of library services with open layouts, modern shelving and furniture.
- They will have well stocked shelves, providing a good selection of popular titles along with well-resourced specialist and reference materials.
- They will be integral to the local community, supporting local groups and community based activities.
- They will promote learning and ICT awareness, promoting social inclusion.
- They will provide access to council information and services.
- They will become centres of information, regardless of how that information is presented or delivered.
- They will open at times which are more convenient to the public.

3.2. We have a number of choices that can be made to enable us to begin to deliver the vision. The speed at which the change can happen, is directly linked to the amount of money that can be released from the existing service for re-investment.

3.2.1. A Library refurbishment programme would be implemented to modernise the interiors of all remaining libraries and improve accessibility.

3.2.2. Investment in the book stock would be increased and maintained to the level expected by the Public Library Standards.

3.2.3. An improved and expanded home library service, to cater for the housebound, elderly people's homes and sheltered housing introduced to ensure that those most at risk from being excluded from accessing the services can still do so.

3.2.4. Opportunities to co-locate libraries will be continued, starting with Mossley and the George Lawton Hall. We will also work towards incorporating libraries in selected extended schools; initially we are looking at Two Trees High School in Haughton Green where a public library is included in the PFI bid.

3.2.5. Improved ICT provision with an additional 30 public use PC's being introduced over the next 3 years.

3.2.6. An upgrade to the existing GEAC library management system is needed, and the replacement Vubis package will be introduced.

- 3.2.7. New and improved lending services such as DVDs with café and toilet facilities being introduced into the flagship libraries.
- 3.2.8. Introduce new opening times that are more convenient for modern lifestyles. These will include closing later in the evening at some libraries, reduced opening hours at others, and new Sunday opening piloted at the flagship libraries.
- 3.2.9. Introduce book access points in remote locations using community buildings such as Post Offices. It is intended to target Hollingworth and Broadbottom as the pilot areas (subject to their approval).

#### **4. Proposals to re-model the library service**

Capital bids have already been submitted for the projects at Hyde, Denton and Mossley libraries. It is the intention to fund all other work by making efficiencies within the service and reinvesting the money saved back into the service in order to achieve the vision.

## 5. Options for reinvestment

### 5.1. Closure or co-location of libraries

Options for consideration – closure/relocation		
Library	Proposal	Savings
Audenshaw Library	<b>Close</b> and provide a library access point via a mobile stop. Consider the use of a community/extended school in the future	Capital receipt (max) £185,000 Running costs £10,000 p.a. Staffing costs £55,000 p.a.
Waterloo Library	<b>Close</b> and provide a library access point via a mobile stop. Consider the use of a community/extended school in the future	Capital receipt (max) £88,000 Running costs £4,000 p.a. Staffing costs £9,000 p.a.
Mobile Library	The <b>Mobile Library Service</b> has already been reduced from 2 vehicles to 1 from April 2005 following an Executive Decision in March 2005. The routes for the remaining vehicle now need revising taking into account the above library closures.  The lease for the last remaining vehicle runs out in March 2007. It is proposed to disband the Mobile Library Service at this point and service elderly and/or housebound residents in Homes and sheltered accommodation with a smaller van.	Running costs £20,000 p.a. Staffing costs £45,000 p.a.  These are costs per vehicle
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS</b>		<b>Year 1 - £420,000 (inc cap. receipts)</b> Future years - £147,000 p.a.
Mossley Library	<b>Co-locate</b> in the George Lawton Hall which is nearer to the centre of the local community, fully accessible on one level and in a good state of repair.	To stay on the present site we need to spend £180,000 on repairs and £70,000 on accessibility work TOTAL £250,000  It would cost in the region of £110,000 to move and we would get an estimated £80,000 in capital receipts. A capital bid has been made for the move and has been placed on the reserve list subject to the outcome of this report.

### 5.2. Reduction of opening hours and related staffing in the remaining libraries:

Tameside considerably exceeds the Public Library Standard for opening hours. The Government expects us to provide 128 opening hours per 1000 population per annum, the actual is 168 hours per 1000 population. It is estimated that if we reduced

opening hours to the Standard there would be a saving of between £30-58,000p.a. depending on the final option chosen. A review of library opening hours will be undertaken as soon as possible.

## 6. Financial Implications

	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	TOTAL
<b>REVENUE</b>					
<b>Additional Revenue Costs</b>					
<b>Library Stock</b>					
Additional spend to achieve required standard	60,000	61,000	63,000	63,000	247,000
<b>Home Library Service</b>					
Vehicle Lease and running costs			5,000	5,000	10,000
Library support worker			17,000	17,000	34,000
<b>Improved ICT Service</b>					
Additional 30 public use PC's	15,000	15,000	15,000		45,000
<b>Establish Planned Maintenance Programme</b>					
Additional provision to enable programme of planned maint.	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	200,000
<b>Address Repairs and Maintenance Backlog</b>					
To carry out essential outstanding repairs to premises	50,000	50,000	50,000		150,000
<b>Additional Savings</b>					
Additional savings requirement	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	240,000
<b>Total Additional Revenue Costs</b>	<b>235,000</b>	<b>236,000</b>	<b>260,000</b>	<b>195,000</b>	<b>926,000</b>
<b>Revenue Savings</b>					
<b>Mobile Libraries</b>					
Leases	20,000	20,000	40,000	40,000	120,000
Staffing	45,000	45,000	90,000	90,000	270,000
<b>Building Running Costs</b>					
Audenshaw	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	40,000
Waterloo	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	16,000
<b>Staffing Costs</b>					
Audenshaw	55,000	55,000	55,000	55,000	220,000
Waterloo	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000	36,000
<b>Reduced Opening Hours</b>					
Savings from proposed changes in opening hours	58,000	58,000	58,000	58,000	232,000
<b>Total Revenue Savings</b>	<b>201,000</b>	<b>201,000</b>	<b>266,000</b>	<b>266,000</b>	<b>934,000</b>
<b>NET REVENUE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	<b>34,000</b>	<b>35,000</b>	<b>-6,000</b>	<b>-71,000</b>	<b>-8,000</b>

<b>CAPITAL</b>					
<b>Capital Costs</b>					
<b><u>Library Refurbishment Programme</u></b>					
Ashton Central	20,000				20,000
Dukinfield		20,000			20,000
Stalybridge				20,000	20,000
Others - accessibility	20,000	20,000	20,000	15,000	75,000
<b><u>New Library Computer System</u></b>					
Vubis Library Management System	100,000				100,000
<b><u>New Services and Facilities</u></b>					
Café facilities at flagship libraries	10,000	10,000			20,000
New and improved services	25,000	5,000	5,000		35,000
Two Book Access points	6,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	15,000
<b>Total Capital Costs</b>	<b>181,000</b>	<b>58,000</b>	<b>28,000</b>	<b>38,000</b>	<b>305,000</b>

<b>Capital Receipts</b>					
<b><u>Sale of Premises</u></b>					
Audenshaw	185,000				185,000
Waterloo	88,000				88,000
<b>Total Capital Receipts</b>	<b>273,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>273,000</b>
<b>NET CAPITAL FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	<b>-92,000</b>	<b>58,000</b>	<b>28,000</b>	<b>38,000</b>	<b>32,000</b>

## **7. Recommendations**

- 7.1. Close Audenshaw and Waterloo libraries with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> July 2005.

The business case is based on:

- Poor usage in terms of issues and visitors
- High unit costs of issues and visitors
- Cost of building work needed
- Cost of accessibility work needed
- The nature of the communities served and the options left to those communities in terms of access to libraries.

- 7.2. Review library opening hours for all libraries with a view to reducing hours overall but reallocating extra hours to Hyde and Ashton and establishing these as the 2 premier libraries within the Borough. Revised hours to be implemented by the end of the financial year
- 7.3. Move Mossley Library into the George Lawton Hall. Work to start in September 2005 and be complete by the end of the financial year.
- 7.4. Withdraw the Mobile Library Service when the lease for the last remaining vehicle runs out in March 2007. Instead, use a smaller van to increase capacity within the Home Library Service and target the housebound, elderly and infirm, Old People's Accommodation and sheltered housing to ensure that the service is accessible to the more vulnerable groups in the Borough.
- 7.5. Explore the feasibility of establishing Book Access Points in the more remote communities of the Borough.