

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Culture and Communities Select Committee
Date:	18 March 2021
Title:	Winchester Discovery Centre - Future Strategy
Report from:	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to outline proposals for a new partnership model between Hampshire Library Service ('the Library Service') and Hampshire Cultural Trust (HCT) at Winchester Discovery Centre (WDC).
2. The partnership will enhance and develop Winchester Discovery Centre's position as a strategically important hub for culture and creativity in Hampshire. In addition, the partnership will bring financial and non-financial benefits to both organisations and secure the long-term viability of the venue.
3. This report includes proposals to transfer operational responsibility for the building (including associated day-to-day running costs) and for cultural programming to HCT. The Library Service will continue to deliver a highly successful library service, free at the point of access, within WDC. Hampshire County Council will retain the freehold ownership of the building and associated repair and maintenance responsibilities.
4. The report also includes proposals for refurbishment of WDC, including essentials works, interior refurbishment and spatial reorganisation.

Recommendations

5. That the Culture and Communities Select Committee recommends that the Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs:
 - i. Approves plans to proceed with the proposed partnership model, subject to agreement being reached by both parties on final details of the arrangement.
 - ii. Approves the commercial principles as set out in paragraph 48 and delegates authority to the Director of CCBS in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Corporate Resources and the Head of Legal Services

to conclude the detailed financial agreement in line with the commercial principles.

- iii. Notes the HR implications as set out in paragraphs 57 to 62.
 - iv. Authorises any other steps be taken that are reasonably necessary in order to implement the above recommendations.
6. It is also recommended that Culture and Communities Select Committee notes that the following proposals are due to be considered at a future Executive Member for Commercial Strategy, Human Resources and Performance Decision Day:
- v. The detailed property arrangements by which the operational responsibility for WDC is transferred to HCT (including the nature and duration of tenure).
 - vi. The detailed programme of property refurbishment and improvement outlined in paragraphs 63 to 67.
 - vii. Proposals to transfer employment of some Hampshire County Council Catering Service ('HC3S') staff to HCT.

Executive Summary

7. Hampshire Library Service (the Library Service) and Hampshire Cultural Trust (HCT) have been working closely to explore ways to strengthen their existing partnership at Winchester Discovery Centre (WDC).
8. Following an extensive feasibility study, a new service delivery model is proposed for WDC, whereby HCT assumes full operational responsibility for the building, including all cultural programming. The Library Service will continue to deliver library services, including book and magazine lending, public IT access and safe community space, within an expanded, culturally led venue.
9. This model builds upon a track record of achievement and partnership work that will enable both organisations to realise financial benefits, increase public access and participation, and secure investment at a time of major financial challenge. It reduces dependency upon local authority funding, whilst maximising income generation and fundraising opportunities.

Contextual Information

Library Service Strategy to 2025

10. Hampshire Libraries' strategy to 2025 is being developed to ensure that the Library Service can evolve to meet the changing needs of its customers, whilst maintaining core and statutory services. It will help develop a sustainable and vibrant library service for people who live, work or study in Hampshire.

11. The vision for Hampshire Library Service is:

A modern, relevant and sustainable library service that is valued by our communities and which plays an important role in the delivering Hampshire County Council's strategic goals through achieving three core priorities:

- Promoting Reading
- Supporting Healthy, Creative Communities
- Providing Access to Digital Services

Further information about the future vision can be found in Appendix 1.

12. In this context, a strategic business plan has been developed for WDC, with the aim of creating a modern destination for creativity and learning. A key theme of the business plan was to develop new ways of working in partnership to deliver the best possible outcomes for customers, and to ensure the long-term financial viability of the building.

About Winchester Discovery Centre

13. WDC is a key destination in the heart of Winchester, occupying an iconic site on Jewry Street.

14. The Grade II listed building was opened in 1838, originally serving as the city's Corn Exchange. It has also been a roller-skating rink, theatre, and dance hall, before being converted to a public library in 1936. In 2008, the building was extensively refurbished and extended, re-opening as WDC the same year.

15. The building currently offers:

- A modern two-storey library, with space for reading and quiet study
- A separate children's library
- Free 'Go-Online' public computers, printing and copying facilities, and free wi-fi
- Library self-service kiosks
- Two public art galleries, both operated by Hampshire Cultural Trust
- A 180-seat Performance Hall, with flexible seating making it suitable as a 200-capacity conference venue
- A café/bar, currently operated by Hampshire County Council Catering Services (HC3S)

- Accessible space for community groups to meet
- Hireable rooms for clubs and societies
- Spaces let to community organisations on a leasehold basis
- A small retail area selling literary gifts and cards
- Free public toilets, including a Changing Places accessible toilet.

16. The opening hours of the building are set out below. At the time of writing this report, library venues across the county are closed for browsing due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The opening hours referenced here represent the opening hours of WDC post-Covid-19, agreed as a result of two Library Service Public Consultations undertaken during 2020:

- Monday 9.30am – 5.00pm
- Tuesday 9.30am – 5.00pm
- Wednesday 9.30am – 1.30pm
- Thursday 9.30am – 5.00pm
- Friday 9.30am – 5.00pm
- Saturday 9.30am – 5.00pm
- Sunday Closed

17. WDC is Hampshire's busiest library - it is the third most-visited library building of any English County Authority¹ - and is an important community hub, providing a safe, accessible, and inclusive space for individuals and groups to meet, learn and discover. With over half a million visitors and 224,000 items loaned in 2019-20, it offers a vast range of books, magazines, and reference materials for people of all ages. WDC houses the Railway Collection, which forms part of the Library Service's five Special Collections². It provides technology to help people access information, opportunities and services online through a suite of 'Go Online' terminals. It also offers an arts and culture programme of events and activities in the Performance Hall and other spaces.

18. Currently, the Library Service has operational responsibility for the building, working in conjunction with HCC Facilities Management (FM). HCC Property Services retains the repair and maintenance liability for the building.

19. Since November 2014, HCT has operated the two galleries within WDC - The Gallery and City Space - and is responsible for creative programming in both spaces.

¹ Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA), 'Public Library Statistics, 2019-20 Actuals', available online (subscription only), at <https://www.ipf.com/cipfavalidation/login/login.asp?type=OTHER&dest=www.cipfastats.net/leisure/publiclibrary/Default.asp>

² Special collections are a rich and diverse range of books, pamphlets, news cuttings, videos and photographs. In addition to the Railway Collection at WDC, the other four Special Collections are the Aviation Collection at Farnborough Library, the Military Collection at Aldershot Library, the Naval Collection at Gosport Discovery Centre and the Jane Austen Collection at Alton Library.

20. The Gallery is HCT's flagship exhibition space as it meets strict government indemnity standards to receive loaned works and artefacts of international importance. The Gallery has a programme of exceptional quality and varied temporary exhibitions, including HCT's curated shows, as well as works from national lenders such as Tate, British Museum and Victoria & Albert Museum. City Space is Winchester City Council's Community Gallery, operated by HCT. It is a vibrant and versatile gallery and hosts a rolling programme of exhibitions which celebrate the very best of Winchester's and Hampshire's thriving arts community.
21. The Café/Bar is operated by Hampshire County Council Catering Service (HC3S). It comprises a food and beverage service counter in a prominent location in the building, as well as a large external terrace. The Café/Bar offers a limited range of cold snacks, as well as hot and cold beverages; it is licensed to serve alcohol.

Development of the Partnership

22. WDC demonstrates some of the best of what a high-performing modern library can offer. However, there is potential for greater and more intensive use of the varied spaces within the building to enable WDC to realise its full potential as a large cultural venue.
23. The present offer, with various operators working independently from each other (the Library Service, HCT, HC3S, community organisations, event partners, room hirers, etc.), has the potential to develop into a more cohesive model to offer a seamless and high quality customer experience and realise the potential efficiencies from a single operating model.
24. The County Council continues to face significant financial pressures which have been exacerbated in the past year by the financial challenge of the pandemic.
25. In this context, a strategic business plan has been developed for WDC, with the aim of generating savings for the Library Service and improving the offer to customers. The plan aims to ensure that WDC is a modern destination for creativity and learning, and can realise its full potential as a large cultural venue in the heart of Winchester. A key theme of the business plan is to explore ways of working in partnership to deliver the best possible outcomes for customers, and to ensure the long-term financial viability of the building.
26. Over the past three years, the Library Service has worked with colleagues from HCC and external organisations, to explore a range of partnership and income generation opportunities for WDC. This report now recommends that the Library Service proceeds to the next stage in developing a partnership with HCT that will secure and develop WDC as a vibrant cultural, arts and learning centre for Winchester and its hinterland, bring financial benefits for both organisations, improve the customer experience and secure the long-term financial viability of the building.

27. HCT has been selected as the Library Service's preferred partner at WDC for the following reasons:
- HCT is a leading cultural organisation in Hampshire, and already delivers arts, cultural and museum programming on behalf of both HCC and Winchester City Council as part of an existing, long-term partnership.
 - HCT is an existing major stakeholder in WDC, having successfully operated The Gallery and City Space since 2014. This also means that it has experience of operating within WDC, and an associated existing knowledge of the building and its operations.
 - The nature of HCT's existing partnership with HCC means that one-off set-up costs, as well as ongoing administrative costs, will be relatively low.
 - HCT has experience delivering a thriving cultural offer for the county of Hampshire, which it can draw on to develop a pilot programme of cultural events and activities across the entire Hampshire library network as a potential second phase of the partnership.
 - HCT's vision for WDC closely aligns with the ambitions of the Library Service.

A Shared Vision for WDC

28. The Library Service and HCT have worked closely together to explore ways to develop and strengthen their existing partnership. A new service delivery model is now proposed for WDC, whereby HCT takes on full operational responsibility for the building, including all cultural programming, whilst Hampshire Library Service continues to deliver library services, including book and magazine lending, public IT access and safe community space, within an expanded, culturally led venue.
29. The emerging vision is founded on three key principles: *Community, Culture and Curiosity*. The shared vision sees the integration of all cultural aspects of WDC under one programming strategy, creating a unique cultural venue for Winchester's community that brings together those who are curious, creative and community minded. The ambition is:
- 'To become a progressive centre for enjoyment, the expression of creativity, and the pursuit of learning for the people of Winchester and beyond.'***
30. Hampshire Library Service will continue to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service, free at the point of access, within the building. It will retain its status as a thriving library venue and will work to deliver the vision to promote reading and literacy, support healthy creative communities and invest in digital services. This will be achieved through continued provision of existing community services, as well as using the partnership approach to explore and develop new opportunities to improve literacy and social outcomes.
31. Through the partnership with HCT, WDC will offer unique, high-quality cultural facilities and a programme of exciting cultural activities that will meet visitors'

needs and interests throughout their lifetime. This will be achieved through a range of tried-and-tested programming formats including exhibitions, live performance, events, workshops, classes, and immersive experiences. WDC will become the place for piloting experimental cultural programming that could develop into a viable and stimulating offer delivered across the library network at a later stage.

32. As part of the project the customer entry point will be improved by introducing welcome areas that multi-function as points for information, ticketing, enquiries, etc. The Café/Bar will be remodelled to achieve increased capacity and the flexibility to turn the area into an evening events space. A retail area will offer exhibition merchandise and products from local artists and makers.
33. The partnership approach will create a new joint branding and staffing team providing an integrated offer where interests can be pursued through a variety of pathways. Customers will be able to move seamlessly between resources and books, hands-on making and social interactivity, entertainment and learning experiences.
34. Both HCC and HCT will pursue investment for growth and innovative projects from funding bodies, potentially including a joint application for Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status.
35. The expected benefits of the partnership are:
 - **Financial**
 - To maximise the financial potential of WDC through additional net income and operating cost efficiencies for the financial benefit of both partners
 - To improve the return on investment for both organisations, including delivery of annual efficiency savings for the Library Service by 2023-2024.
 - To secure operational efficiencies related to management of the building (for example a reduction in business rates through the new charitable purpose for the building)
 - To maximise the income generating potential of the building
 - To enable joint funding applications to Arts Council England and other funders.
 - **Customer**
 - To enhance the customer journey and experience (before, during and after their visit)
 - To continue to grow a diverse cultural programme
 - To increase public access by increasing provision and extending opening hours.
 - **Organisational**
 - To secure the long-term viability of the site

- To grow participation and increase visitor numbers.

Proposed Operating Model

36. Under the proposed model, operational management of the building will be passed to HCT, (including associated day-to-day running costs), through a formal lease agreement. HCT will manage the space, operate the café and run the enhanced cultural programme, including continued operation of The Gallery and City Space. HCT will be recruiting to their 'Destination Winchester' team to facilitate this.
37. Hampshire County Council will retain the freehold ownership of the building and retain property repair and maintenance liabilities accordingly.
38. Heads of Terms are still to be agreed, subject to approval to proceed with the partnership proposal in principle. This will include the length and nature of the legal arrangements (e.g. lease or licence) and appropriate break clauses and reviews.
39. The Library Service will deliver the library services within the building. Library Service staff will remain in the employment of Hampshire County Council.
40. The proposed operating model offers the opportunity to extend building opening hours. Following an extensive Public Consultation in 2020, the opening hours at WDC were reduced as part of a suite of changes to opening hours across the Library Service. As part of the consultation, the Library Service committed to working with partners and members of the community to extend opening hours where the opportunity arose.
41. Under HCT management, the overall opening hours of the building would increase to around 61 hours a week. Under this model, although the Library elements would only be staffed for 41.5 hours a week, access to books, self-service issue, reservations and returns and study space will be available whenever the building is open to the public.
42. The Library Service has considered a range of other options for the future management of Winchester Discovery Centre, but each has been discounted at this stage. There remains an option for the Library Service to continue to manage the building and operations, continuing its efforts to decrease expenditure and increase income. However, this does not provide the wider cultural, community or strategic benefit that the proposed model confers nor afford the same level of savings. Nonetheless, this remains a fully viable option if the current proposal is not progressed.

Governance

43. A Management Funding Agreement already exists between HCT and Hampshire County Council which sets out governance, responsibilities, reporting requirements and funding. A Service Level Agreement specific to

WDC will set out detailed operating requirements for WDC to allow future review of the partnership.

44. HCC already has representation on the HCT Board of Trustees, which has responsibility for all significant partnership and investment decision making. HCT's trustees bring a wealth of skills and experience to the project, with expertise across a broad spectrum of professional areas.

Finance and Resources

45. The proposed operating model is a partnership that aims to deliver financial benefits for both the Library Service and HCT.
46. Winchester Discovery Centre currently costs c£1.03 million a year to run (including both direct and indirect apportioned costs) and generates an income of approximately £200,000 per year, resulting in a net cost of £830,000 per year.
47. Under this model, responsibility for all operational costs (excluding those linked directly to the provision of statutory library services), together with the benefit of all income (excluding income derived from statutory library services) would transfer to HCT. The County Council will provide an annual grant to HCT to cover the operational costs for running the building.
48. The proposed financial model will be governed by the following key commercial principles:
- Over time, both parties should see financial benefits from the arrangements; HCT through the increase of income generated by activity and HCC through the reduction in costs (and longer term reduction in grant levels)
 - HCC recognises that in the initial set up phase (Year 0) there will be a need to increase expenditure to 'pump-prime' the project
 - In year 1 (2022-23) each party will break even, and be no worse off than the current position
 - By year 2 (2023-24), both parties should be seeing financial benefits
 - In year 3 (2023-24) the financial position will be assessed and the grant arrangement will be reviewed, potentially with a view to incorporating it into the wider grant that HCC provides to HCT.
49. HCT will carry the commercial risk and responsibility for growth in income to achieve its financial benefit and return on initial investment, whilst HCC will provide a grant for the first three-year period ensuring future financial certainty. HCC and HCT will make a significant initial capital investment into the scheme and HCC will continue to bear running costs for Library Services. For its part, HCC carries the risk that it is not able to reduce its expenditure on library functions on the timescales envisaged by the financial model.

50. Savings to HCC will be achieved through a combination of operational efficiencies, reductions in events expenditure and changes in staffing as a result of transferring the building and cultural programme to HCT. The single biggest anticipated overall saving will be through the transition to charitable purpose for the building and associated application for charitable business rate relief.
51. In addition to cashable savings, this project will also deliver a resource benefit, as it will release staff from existing duties at WDC to work in other capacities across the Library Service.
52. Robust financial planning is essential to ensure that HCT is less reliant on financial subsidy from HCC in the longer term. HCT will achieve this through programming efficiencies at WDC, and by connecting WDC to other cultural venues in Winchester and across the county. A cultural programming model with the potential to be delivered across the library network could deliver further ongoing financial benefits for both organisations.
53. HCT will deliver increased earned income from ticketing, retail and events, as well as an enhanced food and beverage offer that will complement the creative programme.
54. The existing catering provision in WDC is delivered by HC3S. Under this proposal, HC3S will cease operations at WDC, and the business will transfer to HCT. This is anticipated to have a net neutral financial impact on HC3S. Anticipated staff impacts related to the transfer of the Café/Bar are set out in paragraph 60.
55. HC3S currently contributes £10,000 p.a. to the Library Service from income generated at WDC, and this loss of income to the Library Service has been factored into the financial model.
56. There are no anticipated financial impacts on FM, as the contract to deliver services at WDC is expected to transfer to HCT as part of this proposed partnership.

Staff Implications

57. When taken together (including HCT, Hampshire Libraries and HC3S staff) the overall number of staff required will remain broadly the same under the proposed partnership. However, over time it is expected that the number of staff employed by HCC will reduce and the number of staff employed by HCT will increase.
58. During the next 4 years the staffing ratios between HCC and HCT will be monitored and reviewed as the partnership develops. Reductions within HCC staffing will be managed wherever possible through natural turnover. If reductions cannot be achieved through vacancy management, formal processes will be followed. It is anticipated that there will be role opportunities

within HCT to further mitigate any risk and maximise employment opportunities.

59. Staff providing Library Services will remain in the employment of the Library Service.
60. As part of this proposal, the Café/Bar will change management from HCC to HCT. Therefore, all eligible employees employed in the Café/Bar by HC3S before transfer will automatically transfer from HCC to HCT³.
61. Facilities Management ('FM') staff working in WDC will remain employees of the County Council and are not anticipated to be impacted by this proposal, as it is intended that the FM contract will transfer wholesale to HCT at the point the leasehold agreement takes effect.
62. New job opportunities and roles will be developed within HCT, in relation to the enhanced cultural programme and changes to operational responsibilities being proposed.

Property Works

63. With no significant investment in the interior fixtures and finishes since 2008, Winchester Discovery Centre is starting to show the effects of its half a million visitors per year and is in need of general maintenance and refurbishment – whether or not the partnership proposal goes ahead.
64. Achieving the shared vision, and the expected financial and non-financial benefits for both organisations, will require improvements to the building including essential works; internal refurbishment; and spatial reorganisation. These works will be designed to create a welcoming environment that encourages movement and exploration for customers, as well as maximising income-generating potential for both organisations.
65. The proposed partnership will be supported by a programme of building improvements. The Library Service and HCT will work together during Quarter 1 of the 2021-22 financial year to agree a programme of works that meets the aspirations of both organisations, but which will include:
 - Refurbished Café/Bar and WCs
 - Improvements to key spaces including the Children's Library and City Space gallery
 - Relocation of some library book stock to enable better flow throughout the building

³ A transfer of an undertaking under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/246) (a TUPE transfer) occurs when the whole or part of an employer's business or undertaking is sold or transferred as a going concern to another employer.

- Creation of welcoming space at the heart of the building for groups and individuals to relax and spend time, or to begin exploring the cultural programme on offer
 - Development of a new, unique brand identity for WDC that will encapsulate the exciting joint venture, including new signage and wayfinding within the space.
66. A package of HCC and HCT funding is being assembled to meet the indicative costs of £630,000, with a further potential for a bid to the Arts Council for additional funding of c£70,000 in preparation pending the outcome of this decision.
67. The building handover date to HCT is planned for Quarter 4 of the 2021-22 financial year.

Key Risks / Other Key Issues

68. A decision to proceed with the partnership between the Library Service and HCT is recommended on the grounds it represents the best opportunity to safeguard the long-term viability of WDC as a cultural venue for the people of Winchester and beyond. The proposed operating model is expected to deliver long-term financial and non-financial benefits for both organisations.
69. However, the proposed partnership is not without risk. A primary risk is that HCT is unable to deliver on its predicted financial performance. Potential risk areas that may impact on financial performance include the ability of funding partners to continue investment, and underachievement of visitor and income targets at WDC.
70. Moreover, the unprecedented circumstances brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic have significantly disrupted activities of the Library Service (at WDC and across the wider library network), and at HCT venues. Forced closures, cancelled events and limited visitor numbers have adversely impacted earned income for both organisations during 2020-21, and this is expected to continue into 2021-22 and beyond.
71. Although the financial positions of both organisations have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, and may therefore take longer to realise the benefits of the partnership and require more effort to rebuild audiences, this partnership proposal still represents a strong option for the long-term success of WDC.
72. Under the proposed model, risk associated by underperformance of income or increased operational costs would be primarily borne by HCT. As a core element of ordinary budgeting procedures, HCT will be able to anticipate cash flow issues or budget pressures and put mitigation strategies into place to ensure a balanced budget, in discussion with HCT's Board and with funding partners. A break clause will be included within the tenure agreement for the benefit of both parties.

73. In addition to the income related pressures, the overall savings projections remain finely balanced for both parties. Other key factors, such as the eligibility of the new operational model for charitable relief on business rates, will have a significant effect on whether or not the arrangement can proceed. If the required savings cannot be made, officers will revisit the proposals and revise the model accordingly.
74. Similarly, the savings for the County Council are reliant on a reduction in staff over time. Library Service customer-facing staff have only recently been subject to an extensive consultation and service review exercise and managers are mindful of the additional uncertainty and pressure that any subsequent changes may place on library staff.

Consultation and Equalities

75. In early 2020 the Library Service conducted a significant public consultation on the future strategy for the Service. This consultation elicited c28,000 responses and in July 2020 the Executive Member for Recreation and Heritage agreed to the proposals. This included proposals to generate additional income and deliver services differently. There was strong public support for partnering with other services to reduce costs.
76. Later in 2020 the Library Service ran a subsequent consultation on opening hours. Specific feedback was received regarding the opening hours at Winchester Discovery Centre.
77. The information gleaned through both of these consultation exercises has been taken into account in the development of this proposal.
78. The Local Member, Councillor Hiscock, is aware of the proposals.
79. Winchester City Council invested in the original refurbishment of the Discovery Centre and, as a condition of this investment, maintains the right to operate City Space from the premises. Winchester City Council comments:

“Winchester City Council welcomes this new partnership between Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Cultural Trust which seeks to enhance the cultural and customer experience at the Winchester Discovery Centre. As a founding partner to the Trust and with a continued desire to support the District’s cultural and creative sectors, the council supports this new approach to how the centre is operated. It will provide an opportunity to build on the offer already available at the City Museum, The Westgate, and City Space which, under this proposal, will be enhanced and benefit from closer operational links with The Gallery. We look forward to working with both HCC and HCT as the plans progress over the coming year.”
80. Formal consultation with staff and unions is planned in 2021-22 for HC3S staff who are eligible for TUPE transfer to HCT.

81. Draft Equalities Impact Assessments for both staff and service users have been prepared.

Next Steps and Timetable

82. Key events in the timetable for the proposed partnership are as follows:

Stage	Activity	Status/target date
Stage 1	Development of vision and scoping of high-level business case	Complete
Stage 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision by Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Cultural Trust to proceed in principle • Communication with staff and Trade Unions. • Engagement with Winchester City Council to discuss use of space and wider strategic benefits • Agreement on Heads of Terms and Financial Model 	March- April 2021
Stage 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of phased transition and handover plan • Formation of partnership agreement with HCT • Commencement of statutory approvals and pre-construction phase for capital works 	2021-22, Q1 - Q2 (April – September)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction phase for capital works • Enter into formal consultation with HC3S staff who are eligible for TUPE transfer to HCT • HCT to commence recruiting team to deliver cultural programme and operational duties. 	2021-22, Q3 (October – December)
Stage 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of capital works • Building transfer to HCT. 	Q4 FY 21/22 (February handover)
Stage 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor staff turnover and review of staffing levels • Review of financial performance and future funding model (linked to wider HCT MFA) 	2022-23 onwards

Conclusions

83. This report recommends a new partnership between the Library Service and HCT at WDC.
84. The partnership will transfer operational responsibility for the building and for cultural programming to HCT. The Library Service will continue to deliver a comprehensive and efficient library service, free at the point of access, within WDC.
85. A refurbishment of WDC is also proposed, which includes essential works, interior refurbishment and spatial reorganisation, to support and enable delivery of the shared vision.
86. The partnership will bring financial and non-financial benefits to both organisations, secure the long-term viability of the building, increase public access and participation, improve the customer experience and secure investment at a time of major financial challenge. It reduces dependency upon local authority funding, whilst maximising income generation and fundraising opportunities.
87. Both the Library Service and HCT endorse and recommend this partnership at WDC and present it as a sound option to secure the long-term viability of the building.

Appendices

- 1 Hampshire Library Service – future vision
- 2 About Hampshire Cultural Trust
- 3 Shared vision for WDC

Appendix 1 - Library Service Future Vision

A modern, relevant and sustainable library service that is valued by our communities and which plays an important role in the delivering Hampshire County Council's strategic goals through achieving three core priorities:

Priority one: Promoting reading

- i. Providing a service for everyone – championing reading for pleasure.
- ii. Developing children's literacy, particularly within the Early Years (ages 0-5) – giving children the best start in life.
- iii. Investing in Hampshire's Digital Library – reflecting increasing use of electronic books and offering greater choice to readers.

Priority two: Supporting healthy, creative communities

- i. Establishing council-run libraries as 'community hubs' – bringing individuals, communities and services together, thereby making better use of available public funds and improving outcomes for people.
- ii. Taking the Library Service into communities – engaging with residents in the most deprived areas, where use of library services is lowest, and partnering with voluntary and community sector organisations.
- iii. Delivering a programme of learning and activities that meet the needs of library users – promoting literacy, health, wellbeing and digital skills

Priority three: Investing in digital services

- i. Providing access to technology, prioritising those at risk of digital exclusion – working with partners to help people access information, opportunities and services online.

Appendix 2 - About Hampshire Cultural Trust

Hampshire Cultural Trust was established in 2014 to promote Hampshire as a great cultural county and our **vision** is to create inspirational cultural experiences in Hampshire that enrich and transform lives.

Our **mission** is to provide great arts, heritage, museums and creative programming, working closely with local and national partners, and placing communities, our collections and their stories at the heart of everything we do.

We run a huge variety of exhibitions, workshops, classes, events and projects for both young and old, with particular emphasis on reaching people who are vulnerable or disadvantaged and would not normally be able to access arts and culture.

Our goals are to:

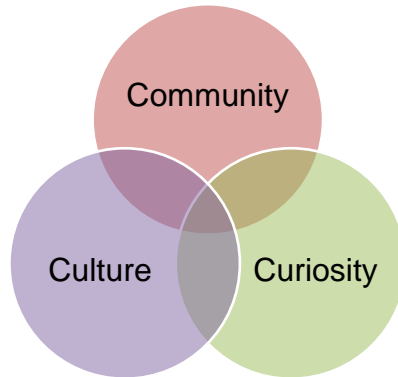
- To provide high-quality programmes and venues that engage diverse audiences and inspire local pride
- To improve wellbeing, health and happiness through cultural experiences
- To deliver a sustainable future for culture in Hampshire, contributing to the local economy and building stronger communities
- To create fulfilling employment and volunteering opportunities through culture

We achieve this by:

- Operating 18 museums across Hampshire and East Dorset, providing access to local history for residents and visitors
- Working in partnership with external organisations to deliver community museum services at three further venues in Hampshire
- Operating three arts centres in Hampshire, bringing high quality performing arts to local communities
- Delivering a flagship gallery programme, bringing major exhibitions to three government indemnified galleries in Winchester, Basingstoke and Gosport
- Delivering engaging cultural programmes for young people; Wessex Dance Academy works with the most vulnerable young people using contemporary dance and Horizon 20:20 engages young people in non-mainstream education settings using a variety of cultural activity
- Delivering of a schools and adult education programme creating learning opportunities inspired by local history, artists and creatives
- Caring for over 2.5 million objects relating to Hampshire's cultural heritage
- Operating of Hampshire Wardrobe which provides costume and loans materials for schools and other local users to support history and the arts
- Hosting of museum development advice for the wider museums sector in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight area via the Arts Council England funded Museum Development programme.

Appendix 3 - Shared Vision for WDC

Hampshire Library Service and Hampshire Cultural Trust are working together in partnership to deliver a shared vision for WDC. There are three key elements to the vision: Community, Culture and Curiosity.



This vision has been developed to:

- Further develop HCC's partnership with HCT to realise benefits for both organisations, and for existing and potential users.
- Provide high-quality library and cultural experiences, contributing towards HCC's and HCT's strategic goals.
- Realise WDC's full potential and furthering its founding vision as a progressive cultural venue.
- Reimage the way in which the building and facilities are used and managed.
- Integrate all cultural aspects of WDC under one programming vision.
- Pilot a programming model with the potential to be delivered across the library network (phase 2).

The benefits of the partnership approach and shared vision are:

Financial

- To improve the return on investment for both organisations.
- To secure operational efficiencies related to management of the building.
- To enable joint funding applications to Arts Council England and other funders.

Customer

- To increase public access by safeguarding and increasing opening times.
- To continue to grow a diverse cultural programme.
- To enhance the customer journey and experience (before, during and after their visit).

Organisational

- To secure the long-term viability of the site.
- To grow participation and increase visitor numbers.

The shared vision is being delivered for:

- People who live, work or study in Winchester and Hampshire.
- People who visit Winchester for leisure.

How the vision will be delivered

Delivering high-quality library services

Hampshire Library Service will continue to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service, free at the point of access, within WDC. It will work to deliver its vision to promote reading and literacy, support healthy creative communities and invest in digital services, prioritising access to technology to those at most risk of exclusion.

This will be achieved through continued provision of existing community services, as well as using the partnership approach to explore and develop new opportunities to improve literacy and social outcomes. This includes:

- Promotion of reading for pleasure, with a strong focus on early years (ages 0-5 years)
- Access to a safe and inclusive space for diverse communities to meet, learn and discover
- Purposeful engagement with hard-to-reach communities to improve literacy and social outcomes
- Access to space for quiet study and reflection
- Support for community groups
- Access to technology to help people access information, opportunities and services online

Careful management of stock will continue to ensure the best possible offer for customers, including a significant financial investment to refresh the book stock held at WDC. The location of stock within WDC will be reviewed to ensure that the space is easily navigable, and some collections could be relocated as a result. The Library Service will continue to ensure that stock reflects changing customer needs, as well as being aligned to the cultural vision for the venue.

Cultural programme

The cultural programme will create a narrative across the building and connect all activities, so that customers will be able to explore their interests in a range of different ways. Programming will be people-centric and grow with them as they progress on their personal journeys of exploration and learning at WDC.

Broad cultural and creative themes will be explored through a range of tried-and-tested programming formats:

- Flagship exhibition programme and community exhibition opportunities.
- Live performance (music, comedy, spoken word) in the Performance Hall and Café/Bar.
- Relaxed film screenings for young families and those with additional needs.

- Big name speakers in the Performance Hall and regular talks in the learning rooms.
- Regular one-off workshops for adults and young people, providing next steps to the free activities offered.
- Term-long classes for more in-depth learning experiences, focusing on life skills and creative practice.
- Digital workshops for young people and adults, developing skills in coding, gaming, and the digital arts.
- Weekly after school club for 11 to 14-year-olds to explore STEAM learning areas⁴.
- Large scale seasonal programming with half-term immersive experiences and biannual themed fairs.

The cultural programme piloted in WDC will have the potential to be adapted for delivery across the library network, which could leverage further investment in programming and increase participation.

⁴ Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u> Results of Library Consultation	<u>Date</u> 28 July 2020
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Draft Equalities Impact Assessments for both staff and service users have been prepared in relation to the proposed partnership.

For service users, impacts on age, disability and pregnancy and maternity have been assessed as positive, due to opportunities offered by the partnership, including an enhanced cultural offer, which will align with Hampshire Libraries' Strategy to 2025, which has a particular focus on supporting literacy in the Early Years (age 0-5). Improvements to facilities (including updates to the public WCs and Changing Spaces toilet), potential increases to the building opening hours and the continued promotion of the building as a safe and welcoming community space will all impact positively on service users.

For staff, impacts on age, disability, gender and pregnancy and maternity have been assessed as low. A lower percentage of the workforce at WDC are over 55 compared to the wider Library Service. Reasonable adjustments will continue to be made for staff who have declared a disability, where appropriate. 76% off the

workforce at WDC identify as female and 24% identify as male and impacts on gender, pregnancy and maternity have been assessed as low.”