

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 2024

12th February

LIBRARIES PROVISION (INCLUDING LIBRARIES UNLOCKED) PRESENTATION

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Steven Colella, Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Climate Change
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic & Property Services
Report Author: Mat Sliwinski	Job Title: Democratic Services Officer Contact email: mateusz.sliwinski@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	N/A
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Overview and Scrutiny Board is asked to RESOLVE that the report and the associated presentation delivered to Members at the meeting be noted.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Board have debated in what form to investigate the topic regarding future of library provision within the District. This discussion took place at an Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting on 20th November 2023. This discussion took place following a request for investigation after a Notice of Motion put forward by Councillor H. D. N. Rone-Clarke at the Council meeting held on 19th July 2023 as follows:

“There is a threat to the future of our libraries and the way in which they are to be managed. It is proposed that Bromsgrove, Rubery and Wythall Libraries will be the first in the County to become ‘unmanned.’ There will be serious consequences associated with such changes both for staff and users of this service. Therefore, we call upon the Overview and Scrutiny Board to investigate the consequences of such action.”

- 2.2 At the meeting on 20th November 2023, it was resolved by the Overview and Scrutiny Board that the matter be discussed as soon as possible at one of the regular Overview and Scrutiny meetings.
- 2.3 It was requested that the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities (including Libraries) from Worcestershire County Council be invited to attend this meeting of Overview and Scrutiny alongside relevant officers from the County Council, to assist with answering Members' queries on the subject of library provision.
- 2.4 The Cabinet Member and Officers from Worcestershire County Council are due to attend this meeting

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 A request from full Council has been made to investigate the consequences of proposed changes to the library provision in the District.
- 3.2 The Board decided that it would be appropriate to invite the Portfolio Holder and Officers from Worcestershire County Council to this meeting to provide more information on the subject.
- 3.3 It is noted that based on the outcome of meeting discussions, the Board could request that further investigation needs to be undertaken, or that no further action is required at this point.
- 3.5 It is noted that the Review of Libraries Task Group was last carried out in 2021, and that Members had scrutinised the recommendations of that Task Group at a previous Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications directly relating to this report, however, if there are any proposals recommended by Overview and Scrutiny which are subsequently agreed for implementation by Council's decision-making committees, there could be potential financial implications.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications directly relating to this report, however, if there are any proposals recommended by Overview and Scrutiny, these would potentially have legal implications that needed to be considered.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 6.1 Governance underpins all of Council's strategic purposes.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.2 There are no climate change implications at this stage. The green thread runs through the Council plan.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.3 There are no equalities implications at this stage.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Not applicable at this stage as this report is to note that a presentation on the subject of libraries will be provided to Members at the meeting.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Presentation about libraries provision (to follow)