

Devon
Library & Information Services

Position Statement
2003

Education Arts and Libraries

Devon Library & Information Services

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Contents

1. Corporate Vision

- 1.1 Vision and ambition for the Library Service p.3

2. Response to Framework for the Future

- 2.1 Books, reading and learning p.6
- 2.2 Digital citizenship p.11
- 2.3 Community and civic values p.13
- 2.4 Building capacity to deliver transformation p.16

3. Public Library Standards

- 3.1 National Standards – PLS 1-19 p.18
- 3.2 Local Standards p.19

4. Resources

- 4.1 Spaces p.20
- 4.2 Stock p.20
- 4.3 Staffing p.20
- 4.4 ICT p.21

Devon Library & Information Services

Position Statement 2003

1. CORPORATE VISION

1.1 Vision and ambition for the public library service

Devon County Council's overall strategic goal for the Library and Information Service is stated in its new Strategic Plan 2003-2008 *Working for a Better Devon* as "broadening access to library services". This is in the wider context of improving access to all council services, and builds on the County Council's aim of "developing the library service as community information and learning centres" which it specified in its previous Strategic Plan. The new goal has a clear target of increasing membership and use (see priority objective target p9) as demonstrating improved access. In the Plan, *Framework for the Future* is acknowledged as the national context in which the Library Service needs to position itself at the heart of the communities it serves and thereby contributes to Devon's environment, culture and heritage as well as supporting informal learning and achievement.

Alongside this, the County Council has recognised that the Library Service - through the People's Network - is well-placed to contribute substantially to the County Council's approach to fast-tracking e-government in Devon to meet the government's Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets. The Council's public policy *New Ways – developing electronic government in Devon* highlights Online Libraries as a service already in place bringing ICT benefits to many people, and underlines the importance of libraries as public access points for both electronic and face-to-face transactions. This role is also exemplified in the *Devon Rural Strategy* for local strategic partnerships as "providing and encouraging access to high quality learning and uptake of ICT".

The mission of the Service is to be "a major community resource whose purpose is to enhance the quality of life of individuals and communities, by enabling and encouraging access to information, knowledge and works of creative imagination". The big challenge, however, for the County Council is how best to enhance access to library services in a large rural county like Devon, with a dispersed but growing and increasingly elderly population, and with young people leaving because of expensive housing and lack of opportunity.

The Service has the potential to do more given improved investment to evolve and deliver the changes which are envisaged by central government. At the same time, there are constraints which continue to affect the Service's capacity to meet its objectives towards *Framework for the Future*, and these are indicated in the analysis tables that follow. The main areas are :

- Staff capacity/staff training
- Bookfund resources
- Opening hours and sustaining the current network of libraries

The Best Value inspection report (2002) on the Library Service noted that there had been under-investment in the Library Service as a result of other County Council budget priorities. In response to the inspection findings, and in recognition of the Library Service's evolving role, the County Council has begun to increase resources to build capacity to meet existing and new challenges and there was broad political support for the Library Service's bid to the Medium-Term Financial Plan. The Authority also made a conscious decision to increase Council Tax to a level that would demonstrate improvements in certain services, and the Library Service has benefited from this, with £451,000 allocated in 2003/04 to improve the Resources Fund and to support service developments.

Strategic Review of the Library Service

It was agreed that a Strategic Review of libraries would be carried out - with elected member participation – and this is underway. The aim of the Review is to see where changes might make better use of resources as the Library Service evolves into its strengthened and modernised role, and which can be endorsed by all stakeholders. It is intended that the Review will produce:

- A 10 year development plan for the Service, to include its role in relation to corporate objectives eg E-Government, and to national objectives included in *Framework for the Future*
- Agreement about
 - the network of static libraries to be provided
 - the criteria for provision of mobile stops
 - future plans for new/replacement libraries and/or co-located libraries
 - staffing levels and structures to deliver the vision

As part of the Strategic Review, the Library Service will also be consulting with local communities to explore the scope

- to adjust opening hours per individual library within present levels of budget and staffing
- to apply any new funding to sustain additional opening hours

User surveys have indicated that most people would like longer opening hours, especially at lunch times and all day on Saturdays for larger libraries. As this key issue impacts on the capacity of the Library Service to deliver on the County Council's strategic goals for social inclusion, enabling learning and e-government, the Council has provided funding through its Medium Term Financial Plan

- to enable Exeter Central Library to open on Sundays with effect from autumn this year
- to allow scope for more libraries to open on Saturday afternoons
- to meet demand for increased opening hours when a new library has been opened

Capacity Building

The evidence of capacity-building includes:

1. County Council investment towards meeting the Public Library Standards and the goals outlined in *Framework for the Future*

Improvements in resources totalling £600,000 over the last 2 years include funding to

- Improve the bookfund by £450,000 (a 25% increase)
- Address opening hours and access as outlined above eg weekend opening
- Improve staffing capacity – particularly for helping people with ICT

This positive response is starting to make an impact on key targets eg increased use and membership and outcomes eg user satisfaction and should continue the improved performance of 2002/03 which saw, for example :

- a 1.2 % increase in visits to 3.63 million
- a 3% increase in registered library members to 376,000 (53%of pop)
- a 50% increase in children aged under-5 joining the library (to 7151, 18% of all U-5s)
- more than 33,000 computer sessions per month and 17,000 hits per week on the Library Service web pages (particularly the Local Studies pages) which is the 3rd most visited site on Information Devon, the County Council's website

2. County Council support for the People's Network and the Library Service's role in working towards DCC e-government, public access and community information strategies.

This has been underlined by

- the corporate commitment to sustaining provision after NOF funding ends, and particularly as key to the County Council's Public Access Strategy
- corporate funding to develop a new community organisations database so that information can be shared and updated more easily

- facilitating the new NOF-Digitise funded content management system for the “Etched on Devon’s Memory” project
- recognition of, and funding for, libraries e-skilling role in the successful UK Online *Get Started* campaign, with members of the public benefiting from staff having more one-to-one time to demonstrate recently-acquired skills in helping people wanting to use computers

This support complements online service developments which are seen by the Authority as access improvements under e-government :

- online catalogue, averaging 11,000 accesses per month
- online renewals, with over 3000 web renewals per month
- virtual visits, especially to the local studies webpages, which have a learning as well as information dividend. These currently average 17,000 visits per week
- online reservations once all libraries have been added to the Galaxy system by the end of 2003/04, with a target of 5000 online reservations per year thereafter

3. County, District and community partnership working to meet continuing demand and DDA requirements.

Under the Education Arts and Libraries capital building programme for new and refurbished libraries and improved access to services, there is a total investment of over £1m in 2003/04, including

- a £700k contribution to a new library at Tiverton in partnership with Mid-Devon District Council to open March 2004
- DDA improvements from the single capital pot eg £120,000 for a new lift at Newton Abbot Library and Learning Centre
- minor works funding of £112,000 for 2003/04, including smaller DDA improvements as well as refurbishments. Provision is also included in the 2004-07 indicative programme for ongoing minor improvements

In addition, there is also priority approval for a community partnership building project at Dartmouth next year, which includes a new library - total scheme valued at £730,000 – and funding to start a project to remodel Exeter Central Library. This follows on from the successful new libraries at Tavistock and Seaton, which have doubled the available public space, provided increased bookstock and extended public access ICT facilities.

4. A positive response to the establishment of a Reader Development Officer post to develop policies and practice to support the promotion of books, reading and literacy skills for adults (see 2.1 below)

5. A more flexible approach to library fees and charges to allow work towards a more socially inclusive approach to charging, and realistic income targets to assist this process.

Growth in video income of 17% and DVD income of 300% has - in the overall budget - helped to offset any loss of income from positive actions such as improving specific needs entitlements, reducing children’s fines, eliminating charges for under-5s and pegging adult fines to promote library use and membership. Both the County Council and the Library Service, however, face a challenge in extending entitlements to benefit low-income and harder-to-reach groups.

2. RESPONSE TO FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE

2.1 Books, reading and learning

Key Strengths	Constraints	Challenges
Stock management policy and improved stock management and purchasing regime. Good selection and supply of most popular new books and growth of topic /circulating collections Significant improvement to the Resources Fund, and to purchasing power with improved discounts	Capacity of DCC budget to respond to Public Library Standards imperatives. The timescale for "turning the ship around" to make an impact on users (though anecdotally there is good feedback on stock improvements thus far). Capacity of Stock Team to cope with increased stock handling/throughput	Maintaining and augmenting recent improvements in Resources Fund to achieve Public Library Standards. Strengthening core stock and managing to broaden range to improve minority interests. Stack management.
Reader Development Officer post established and policy produced to provide focus. Improving development activities and promotion of reading including national initiatives. Development of reading groups and local enthusiasm of public and staff.	Amount of staff time and input that is possible/desirable. Dynamics of local reading groups	Sustaining reading groups across a wider range of libraries. Working in partnerships to engage with harder-to-reach groups. Developing the website/wider promotion Securing external funding/ sponsorship.
For Children's Services, range of services/ good initiatives in place, eg Summer Reading Challenge. Improved membership incentives. Continuing high level of press coverage and family interest	Limited staffing (2 professional posts and a p/t Book Start coordinator) to make links and impact on <i>outreach</i> across the county eg visits to schools and pre-school settings	Improving the professional base and enhancing links with children's learning, education and recreational settings to encourage library use and reading. Improving provision for teenagers
Supporting pre-school reading and learning through partnership including Bookstart and Sure Start	Uncertainty over national funding stream year-on-year. Capacity to develop links with early years providers	Raising the library joining rate for parents and babies signed up to Book Start. Extending role in Sure Start. Developing pro-active links with pre-school organisations
Enabling learning opportunities for individuals in informal settings. Very good links with other learning providers in partnership eg Devon Adult & Community Learning, BBC, Learndirect.	Capacity to meet range of new initiatives in the rapidly-changing learning environment without a designated post	Persuading funders eg LSC of the value of the library role in supporting learning. Having a Learning strategy action plan which can be achieved. Engaging with national launch of "Inspiring Learning" in 2004
Key role in support of the County Council's e-skilling strategy as part of e-gov related learning. IAG accreditation	Current staffing capacity and capability	Providing capacity/capability to support e-skilling for the community. Strengthening the role in support of basic skills

Key policies and practice for adults and children

Adult Reader development

The basis of adult reader development in Devon's libraries is to support and encourage the experience and enjoyment of reading. This is regarded as an important strand of library service development, and the appointment of a permanent Reader Development officer has proved of enormous value in demonstrating the benefits of designated specialist staffing. The progress made helps both to cement and extend the Library Service's commitment to its readers, and along with reader development training, to embed the practice of reader development in the day-to-day work of staff.

The Reader Development Officer's role has enabled the following to take place:

- Reader Development Policy devised and implemented including also a reading groups policy
- 7 existing groups maintained and supported and 11 new reading groups set up
- Web book review pages under development and author "taster" bookmark series enhanced
- Extensive new reading and stock promotion through, for example, the Orange Fiction Prize and Black History Month, complementing the Stock Managers' programme of themed book displays and circulating collections designed to widen interest
- Partnership networking with other library authorities, the voluntary sector and with Prison Librarians to promote reading and reader development for a range of abilities

The next stage is to

- explore ways of introducing more groups and non-library users, related to the Library Service marketing strategy
- establish closer working with partners on providing and promoting basic literacy skills
- improve use and coordination of the Reading Promotion budget (£5,000 funding in place) to support reading and literature-related promotional events and activities in libraries, and as part of the corporate Cultural Strategy, participate in author visits and literature festivals
- explore with the Children's Team ways of developing family and shared reading opportunities which are attractive to both adults and children. The Library Service also needs to address – through partnership funding or secondment – how a designated post could promote wider reading horizons for young people to support their transition to adulthood. This would improve the capacity of the Service to work with the Youth Service by engaging more effectively with young people so that in their eyes the library becomes more socially-inclusive and relevant to them

Key policies and practice

Membership is open to all from the earliest age and is free, which is also a key plank of the Library Service's marketing strategy. The intention is to attract non-users into libraries through an easier joining process and incentives to join which highlight audio-visual services and PC facilities as a magnet to encourage use of the bookstock for people to browse and to choose, giving them scope to

- learn something new, update skills or widen horizons through non-fiction materials, which can often enrich their local community as well as themselves
- experience and enjoy fiction reading which can be challenging, comforting or create a different perspective

Policies include :

Reader Development

Stock Management

Borrower entitlements including specific categories/needs eg visually impaired

Fees and Charges

Service information in hard copy and online

Renewals including online

Reservations

Encouraging Children's reading and learning

For children and young people aged 0-16 years and their parents and carers, the overall service aims are to:

- Encourage and assist children to become well-informed and literate individuals
- Promote a love of books and reading for pleasure during holidays and school-time
- Promote membership of the library
- Foster the parent/child habit of listening to and sharing stories
- Develop the skills needed to use libraries and access information for lifelong learning

The Educational Development Plan, 2002-2007 sets the priorities and provides the framework for LEA activities that directly support schools in raising the level of pupil attainment. The School Library Service, which is now completely separate from the Public Library Service and wholly run as a traded service within the LEA, make specific contributions to the Plan but the Public Library Service is also acknowledged as making a contribution, in two sections in particular:

- **Raising pupils attainment by improving the quality of teaching support in Early Years**
The EDP action plan includes working with the Library Service to increase local access to learning resources. Partnership working has involved the Library Service participating in all of the Sure Start schemes in the County, provision of designated Out of School Study Support schemes and Bounce and Rhyme sessions, as well as offering enhanced loan entitlements for teachers and home educators.
- **Raising attainment in literacy**
Various activities in the Library Service are aimed at contributing to this target, including reading promotion schemes such as Bookstart, Bounce and Rhyme sessions, Booktrack and the summer reading challenge (see below). Acknowledgement of the contribution that the library service can make is evidenced by Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (Zero 14 plus) supporting the work of the Bookstart scheme. The Library Service also ensures the promotion of the activities through all primary schools and the Primary Times newsletter.

Key policies and practice

- Reading promotion – Bookstart, Booktrack, Summer Reading Challenge involving branch library staff as well as Children’s Team
- Child safety in libraries – “A Safe Place for Children”
- Stock management profiles
- Use of library computers by U-16s
- Loan entitlements for specific groups and individuals eg pre-school groups, disabled children, teachers, home educators
- Homework clubs
- Library [ICT] support for out-of-school children – partnership with Link Education Service, which may also be extended to excluded pupils

More than 3500 children attend library activities and events each year, and there are more than 70,000 children who are registered library borrowers, estimated at 25% of all borrowers and 55% of total U-16s in the county. The Library Service needs to continue to attract children not only in their own right as borrowers and users but also as future adult users. To support the aims of encouraging children and their parents to use libraries and enjoy reading - which is also contributing to social inclusion - enhanced borrower entitlements for children include:

- No fines for under fives
- Reduced fines - this is 20% of the adult rate and has been reduced over both the last 2 years.
- Free book reservations
- Children with disabilities are entitled to borrow spoken word tapes and CD’s on the same terms as books.
- Lost and damaged first/picture books – more staff discretion

There has been a very positive response to these initiatives from users, non-users and staff. Some parents, particularly those on lower incomes, have joined their children (and themselves) as a direct result of these changes being introduced to make using the library more welcoming. The loss of income has been absorbed into the overall Library Service budget, so there is every expectation that these improvements can be sustained.

Promoting reading for enjoyment and the development of literacy is encouraged through a number of initiatives including:

Bookstart

In partnership with Health Visitors all babies are provided with a pack of material promoting shared reading, library membership and Early Years and Childcare Partnership information. A consultation exercise found that 94% of babies were not members at health check, and 56% of parents were not aware they could enrol their baby at any age. To date, more than 12,000 packs have been sent out and over 400 babies (10% of under-5s) and 100 parents have joined. National funding difficulties have been tackled locally, with the Library Service raising 75% of its support costs for Bookstart and Bookstart Plus from a range of external sources in partnerships. Research has shown that Bookstart - alongside SureStart initiatives in Devon - contributes significantly to learning, literacy and language skills, family cohesion and social inclusion.

Booktrack/ Book Reviews/Reading Clubs/Holiday reading challenge

- Bounce and Rhyme sessions are held in 25 libraries currently to encourage parents and young children to enjoy reading and using the library. There has been a very positive response to this, contributing to a 50% rise in Under-5s membership in 2002/03 to 7151
- Booktrack is a reading encouragement scheme for 6 year old+ children operated through libraries and overseen by Children's Librarians, and over 2,570 children participated last year. Children who have completed Booktrack are encouraged to provide reviews of the books they have read and some are selected for publication on the library web page
- Reading clubs for children are being encouraged where resources allow

Support for Learning – Adults and children

There is growing recognition of the Library Service's role in enabling and providing informal learning settings and participating in learning partnerships. This has included, for example, working in partnership to host/establish Homework clubs for children, which are being extended further after successful implementation in several larger libraries, where 500 children and young people have participated.

There is, however, currently no Learning Strategy in place to

- Draw together the extensive range of activities for adults and children in which libraries participate/facilitate or might do so in the near future
- Respond coherently to the launch of "Inspiring Learning" nationally in early 2004
- Reflect the work of SWMLAC in promoting the learning role of library services as part of cultural sector

The Library Service has already explored – with an unsuccessful funding bid - whether the LSC's remit would extend to recognising the need to develop informal learning settings/ways of learning in libraries. The absence of funding affects the Library Service's capacity to meet the substantial challenges of the fast-moving learning world, and the appointment of a Learning Development Officer to develop the Learning Strategy would give the sort of focus and impetus which the Reader Development Officer has given to adult reader development. The aim now is to identify how the corporate e-skilling project currently underway might facilitate the Learning Development role as a logical extension of the Library Service's contribution to e-government goals.

PRIORITY OBJECTIVE	Key Target/timescale**
<i>** note timescales indicated in all tables follow the ALP model of showing end dates unless specified otherwise</i>	
Improve overall user satisfaction levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve quality and currency of bookstock through improved funding of £400,000 for 2004/05 March 2005
Widen the participation of library users and non-users in book-related and library activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce at least 5 new reading groups March 2004 ▪ Set up a focus group with an ethnic community March 2004
Enhance reading and the library experience for children of all ages, particularly under-5s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase library membership of Under-5s by 300% to 10,000 - December 2005 ▪ Develop and promote policy for excluded children including eg travellers, looked-after children, pupils March 2004
Widen the participation of library users and non-users in informal learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secure partnership funding to produce and implement Learning Development Strategy March 2004 ▪ Produce and implement Basic Skills policy in conjunction with Reading Agency's Vital Link initiative - March 2004

Evaluation

The following approaches are used to evaluate practice across a range of services, *and for the sake of brevity, apply selectively* to all Evaluation sections of the Position Statement onwards:

- Monitoring of team objectives by teams, by Management Team and by Quality, Performance and Development Librarian for library plans to feed into Education Arts and Libraries Service Action Plan
- Feedback from PLUS and other surveys
- Customer feedback form/ Comments, complaints and compliments monitoring
- Feedback from users of public access computers
- Feedback from Booktrackers
- Stock assessment: the currency, quality and use of stock is monitored continuously by local staff and regularly by specialist staff
- Training needs analysis, course feedback and induction training checklists
- Staff performance appraisal process – helping staff to make the link between the library strategies/objectives and workplace and personal development targets
- Response tracking for specific marketing and service promotion initiatives
- Income monitoring and response to new media collections
- Benchmarking and management information including performance indicator monitoring
- Activity count for activities in branch and central libraries
- Use of recognised toolkits to work to national standards and guidelines
- EFQM quality framework

The Chartermark process, new IAG Matrix accreditation (both 2004) and the Strategic Review will also provide the means for additional evaluation.

2.2 Digital citizenship

Key Strengths	Constraints	Challenges
Improved access to PCs across all libraries	Space in libraries for [more] PCs Technological capacity to make ICT access on mobiles work. Funding the purchase and support of additional PCs in the post-PN era	Managing public expectations of staff assistance Increased home ownership and accessing library services remotely
Service improvements made possible by PN-funded infrastructure, including online renewals , web catalogue and in 2003/4 online reservations. Improved website	Matching and funding staff training needs to service developments. Staffing levels	Effective marketing to promote take-up that is manageable.
External funding and corporate support from County Council and ICT services to achieve and sustain PN implementation	Levels and funding of technical support available to sustain further developments Lack of space for staff-dedicated PCs	Developing e-government role with e-enabled library services Securing corporate funding to continue and sustain development Assisting with community websites
Staff with acquired knowledge and capacity to undertake ICT role. ICT taster and training sessions for the public in partnership with BBC, ACL , Get Started etc	Managing demand for one-to-one staff help Capacity for further training eg diversity and social inclusion	Building staff knowledge to undertake assessment and validation of web-based sources Developing sessions for socially-excluded groups
ICT access for people with disabilities	Scope of staff training	Extending adaptive technology to more libraries
Use of new technology to deliver a wider range of information in (smaller) libraries	Cost and licence terms of online subscription services	Developing virtual information services on the web, and access to online subscription services for library members in the home and workplace
Digitisation, links with local communities for original materials	Sustainability of staffing to manage content and copyright	Developing content with limited resources

Key policies and practice

While providing ICT facilities can be regarded as part of the core service in itself, the Library Service sees ICT as, essentially, a means to various ends - supporting learning, encouraging inclusion, developing new skills, enhancing communication and providing information. The Library ICT Strategy is therefore perceived as key to the delivery of 21st century library services, quality content and the e-government goals of the County Council, over and above the provision of facilities and processes. Key policies/practice include

- Access policy/computer use membership – see www.devon.gov.uk/library
- Acceptable use of computers
- Computer use by Under-16s/filtering
- Community Organisations database – collection of data
- Digitisation protocols including publishing guidelines
- Online Renewals/PIN/access to personal data
- Study Support access

The Library Service and E-Government

The Library Service is contributing to the following County Council E-Government targets which the Authority is aiming to achieve one year ahead of national government targets:

1. 100% (currently 39%) of agreed services capable of electronic delivery to be delivered by these means by 2004 – *the Library Service already has the following services e-enabled:*

Service	In-Library	Remotely
Free internet access	Y	N/A
E-mail	Y	N/A
Word-processing	Y	N/A
Online catalogue/OPAC	Y	Y
Online renewals/PIN	Y	Y
Online reservations	N/A (by March 04)	N/A (by March 04)
Community information	Y	Y
Joining the library	-	N
Service & contacts information	Y	Y
Mobile library service stops	Y	Y
Computer taster courses	Y	N
Web feedback	Y	Y
Events diary	Y	Y
Online reference services eg Oxford	Y	Some
Online reference enquiry service	Y	Y

2. 95% (currently 81%) of Devon residents to travel less than 3 miles to their nearest free internet access point – *the Strategic Review will need to take this target into account*
3. 50% of the hardest to reach residents in Devon to have access to a mobile community access and learning point once a week. *DCC mobile information/access service about to be launched – the use of satellite technology will be evaluated to see if it can be implemented on mobile library vehicles*

The Library Service has an important role under the County Council's Public Access Strategy in providing community access points for up-to-date local and global information, computer access and learning opportunities. Specifically for the Library Service, building on the People's Network implementation, the areas for development include content, interactive services, website and webguide developments. As all Devon libraries are UK Online centres, there will also be scope for:

- Interactive or transactional learning and work opportunities online
- Joining the library remotely (followed by in-library validation)
- Library membership as first-level authentication for people wishing to apply for other council services
- Booking library computers and hiring display space online
- Online consultation and interaction with elected members via a library PC.
- Electronic payments for services, a corporate project which will have an impact on library transactions/borrower accounts

Evaluation

see section 2.1 above

PRIORITY OBJECTIVE	Key Target/timescale
Enhance public access to ICT-based services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce online reservations - March 2004 ▪ Extend adaptive technology - March 2005 ▪ Introduce ICT on mobiles - December 2004 ▪ Secure corporate funding to promote and sustain development - December 2003
Develop public capacity for self-issue library use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce pilot self-issue systems in Exeter Central Library and the new Tiverton Library - March 2004.
Contribute to County Council e-government initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete membership policy/procedural changes March 2004 ▪ Implement or extend agreed e-enabled library services, with selected libraries as DCC e-access points - December 2004
Ensure staff are trained to meet public demand for ICT services	See section 2.4 below
Develop online information resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement new Community Organisations database and protocols - March 2004 ▪ Establish two further county subscriptions to major online resources - March 2004
Develop digitised content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement Local Studies Content Management system December 2003 ▪ Secure sustainability funding for content development March 2004

2.3 Community and civic values

Key Strengths	Constraints	Challenges
High level of public goodwill and up to 50% of population using libraries. Good channels of user feedback via surveys and customer feedback	Consultation fatigue for users and staff. Costs of consultation processes. Funding for higher profile marketing and promotion	Reaching non-users and re-engaging lapsed users. Improving feedback to users and promoting services. Making better use of survey analysis.
Library services to nearly every community through static and mobile libraries	Effectiveness and efficiency of maintaining such a large network. Rurality and distance	Making opening hours more flexible to meet public demand, demography and lifestyle patterns Managing expectations
Capital programme for shared library premises and refurbishments	Failure to identify suitable sites/premises and lack of funding to progress improvements	Capacity to make improvements to meet DDA requirements
Level of service to people with specific needs including with other agencies eg housebound, residential homes, day centres, visually-impaired, hearing loops in most libraries	Capacity to meet expectations for improvement and to target specific groups	Setting and achieving social inclusion goals of improving services to minority groups. Meeting DDA requirements Improving joining procedures and membership entitlements for all
Information for the community. Community Organisations Database. Level of info resources in each library	Sustainability costs for procurement Need to meet continuing demand for printed materials	Migrating from print-based to more electronic based resources. Developing Community website support
Strong community links and rich heritage resources. Clear Local Studies strategy	Staffing and skills base to maximise the resources and maintain momentum	Extending access through further digitisation

Developing Citizenship and encouraging community identity

The strategic goals for the Library Service reflect components of the 2013 *Framework* vision for services and are aimed at improving the quality of life for the people of Devon, but also to develop citizenship and encourage community identity. The Library Service helps individuals and groups in the community - whether or not they already use their local library - to achieve this by:

- Promoting **reading** and literacy skills for people of all ages and abilities
- Identifying and responding with others to the reading needs of **children and young people** from the earliest age, to encourage the enjoyment of reading and use of libraries
- Supporting participation in lifelong **learning** by adding value through the informal learning setting, and stimulating opportunities for personal development
- Providing community-based venues for other learning providers to use
- Implementing **e-government** objectives for access to information, communication and learning opportunities through the People's Network including staff training to help users access the internet, more online services and "virtual visits" and developing digitised content
- Ensuring that all citizens have access to, and help to navigate, a range of **information** to enable them to exercise choice in meeting their own needs, to develop new skills and to have access to learning and job opportunities
- Promoting **cultural and local heritage**, through the written word and support for the performing arts
- Supporting heritage learning – finding out about where you live, where your family came from
- Contributing to the positive use of **leisure** time and providing an important neutral and welcoming **space** for individuals within communities
- Helping people with **specific needs** arising from physical or sensory disability; learning, literacy or language difficulties; or who belong to marginalized groups

Access to services is key to supporting community and civic values, but with limited opening hours and resources spread thinly, many of the Library Service's objectives in support of County Council goals and the *Framework for the Future* vision are inevitably constrained. The key factors below relate to opening hours and the Strategic Review will be taking these into account :

- As many communities do not have access to basic facilities such as a village shop or post office and transport is limited, it is a priority for the County Council to combat the effects of social exclusion and rural isolation
- The role of branch libraries as a focal point remains important, and will gain further impetus in the context of the County Council's strategies for e-government, community regeneration and community safety, and in the context of Freedom of Information
- Population growth for some local communities, along with changing local expectations, translate into more requests for shared, relocated and enhanced premises.
- Every user survey has highlighted the public demand for larger, better-stocked, more accessible libraries. Funding levels in the EAL capital-spending programme have set priorities for particular libraries based largely on DDA-related access requirements.
- While the mobile library service visits most parishes across the county and is well-placed to respond to local demand, Devon's range of static library opening hours are based on sizes of community, and largely on an historical basis for where libraries are located. Library opening hours range from over 50 hours per week to less than 10 hours per week. The Mobile Library Service could be utilised in more urbanised areas at evenings and weekends
- Access to libraries outside 9-5 core time averages 24% of the total opening hours. Devon dipped below the Public Library Standard of 128 aggregate (ie total all libraries) weekly opening hours per 1000 population in 2002/3 because of population changes. **To achieve the Standard the total number of weekly opening hours would need to increase 49 hours per week (2,467 pa).**

Key policies and practice for adults and children

These are reviewed periodically to see where changes to policy and/or procedures need to be made to reflect policy developments, major themes and national initiatives

- Library membership entitlements including specific needs
- Mobile stop criteria
- Renewals and reservations
- ICT public access policies
- Published opening and closure hours
- Published feedback to users on survey results
- Operating agreements for service delivery to residential homes and to housebound people
- Access and guidance to library facilities

Improving customer services

- The Library Service is currently working on a submission for the revised Charter Mark as part of corporate policy
- A senior library manager has been involved heavily in a corporate project to revise comments/complaints procedures based to a large extent on the successful Library version
- Library staff participate in corporate customer care courses and the aim is for this strand to run through in-house courses for frontline library staff
- E-government will also provide an important structure for improving customer care with better access and response to enquiries

PRIORITY OBJECTIVE	Key Target/timescale
Improve awareness and use of library services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Achieve 55% of Devon population as registered library users - March 2005 ▪ Produce and implement marketing strategy March 2004 ▪ Develop "return anywhere" policy for borrowing March 2005 ▪ Achieve Charter Mark - June 2004 ▪ Extend surveys to include mobile library users, lapsed and non-library users - March 2004
Enhance opening hours in partnership with local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake Strategic Review of the library network including mobile library service - March 2004 ▪ Implement changes in opening hours - March 2005
Improve premises to make library services more accessible and welcoming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete partnership building/multi-agency use projects under Capital premises programme eg Tiverton, Dartmouth March 2005 ▪ Act on DDA survey of libraries to establish funding streams and make improvements - March 2004
Involve users and partners more in shaping services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce published service standards as part of Charter Mark - March 2004 ▪ Extend opportunities for using Friends and volunteers March 2004 ▪ Undertake Childrens PLUS - March 2004
Engage more effectively with socially-excluded groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce easier joining procedures to meet more specific needs - March 2004 ▪ Review current provision for ethnic minority and hard-to-reach groups - March 2004
Enhance services for people with specific needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secure funding of £8k to extend Total Communications technology to 4 more libraries beyond 8-library pilot March 2005

Evaluation

see section 2.1 above

2.4 Building capacity to deliver transformation

Key Strengths	Constraints	Challenges
<i>Note that this table focuses on staffing as key to delivering transformation. Please see tables in previous sections which underline the building blocks of premises, ICT and stock as key to building capacity</i>		
High level of staff commitment and knowledge, and continuously improving level of staff knowledge for new areas of work	Relatively low grades and limited career opportunities affect recruitment, particularly (younger) professional staff	Improving staffing levels and training to cope with the wider range of tasks and duties now expected of frontline staff on basic pay scales. Maintaining morale in the face of increased and changing workloads.
Overall improvements in level and scope of staff training and numbers of staff being trained. Range of in-house courses	Support for Training and Development co-ordination role. Small (<1%) training budget	Improving relief staffing cover capacity to support increased training needs, library outreach activities and additional departmental on-costs from new county initiatives
Staff Training in ICT skills under PN	Capacity to sustain training beyond NOF funding	Building staff knowledge to undertake assessment and validation of web-based sources
Staff training improvements linked to performance appraisal scheme	The difficulties of sustaining multi-tasking managers in key roles e.g. Staff Training and Development co-ordination	More training and "time out" to support staff development/awareness of information sources and services.
Staff developing skills to engage in partnership working	Capacity and opportunity to support development & training of partnership working skills	Developing frontline staff-in-charge's capacity for partnership working

Improving leadership, staff capacity and skills

This is currently achieved and monitored through

- Staff training for ICT skills : as trainers and for the workplace
- Specific sector training eg reference work
- Provision of training and guidance manuals as workplace manuals and available on the library intranet
- Peer group training, building on in-house training which has worked so well for PN
- Performance appraisal
- Course/conference attendance
- Hours support for study/time out
- Support for staff undertaking City & Guilds/NVQ, NEBSM Team leader and Certificate in Management Studies
- LGV training for mobile library relief staff
- Diversity and equal opportunities training
- Opportunity to shape library policy through membership of task groups
- Involvement with professional associations
- Involvement in new library planning
- EQFM and other planning/performance tools

Areas for further development include

- Improving staffing levels to
 - make better use of senior frontline staff-in-charge
 - allow more capacity for other staff to develop skills and widen participation in service development
- Introduction of competency based framework
- Defining and implementing a new staffing formula
- Improved training budget
- Designated Training and Development manager resource

- Re-introduction of suitably-graded professional “launchpad” posts
- Development of frontline staff skills for partnership working
- Development of skills and awareness for frontline staff to support learning
- Designated Learning Development Officer resource

Evaluation

see section 2.1 above

Partnerships

The Library Service firmly believes in the value of partnership working both to achieve the Library Service’s own aims and objectives and to meet wider national and County Council agendas. The main benefits for both the “customer” and the organisations involved are shared goals, complementary resources (staffing, expertise, finance and premises) and a more seamless approach to minimise duplication of effort and short-lived/smaller-scale funding. Examples in Devon include:

- Learning, Basic Skills and ICT eg. Devon Adult & Community Learning, BBC, Learn Direct, Devon & Torbay Learning Partnership, Exeter Learning City
- Information eg GO4 IAG, HE, FE,
- Social inclusion/children and young people eg Book Start, Sure Start,
- Voluntary eg WRVS, Friends groups and volunteers
- Buildings eg local development trusts
- Local Studies eg family and local history groups
- Stock purchase eg CUSP South West library authorities
- Local eg museums, CAB, business sponsorship, ethnic communities in Exeter
- Regional eg SWMLAC eg for pilot Exemplars project, SWRLS, SWACL

PRIORITY OBJECTIVE	Key Target/timescale
Develop and improve staff capacity to meet changing service requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review staff roles and levels, including the capacity to maintain existing services - March 2004 ▪ Complete and implement actions from ICT Workload Survey - March 2004 ▪ Determine new staffing formula and consider implications for implementation - March 2004 ▪ Ensure staff are made aware of national, strategic and service targets in their performance appraisal March 2004 ▪ Identify and implement opportunities for developing partnership working skills - March 2004
Improve scope of staff ICT training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify sustainable funding for post-NOF era March 2004
Increase the number of staff with appropriate professional and/or ICT qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate competency based framework and relate to induction training and staff development - March 2005 ▪ Identify candidates for leadership and management training - March 2004
Raise staff awareness of equality and diversity issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure all frontline staff undertake disability awareness training - March 2004 ▪ Embark on programme for staff-in-charge to undertake diversity/equal opportunities training - March 2005

NOTE

Devon County Council is undertaking a Job Evaluation exercise 2003-2005, which will focus primarily on staff job descriptions and value of posts, but is bound to impact on the above

3. PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS : Performance 2002/03

3.1 Public Library Standards : PLS 1-19

We would support the view of DCMS that the current Public Library Standards need to be revised to embrace fully the vision of the Framework document.

The following standards were not met during 2002/03 (see Priority Objective tables in Sections for improvement targets):

Standard	Performance 2002/03	Comments
PLS1 85% of households within 2 miles of a static library	74.6% (excluding mobiles)	To achieve this, more static libraries are needed. However, in the context of Strategic Review of network + changes to mobile library criteria + capital premises programme priorities this standard is therefore unlikely to be met
PLS3 (i) 128 aggregate opening hours per 1000 pop	124.5	As above, depends on outcome of strategic review of network and opening hours. Note even if new Sunday and weekend opening hours are added, then population change will still leave the figure almost static
PLS3 (ii) 30% of aggregate opening hours outside 9-5 weekdays	23.1%	As above in PLS 3(i)
PLS 6 (i) 6 electronic workstations per 10,000 pop	3.5	People's Network has put PCs into all libraries. This standard will not be achieved within present space and premises. May be met over the next 5 years with newer libraries with more PCs, or where PCs are provided in non-library locations. Priorities for improvement including introducing adaptive technology into more libraries
PLS 9 50% of requests met within 7 days 70% of requests met within 15 days 85% of requests met within 30 days	50.7% 72% 82.8%	All libraries will be on the full Galaxy system by next March, which should ensure standards are maintained. However, performance within 30 days still depends on inter-library loans performance
PLS 11 6600 visits to libraries per 1000 population	5152	Set against the rate of population increase, along with increased remote access - and despite best efforts at improved stock, service promotion and incentives to join which have incrementally improved performance - this standard is never likely to be met given that it is unrealistic
PLS 13 (i) 75% of library users finding the information they needed	70.2	Standard previously exceeded so this is a surprise. No obvious change in information and reference provision except greater self-help on the Net. Need to see PLUS 2003/4 results to see if this is blip/trend needing action
PLS 14 95% of library users rating the knowledge of staff as "good" or "very good"	94.2	Standard all but met. Will depend on impact of staff training over the past two years
PLS 17 216 items per 1000 pop purchased per annum	168	A major boost for the Resources Fund has moved Devon closer to the Standard after years of low funding. The securing of further additional funding remains one of the Service's top priorities
PLS 18 Time taken to replenish lending stock 6.7 years	8.1	As above in PLS 17 – depends on funding levels

PLS 19 (i) 0.15 staff per 1000 pop with appropriate management qualifications	0.08	This standard is still to be defined nationally, but based on the 0.15 per 1000 benchmark, Devon currently has 56 fte posts with appropriate professional qualifications, and to meet the Standard would need 105 in total. Given budget realities and difficulties of recruiting to professional posts, progress towards the target will be incremental
PLS 19 (ii) 0.5 staff per 1000 pop with appropriate ICT qualifications	0.32	To meet the Standard, Devon needs an <i>additional</i> 129 fte staff on top of the present establishment of 223 fte who all have appropriate ICT qualifications (ie to ECDL outcomes)

3.2 Public Library Standards : Local Targets

Target not met 2002/03	Intention for 2003/04
Disabilities	
Adaptive technology	Implemented July 2003
Hearing loops	Being installed Autumn 2003
	DDA Survey of premises Summer 2003
Ethnic minority communities	
Ethnic minority reading group	Set up ethnic minority focus group : <i>see priority objectives 2.1</i>
Staff training	Improved equality and diversity awareness/training for staff in hand as part of corporate training – <i>see priority objectives 2.4</i>
	Cultural Diversity Festival bid successful for Oct-Dec 2003 project
	Possible stock resources project with Chinese community in Exeter. Children's book collections for minority communities to be set up. Funding available for both. – <i>see priority objectives 2.1</i>
Social exclusion	
Strategy	Complete strategy by March 2004. Monitor through Management Team
Engaging with harder-to-reach groups	Set targets for work with travellers and homeless people as part of social inclusion strategy – <i>see priority objectives 2.3</i>
Children	All targets met from ALP 2002 except Survey of children using single staffed static/mobile libraries, to be undertaken using new national Children's PLUS - March 2004.– <i>see priority objectives 2.3</i>

4. RESOURCES

Key Strengths	Constraints	Challenges
Improved Resources Fund	See section 2.1	
Improved income levels	Increasing reliance on income generation to support budget.	Sustaining new or improved services within current budget level. Social inclusion goals affecting income
External funding opportunities	Managing funding and partnership bids - current management structure is stretched in ability to respond	Capacity to meet range of new initiatives and rapidly-changing information and learning environment

4.1 Spaces

For key strengths, constraints and challenges see section 2.3 Community and civic values

Adequacy of resources	Authority commitment
New and refurbished premises – no scope within Library Service budget for much beyond minor improvements, refurbishment and maintenance	Bid to the single capital pot in 2004/5-2006/7 for building new libraries (partnership schemes) in Dartmouth and Totnes, refurbishing Exeter Central Library, as well as smaller projects to address DDA requirements
Opening hours – Sunday opening at Exeter and Saturday afternoons in two other libraries funded from Medium-Term Financial Strategy	Strategic Review and Medium-Term Financial Strategy
DDA – some improvements from capital minor improvements budget / internal budget eg hearing loops	Capital programme for major works

4.2 Stock

For key strengths, constraints and challenges see section 2.1 Books, reading and learning

Adequacy of resources	Authority commitment
Books and audiobooks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General lending and reference stock ▪ Online information sources - licences expensive, joint procurement a possibility ▪ Reader development collections – well-funded ▪ Large Print – boosted substantially through Resources Fund (but still not adequate to meet demand) ▪ Spoken word – ditto 	see section 2.1 for details and requirements to achieve Public Library Standards.
Video, DVD and music CD – investment in new collections see good early returns but pump-priming important	Income generation maximised through additional boost to Resources Fund.
Special collections	Largely dependant on external funding sources eg partnership funding for heritage-linked projects

4.3 Staffing

For key strengths, constraints and challenges see section 2.3 Building capacity to deliver transformation

Adequacy of resources	Authority commitment
Staffing levels – overall levels remain well below the average with Devon 31/34 shire authorities for staff per 1000 pop. Managers multi-task to the extent that capacity is very stretched to respond effectively to both operational demands and to widening agenda/ changing roles	Medium Term Financial Strategy has provided funding to address single-staffing concerns, remove lone working as appropriate and meet increased demand at new libraries
Staff capacity to meet public expectations for ICT use and guidance is in general terms inadequate	ICT workload survey and Strategic Review will inform bid to Medium Term Financial Strategy
PN training - very good level of NOF-Funding to improve staff capability but finite timescale	Corporate commitment to ICT training will be needed from 2004/5
Training budget (<1% of budget) – needs improvement to support non-ICT training	Some training funding from within EAL Directorate – will be sought again for 2004/05
Staffing relief cover – inadequate to support goals and <i>Framework</i> vision	ICT workload survey and Strategic Review will inform bid to Medium Term Financial Strategy

4.4 ICT

For key strengths, constraints and challenges see section 2.2 Digital citizenship

Adequacy of resources	Authority commitment
Galaxy system – developments internally funded	Devon ICT Services and network support
OPACS/Viewpoint - ditto	
Public access PCs – hardware and software NOF Funded	Matched funding from ICT Services for network structure and roll-out, and support secured for replacement programme
Public access PCs – charging policy. Approach has proved to be financially viable	Corporate support for affordable charging regime
ICT on mobiles	Funding sought as part of e-enabled service development through corporate e-government projects
Community information – limits on development without corporate support	Corporate support for infrastructure and partnership developments
Computer taster sessions - achieved in-house, in partnership	Selected support for national initiatives usually under e-govnt umbrella
Adaptive technology	Capital bid
Self-issue systems	Capital budget
Digitisation - content management system - content development	Devon ICT services facilitation for technical scope, servers etc.
Online developments – Scope for service budget to underwrite in absence of any e-government income	E-government funding support sought as part of e-enabled service development
Management information – DS system purchased from within existing budget	None sought