

To: Sport, Leisure and Culture Policy Board

On: 5 March 2015

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Libraries Digital Services Development in 2014 Update

1. Summary

- 1.1. The provision of high quality information and communication technology (ICT) has become an increasingly important aspect of the services provided by Renfrewshire Library Service to its customers. As the service aims to improve efficiency and modernise practices it is important that customers continue to receive excellent service and improved flexibility in how they access these services.
- 1.2. There are a number of objectives for the libraries digital services development which will be undertaken during 2015/16:
- Key objectives:
- To promote social and digital inclusion by enabling access to ICT facilities;
 - To support the ICT learning needs of adults, children and communities;
 - To maximise the availability of all library content for all users; and
 - To improve customer communication and transactional channels.
- 1.3. The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on progress and highlights to date.
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2. Recommendation

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Sport, Leisure and Culture Policy Board note the contents of this report.
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3. Background

- 3.1. Work undertaken in 2014/15 continues to develop digital services within Renfrewshire Libraries. In particular work to support the key objectives:

Promote social and digital inclusion by enabling access to ICT facilities:

- 3.2. Funding of £10K was successfully secured in 2014/15 from the Scottish Library and Information Council to train all library staff in the use of new technology. All staff will be trained to use a variety of mobile devices, which will raise awareness and prepare them to assist customers with new digital media, promotion of online government and council services and library digital products.
- 3.3. Libraries continue to support the digital inclusion project to introduce tablet devices to older people with a programme of visits to sheltered housing complexes, seniors' forums and ROAR clubs engaging with over 1000 older people. Partnership loan agreements with colleagues in Housing, ROAR and the visual impairment unit / disability resource centre are giving these hard to reach groups access to library and council services via tablets.
- 3.4. All Renfrewshire Libraries now have free Wi-Fi access and libraries are active in promoting new online council services and apps. The service is popular and well used in busier libraries with more than 15,000 customer log-ins since April 2014 and some customers coming in regularly to use it.

Support the ICT learning needs of adults, children and communities:

- 3.5. Libraries have purchased licences for Encyclopaedia Britannica School for all secondary school pupils, providing online access in the school library, classroom and at home. This complements the public library online edition which is used as a homework resource by primary school pupils. School librarians support and promote the use of this and library e-resources for pupils' homework and curriculum support for teachers.
- 3.6. A successful funding bid for £29K was made to the Scottish Library and Information Council to develop a 'Digiteers' project. This will provide a co-ordinator post to recruit and train digital volunteers. The project will start in 2015 /16 and will target three groups - older people, unemployed people with low digital skills and people living with a disability or LTC (long term condition).
- 3.7. Libraries continue to develop information in partnership with Children's Services and the NHS under the umbrella initiative 'Living Well @ the Library' using digital content to support health and well being. Our living well points will have access to tablet technology and a new tailored patient information service for anyone affected by cancer. It is intended to extend this information to offer support for all long term conditions.

Maximise the availability of library content for all users:

- 3.8. A heritage digitisation unit has now been set up in Paisley Central library and 2709 valuable and delicate items from the libraries and arts and museums' collections, including images of photographs and historical building plans, have been copied. In addition to preservation and access benefits, these have also already been used to enhance museum and library exhibitions, displays and smart board presentations and offer great potential in this area. The digital images have also featured in outreach activities in the community, such as the intergenerational project with Housing Services and Gallowhill Primary School, where pupils met with residents of sheltered housing to share images and memories on I pads.
- 3.9. Regular school visits take place to the Heritage Centre, where young people are able to use the resources available (including digital ones), in partnership with the arts and museums education team (10 visits, 284 students in 2014).
- 3.10. An upgraded public library online catalogue been installed to improve the online customer experience. Further development of the online catalogue will continue throughout 2015/16. It will offer improved functionality and interactivity and provide better access to 24/7 library resources and services for customers.
- 3.11. Downloadable e-books, e-audio books and magazines are now available for free download to suitable devices such as smart phones and tablets, both in and outside the library.

Improve customer communication and transactional channels:

- 3.12. Actions detailed below will take place in 2015/16 to deliver on the key objectives to increase and improve customer communication and transactional channels, enabling provision of a relevant library service for customers in the 21st century.
 - 3.12.1. Further development of customer e mail services and encouragement for customers to activate and update their online library account.
 - 3.12.2. Development work on the introduction of self service book issue systems in Renfrewshire libraries. Already introduced in the new Linwood library and in Erskine library, this will be extended to Paisley Central and Renfrew libraries before the end of March 2015. A self service book issue system will also be installed in the new Johnstone library due to open in Spring 2015.
- 3.13. A strategic working group of library staff is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of digital services development.

Implications of this report

- 1. **Financial Implications**
None - implementation from existing resources and external funding.
- 2. **HR and Organisational Development Implications**
None.

3. Community Plan/Council Plan Implications

Children and Young People	- The development of ICT digital services will enhance the learning experience for children and young people
Community Care, Health and Well-being	- The development of 'Living Well @ the library' using digital resources will support self management of health conditions and improve access to information.
Empowering our Communities	- Provision of ICT facilities which are fit for purpose will ensure equity and fairness of access for all stakeholders.
Greener	- Increased digital content reduces reliance on paper copy and print.
Jobs and the Economy	- The development of ICT digital services will enhance the learning experience of all customers and offer support to jobseekers and unemployed customers.
Safer and Stronger	- The provision of safe Internet use training sessions contributes to online safety for adults and children.

4. Legal Implications

Work with legal services to develop public access policy which includes new digital media.

5. Property Implications

Work with the Corporate Landlord team to remodel library spaces to enable delivery of modern digital services.

6. Information Technology Implications

Work with IT team to develop systems which fit with Renfrewshire Council ICT strategy.

7. Equality and Human Rights Implications

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.

8. Health and Safety Implications

None.

9. Procurement Implications

None.

10. Risk Implications

- Ensure adequate staff training to develop new digital content and support users.
- Ensure promotion and marketing of digital services to new and existing users using new channels.

11. Privacy Impact

None.

List of Background Papers

(a) none

JMcF/JL
17 February 2015

Author: Jenifer A. McFarlane, Libraries Manager, jenifer.mcfarlane@renfrewshire.gov.uk,
0141 618 5425