**Briefing Note**

**TOPIC: Budget Decision 2015/16 Review of Library Opening Hours**

**Date: 11 March 2015**

**Edinburgh City Libraries and Information Services are implementing efficiency savings of £257,000 by reducing opening hours across 11 libraries.**

**Background**

The city’s public library service remains committed to providing a high quality service. Edinburgh is one of a few local authorities to invest significantly in new library facilities, notably the East Neighbourhood Centre and Craigmillar Library and the Drumbrae Library Hub.

Following a significant review of library opening hours in 2012 a consistent pattern of opening hours was established. These opening hours were subject to extensive consultation with over 10,000 responses received. There was strong support for Saturday opening and as a result 22 libraries are currently open all day Saturday across the city. Six libraries are currently also open on Sunday afternoon.

Libraries were required to find £257,000 as part of the budget process for 15/16. The proposals were developed looking at highest levels of current usage and proximity to other libraries during the week. The proposal was part of the Council’s Budget Engagement process and impacts on opening hours at 11 libraries across the city, 6 currently open on a Sunday afternoon and 5 to move to a reduced pattern of hours which already exist across the city. The proposals were part of the Council’s Budget engagement process and library opening hours’ proposals received 49 responses out of a total 3,525.

**2015/16 Budget Decision**

**Sunday opening**

The following six libraries will no longer open on Sunday afternoons from 1 April- McDonald Road, Muirhouse, Newington, Oxgangs, Portobello and WesterHailes. This is a reduction of 4 hours per week in opening hours at these libraries.

The predominant users of libraries on Sunday afternoons are families, children and young people either attending events or using computers. Visit figures tend to be lower than on other days of the week.

Visitors to the 6 libraries currently open on Sunday afternoons totalled 101,000 for 2013/2014.

This accounts for 3% of total libraries footfall for the year.

The proposed changes to library opening hours are based on analysis of library usage and distance to alternative library access for communities during the week. Mitigating measures will include

* promotion of the online 24/7 library service for renewal and reservation of library materials
* All day Saturday opening in 20 libraries across the city
* Move current Sunday events such as craft sessions to Saturdays or other parts of the week
* Continue to support Portobello Book festival and other community events as needed

The comparison for Portobello showed as below that Sunday usage was significantly less than other days of the week.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Actual number of visits per day  | **Mon****1663** | **Tues 1899** | **Wed****1753** | **Thus****1712** | **Fri****2352** | **Sat****1867** | **Sun****527** |
| Day as %age of Weekly Total  | **14%** | **16%** | **15%** | **15%** | **20%** | **16%** | **4%** |

 The average ratio across the city for library weekend visits across the six libraries is 60:40 with Sunday afternoon usage lower than Saturday afternoon usage in 13/14.

The savings are all on employee costs and will reduce staffing levels by 12 full time staff, which will be achieved by changing current working patterns and vacancy management.

**C**urrent Library Opening Hou**rs**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day**  | **Group A (51 hrs)**  | **Group B (42 hrs)**  | **Group C (32 hrs)**  |
| Monday  | 10.00 – 20.00  | 13.00 – 20.00  | 13.00 – 20.00  |
| Tuesday  | 10.00 – 20.00  | 10.00 – 17.00  | 10.00 – 17.00  |
| Wednesday  | 10.00 – 20.00  | 13.00 – 20.00  | 13.00 – 20.00  |
| Thursday  | 10.00 – 17.00  | 10.00 – 17.00  | Closed  |
| Friday  | 10.00 – 17.00  | 10.00 – 17.00  | 10.00 – 17.00  |
| Saturday  | 10.00 – 17.00  | 10.00 – 17.00  | 10.00 – 14.00  |

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| **In each neighbourhood area there are at least two Group A libraries offering extended opening hours. Locations**  |
| **Group A 51 Hours**  | **Group B 42 Hours**  | **Group C 32 Hours**  |
| Blackhall (N)  | Currie | Balerno |
| Corstorphine (W)  | Fountainbridge | Balgreen |
| Craigmillar (E)  | Granton  | Colinton |
| Drumbrae (W)  | Kirkliston | Gilmerton |
| Leith (L)  | Moredun |  |
| McDonald Road (L)  | Piershill |  |
| Morningside (S)  | Ratho |  |
| Muirhouse (N)  | Sighthill |  |
| Newington (S)  | South Office |  |
| Oxgangs (SW)  | South Queensferry |  |
| Portobello (E)  | Stockbridge |  |
| Wester Hailes (SW) |  |