



Doncaster
Council

Doncaster Council Public Libraries Strategy 2018-2021



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Executive Summary

The library service in Doncaster provides front-line services accessible to all its residents, with its primary purpose to support and enhance residents' health and wellbeing, productivity and economic activity, learning and skills, and social and democratic participation.

The Library Service in Doncaster has responded to wide-ranging environmental challenges over the previous 6 to 7 years with some success, and in 2012 was awarded the LGA Yorkshire and Humber Award Making a Difference Award for Sport and Leisure.

Our vision is for a library service which up to and by 2021;

1. Contributes to the fulfilment of a range of the local strategic partnership's objectives, with every library venue an asset to the community, which can be commissioned as a resource to support residents' economic, learning, and wellbeing needs;
2. Can work as an alternative service model which increases inward investment into the service and enables it to work more commercially (the right model for the service will be the one which enables the most investment to come in);
3. Provides excellent service delivery, demonstrated through a range of performance indicators.

Local Authorities are held accountable for the comprehensive and efficient provision of libraries within their boundaries, as outlined by the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act. However, the last ten years have seen substantial changes as to how libraries are commissioned and delivered around the country. The drivers for these changes have included financial austerity, localism and community empowerment, the quick pace of technological change, and local needs. There are a range of leadership and advocacy organisations supporting the development of public libraries which Doncaster Libraries will work with to achieve excellence in performance and value for money for local residents.

One of these sector improvement agencies is the Leadership for Libraries Taskforce. The Libraries Taskforce 7 Outcomes are defined as being critical to the individuals and communities in their areas:

1. Cultural and creative enrichment
2. Increased reading and literacy
3. Improved digital access and literacy
4. Helping everyone achieve their full potential
5. Healthier and happier lives

6. Greater prosperity
7. Stronger, more resilient communities

This strategy articulates the priorities for the service over the next 4 years, with an action plan which brings together the 7 outcomes, a local need assessment, and the main objectives required to fulfill each outcome. As well as the national agencies, Doncaster Libraries will also work with various local and regional partners to achieve the ambitions of this plan.

Introduction from the Portfolio Holder

It is with great pride that I introduce Doncaster's Library Stagey at such an exciting time: Our Libraries provide enlightenment, empowerment and give our communities and the individuals who use them a voice. Our Libraries provide warmth, escapism, a chance to expand the mind and learn new things. Our Libraries are welcoming and offer the chance to meet, mingle and find joy in simple things that bring happiness. Our Libraries reflect our communities and the people within them and as our service moves forward towards a new vibrant chapter, our Libraries are there with open doors for all our people waiting to inspire and raise aspiration.

Libraries give us power!

Councillor Nigel Ball



Introduction to the Public Library Service in Doncaster

The library service in Doncaster provides front-line services accessible to all its residents, with a primary purpose to support and enhance residents' health and wellbeing, productivity and economic activity, learning and skills, and social and civic interaction. To achieve its aims, the library service's core resources include fiction and non-fiction book stock, stock in different formats, including e-books and music downloads, audiobooks, and books in large print format. The library service is the borough's collective book store, and the first point of access to digital information for those residents who cannot afford to access the internet from home. The workforce provides expertise in supporting complex enquiries, whether supporting residents to complete Universal Credit forms, braille/audio and large print transcription services to St Leger Homes and the Revenue and Benefits Team, access to electoral register, access to the Latitude Mapping portal, with which library staff are able to create site and location plans that residents use for planning permission and submissions to the planning team, and the publication of traffic regulation orders. A wide ranging quality events programme takes place in libraries across the borough, and wide ranging partners work with libraries to bring the benefits of reading and information to their audiences, with a particular focus on children and young people.

Libraries are trusted spaces, free to enter, welcoming and open to all. In a library, residents can explore, learn, share and collaborate from reading, information, knowledge and cultural resources. The library service in Doncaster is deeply rooted in local public perceptions, which reflects national trends: a survey published in 2018 suggested that professional library workers are in the top 5 most trusted workers in local communities¹. Residents appreciate and access the wide range of books, digital and other resources, as well as the trained staff who are on site to help make best use of the resources for residents, and the communities and volunteers who manage and underpin 21 of our libraries every day of opening. We have 25 public libraries in the borough, and provide services in 4 HMPPS libraries, 4 health library service points for Doncaster and Bassetlaw Foundation Trust, a Home Library Service for residents who cannot visit libraries, and an online 24 Hour Library. Doncaster has had a public library since the mid 1800s, which included a Central Library built in the town centre to celebrate Queen Victoria's Jubilee year in 1888-89. 2019 will be the 150th year of public libraries in the borough.

A Short History of the Service:

Doncaster Subscription Library – disbanded in 1868

¹ <https://www.cilip.org.uk/page/trustedprofessional>

Post of Librarian advertised in March 1869. Received 173 applications and appointed Mr Henry Charles Hammond of Pimlico for a salary of £75.00.

Opening of First Public Library in Doncaster – 29th December 1869

The Library was divided into 2 sections, a lending library with 10,000 volumes and a reading room with newspapers and periodicals.

The Jubilee Building, the erection of a new library and school of art – opened on 20th June 1889 by the Mayor, Alderman John Athron.

1912 - reorganisation of library to allow “open” access, the Mayor re-opened the library.

1934 - the School of Art moved to new quarters, the library took over the whole building and the first library building became a Children’s library.

1961 - first carriageway of East By-Pass was built resulting in the demolition of the major part of the old St George’s National School.

1966 - full development of the East By-Pass sanctioned and a new site was needed for the library.

29th December 1969 the library was opened in Waterdale by the Mayor, Councillor Marcus Outwin. Exactly 100 years to the day since the 1st library was opened in 1869.

The Library Service in Doncaster has responded to wider environmental challenges over the previous 6 to 7 years with some success. In 2012 the service was awarded the LGA Yorkshire and Humber Award Making a Difference Award for Sport and Leisure, and Doncaster’s Knowledge Library and Information Service for Health was runner-up in the Sally Hernando Award for Innovation in NHS Library and Knowledge Services in 2013-14.

Other successful outcomes over this period have included;

1. Transition to 12 community managed libraries in 2011-12.
2. Transition to a further 8 community managed libraries in 2014-15.
3. Effective public consultation programmes.
4. Re-opening of Denaby Community Library in 2016.
5. New brand developed, with use of the ‘Doncaster Libraries’ name.
6. Ongoing excellence in Knowledge Library and Information Services for Health contract management.
7. Good contract management of Prison Library Services at 4 locations in the borough.
8. Achieving £2.1m revenue savings since 2011-12.
9. Ongoing investment in capital works in our buildings.
10. Relatively good levels of staff morale reported.

What We Do Well;

- Change Management
- Co-production with communities, and workforce development

- Effective Consultation
- Effective Resource Management
- Service Resilience and with good to excellent practice in some locations

Baseline Performance

In the last financial year, Library Services in Doncaster had:

- approximately 80,000 volunteer hours,
- 2667 library members are aged 5 and under,
- 11868 library members are aged 16 and under,
- 2577 members are from a BME background,
- we have 267500 items for residents to choose from,
- our current eldest library service member is 101 years old.

Since 2014-15 we have:

- received 1.8m visits,
- issued 1.3m loans,
- provided 428,000 hours of free internet access time for residents,
- managed 838,000 customer enquiries,
- issued 2809 books on prescription,
- issued 78,200 books to residents who would not otherwise be able to get to a library.

Since 2011-12 we have:

- Provided approximately 350,000 volunteer hours.

Wider Context

Local Authorities are held accountable for the comprehensive and efficient provision of libraries within their boundaries, as outlined by the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act. However, the last ten years have seen substantial changes as to how libraries are commissioned and delivered around the country. The drivers for these changes have included financial austerity, localism and community empowerment, the quick pace of technological change, and local needs. There are a range of leadership and advocacy organisations supporting the development of public libraries. The national strategic development agency for libraries is Arts Council England. In 2015, DCMS created a new strategic leadership group for public libraries, the Libraries Taskforce. And the Society of Chief Librarians' (SCL) Universal Offers provide a framework that helps libraries deliver against 7 nationally-agreed outcomes. They currently cover 6 topics:

Health, Reading, Digital, Information, and Learning. Each is underpinned by the Children's Promise and Six Steps initiatives. It is Doncaster Libraries' aim to be a key local delivery partner of Arts Council England's Great Art and Culture for Everyone, and is aligned with SCL's ambition for an inclusive, modern, sustainable and high quality public library service at the heart of the community. The Universal Offers are a national framework of partnerships, programmes and messages that can be flexibly delivered at a local level. They've been developed in partnership with The Reading Agency (joint owner of the Health and Reading Offers), Arts Council England, the Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians (ASCEL) and Share the Vision.

This strategy makes use of 2 outcomes frameworks.

Firstly, the Libraries Taskforce 7 Outcomes are defined as being critical to the individuals and communities in their areas;

1. Cultural and creative enrichment
2. Increased reading and literacy
3. Improved digital access and literacy
4. Helping everyone achieve their full potential
5. Healthier and happier lives
6. Greater prosperity
7. Stronger, more resilient communities

According to the Leadership for Libraries Taskforce, "millions of people in England use libraries: public libraries in England were visited 225 million times in 2014/15 - more in total than visits to Premier League football games, the cinema, and the top 10 UK tourist attractions combined²". So there is clearly a demand at local level, and across the country, for the valued services which libraries provide. At the same time, it is evident looking at trends that certain ways in which libraries are used is changing.

According to various datasets, library users are more likely to be;

- *Women than men*
- *From upper socio-economic groups than lower socio-economic groups (though this gap is narrowing)*
- *Non-working adults than working adults*
- *From black and minority ethnic groups than white ethnic groups*

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/libraries-shaping-the-future-good-practice-toolkit/libraries-shaping-the-future-good-practice-toolkit>

Having children can also influence library use. Adults who live with children are significantly more likely to have used public library services than those who do not. In addition, adults who went to the library themselves when they were growing up were also more likely to go to the library as adults.

Data from adults who have been re-interviewed annually (for 3 years) show that the libraries sector has a core of “Consistent users” (21%) who reported using libraries at all 3 interviews. Just over half of respondents (52%) reported using public library services at least once over 3 interviews. Overall, there were fewer library users by the third interview than at the first interview: 9% of respondents were classified as “New visitors”, but 15% were classified as “Former visitors”.

This can be explained in various ways; libraries are competing for reading audiences not least with multinational companies like Amazon and Apple, and the way in which people access resources is no different for libraries as for the high street – consumers want up to date, high quality experiences at the right price. In this environment, libraries must maximise one of their key unique selling points, being free at the point of access, so that residents can still make a choice between paying for reading and information which may be filtered or modified by the provider, or not. Library Service purpose and usage is also being delivered within the context of many wider challenges, such as: changing demographics and social mobility, increasing demands for social care, developing and sustaining communities to look after the most vulnerable, including children’s safeguarding, and the need to support the creation of new business and drive economic growth. The demographic use of libraries is changing, and the needs of people using libraries in one area of the borough can be different to another. Every library has a core reading and information offer underpinned by the Council, and in line with the SCL Universal Offers, but how libraries provide services should also reflect the local need.

The national data sets from the Taking Part surveys tell us that;

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| <p>Amongst adults whose frequency of library use has increased over a period of 3 interviews, encouraging a child to read books was the most common reason given for this increase (20% of respondents), while “I like to read/wish to read more” was the second most common reason (18% of respondents).</p> <p>Among those whose use of libraries decreased over a period of 3 years, the most common reason for this decrease was having less free time. The next 2 most common reasons for using services less often were getting books elsewhere (17%) and reading e-books instead (12%).</p> |
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As the Libraries Taskforce states, “given this situation, libraries provide exciting opportunities to act as the heart of community hubs and contribute to a range of national and local government priorities”.

The second outcomes framework which the strategy will refer to is from the Borough Plan, Doncaster Growing Together.

Doncaster Growing Together has 5 Principles for Action;

- Deliver value – Use all our resources well. We maximise the value in all we do;
- Keep it simple – Together, we focus on what we can do, not what we can't do;
- Be ambitious – Expect Doncaster and its people to thrive. We are creative and courageous in pursuit of this ambition;
- Do it together – No one has all the answers. We share responsibility for making the right things happen;
- Expect contribution – Everyone does their bit. We empower people and communities to help themselves and each other.

The action planning which forms the main work of this Strategy will be set and measured against these principles. The action plan will also show how the Strategy is performing against the Plan's themes of Doncaster Living, Caring, Working and Learning. The new build Central Library, Museum, Archives and Art Gallery is currently reporting in to Doncaster Living's Assurance Board, and there may be scope to revise and renew this focus on key areas of delivery from the service in future.

Where we want to be: Our Vision for Library Services in Doncaster by 2020-21

There are a number of reasons why libraries need to develop over the next 4-5 years, determined by local need, the Council's priorities, and national policy. This will further inform our action planning and progress against the 7 Outcomes.

Locally, the case for change is determined by;

- Meeting the needs and demands of a diverse and changing population;
- The fast pace of technological change; public expectations regarding the use of technology, and technological advances, will have moved on again by 2021. If there is an increasing emphasis on digital and creative technologies and skills, libraries must be ready for this and fit for purpose, to provide access to opportunity and meet modern skills and information needs;
- The ongoing challenging financial environment;
- To ensure that it provides the highest performance levels possible for its customers, whilst also delivering value for money;
- The delivery of the new build Central Library and Museum, and its financial modelling.

A Needs Assessment, commissioned in January 2018 for the Library Service, and available in Appendix 2, highlights the following key national and local drivers for change;

- Doncaster has a poorer score than our CIPFA neighbours on Social Mobility;
- Doncaster's unemployment rate has been falling steadily for the past three years, it is also much closer to our nearest neighbours;
- Women's healthy life expectancy [HLE] in Doncaster has been increasing, at the same time HLE in the CIPFA 15 has recently declined slightly;
- Since 2014 Doncaster has outperformed the CIPFA 15 in economic activity, however by 2017 annual change was roughly in line with the comparator (Doncaster = 3.0% and CIPFA = 3.8%).

Locally, in terms of needs, the Library Service will focus on those needs which are priorities for the local strategic partnership, for residents, and within the context of the 7 Outcomes. We will use this assessment to inform priorities within our action plan, and demonstrate through advocacy and communications how the library service support these priority areas over the next 4 years.

- The top 5 communities with the highest proportion of adults with no skills are Stainforth, Denaby, Edlington, Bentley and New Rossington;
- The areas where there is the highest percentages of people who are not proficient in English are clustered around the centre of the borough – specifically Town Centre, Wheatley & Belle Vue, Balby North, Balby East and Wheatley Park & Wheatley Hills;
- The areas where respondents in the 2011 Census were most likely to say that their health was either bad or very bad were Denaby, Mexborough East, Mexborough West, Bentley and New Rossington;
- The areas with the highest levels of people who are unemployed are Town Centre, Mexborough West, Wheatley & Belle Vue, Balby North and Bentley;
- Micro Businesses represent the majority of employment in Doncaster. The areas with the lowest numbers of micro enterprises are Conisbrough, Balby North, Cantley, Armthorpe South and Edlington. Small Businesses are lowest in Conisbrough, Balby North, Cantley, Armthorpe South, Scawthorpe, Old Rossington, Mexborough East, Dunscroft & Dunsville and Sprotborough. More than half of Doncaster does not have any Medium Sized Enterprises at all. The majority of the medium sized enterprises are focused in Balby East, Town Centre and Wheatley & Belle Vue. There are only three community areas in Doncaster with Large (250+ employees) sized enterprises - Balby East, Town Centre and Wheatley & Belle Vue (all with 5 organisations each);
- Bentley, Town Centre, Denaby, Stainforth and Balby North are the top five most income deprived communities.

Further to this, it can be anticipated that there will be no more local government funding for libraries up to 2020 and beyond, and in all likelihood less, due to corporate cost pressures elsewhere.

Our vision then is for a library service which by 2020 – 21;

1. Contributes to the fulfilment of a range of the local strategic partnership's objectives, with every library venue an asset to the community, which can be commissioned as a resource to support residents' economic, learning, and wellbeing needs;
2. Can work as an alternative service model which increases inward investment into the service and enables it to work more commercially (the right model for the service will be the one which enables the most investment to come in);
3. Provides excellent service delivery, demonstrated through a range of performance indicators.

By 2020-21, Doncaster will have a high quality, innovative flagship Central Library, Museum, Archives and Art Gallery. The vision for how this building will work, and which reflects the approach of the service in general, is represented in Appendix 3.

Our Strategic Priorities



Priority 1: Service Transformation

Within the timespan of this strategy, Doncaster's residents will have a new Central Library, constructed and opened, on time and on budget. It will be a building and service which has a transformational effect for libraries and their usage in Doncaster, and will elevate ambitions and aspirations for the borough and its people. Also, by 2019-20 the service could be operating as an alternative form of service delivery model. To achieve on these objectives to best effect, the service is required to transform itself and be as transformational as possible. This will be achieved in the following ways;

1. The Library Service will report to elected members and corporate leadership on an options appraisal for the transfer of the service to an alternative service delivery model. A new model will enable the service to be fit for purpose and able to thrive, with anticipated less Local Authority funding, and to support its customers to access relevant excellent reading, knowledge, information and cultural resources. The options appraisal will provide a clear direction on the best, most suitable form for the service in future, to enable the service to attract inward investment and meet diverse community needs. Whether that is as an in-house provider, as an arms-length organisation, a Trust, Co-Operative, Mutual, Charitable Incorporated Organisation, or a model with more than one status is to be determined through the options appraisal. The model would also be dependent on consultation with the library service workforce and the public at the right time, and will seek to achieve financial sustainability, greater community and / or staff ownership, and the best quality delivery of service possible. Any alternative model decided on in future must strengthen and grow the community involvement and shaping of service, and help to further motivate staff and volunteers.
2. The New Build Library and Museum will be delivered on time and on budget, with an exceptional library service provision for the people of Doncaster. This will be underpinned by a deliverable and effective capital and revenue finance scheme. The building will be an excellent and innovative venue which is of benefit to all of Doncaster's residents, and is part of a wider excellent cultural portfolio in the borough. A digitally enabling environment, the Central Library and library service will respond to fast-paced advancements in digital technology, ensuring that the service can provide equitable access to opportunity and meet modern skills, learning and information needs.
3. Publish a new commercialisation and investment plan for the service. Through this plan, show an increase in commissioning, co-productivity and co-location of services, and develop libraries as a model for integrated services. The Library Service works consistently well in partnership with other internal and external

services, but when responding to local need, the next step is for the service to demonstrate integrated ways of working with key partners and providers, whether, for example, Business Doncaster, Public Health, the Chamber of Commerce, or cultural partners. This will be determined through service planning aligned to action plan in this strategy. Co-production of the service should specifically ensure that there are significant opportunities for community and service user engagement and shaping of services, ensuring that our many volunteers have a voice, continue to be inspired and motivated, and can contribute directly to the service offer, and then increase the volume of volunteering, particularly in under-represented age ranges and other demographics.

4. Restructure the service ready for 2020 with appropriate development and succession planning, merging roles with Heritage Doncaster where appropriate to do so. There are opportunities to consolidate services (Doncaster Libraries and Heritage Doncaster) and achieve efficiencies in the establishment, predominantly by holding vacancies during natural turnover, but also, for example, by joining up front line services and also integrating management structures across the two service areas. At the same time, for the service to deliver to best effect, there will need to be some new roles (e.g. in Fundraising, Volunteer Management, and Commercial / Retail), some roles will be viable for merging, and some roles will be predominantly the same, though perhaps with a smaller establishment overall. There will be further opportunities for volunteering and community involvement, for example, as wayfinders in the new build, in event support, or in trustee roles for the new delivery model. However, it is not expected that the financial modelling required should be achieved by a further extension of the community managed library model. From this point, it is expected that the volunteer role in the model will be alongside the workforce, but not in place of it. The Service will need to strike a balance between investing in the professionally-delivered service, through a workforce development programme for modern librarians, alongside growth in community-shaping of services. Doncaster Libraries will continue to support volunteers in community-managed libraries to network, share learning, and provide peer-to-peer support'; the service will also support volunteers to take part in and contribute to the strengthening and re-imagining of the service as a whole, to really shape local libraries at the heart of the community, and reflecting community need.
5. Working with communities and funders, secure building improvement investment in at least 3 buildings in the branch library network, prioritising Scawthorpe, Stainforth and Bentley Community Libraries, based on local levels of need, with a proviso to investigate further and secure external funds to improve library buildings in other areas of the borough too, which could include, for example, Askern, Cantley, Bessacarr, and Wheatley. And to work with external funders and partnerships to

increase investment in digital capabilities, so that the service can grow its offer both inside its venues and out into communities and residents homes, particularly for people who cannot access venues easily.

Priority 2: Libraries as commissioned services supporting good health and wellbeing in the borough

Doncaster Libraries can provide access to health and social care information, and signpost customers to online information and specialist agencies. Our libraries are dementia friendly, offering stimulating community events, such as reminiscence groups and dementia-friendly iPad classes. Library Service officers work with public health colleagues to provide public access in libraries to health professionals, health checks, and healthy living event programmes. Some libraries, such as at Woodlands Community Library and Hub, have hosted yoga classes; residents in Askern can attend Pilates classes in their local library, there is a meditation group using Mexborough Library, and others provide support through social forums for new mums and their children. Askern Community Library hosts a children's dance class for all ages.

The Library Service will continue to build effective working relationships with health practitioners and organisations, whether through the Health and Wellbeing Board, with the CCG, Healthwatch Doncaster, or directly with GPs, pharmacies, and other providers, along with Public Health colleagues. In this way, libraries can be a free and accessible community asset for health providers to use, as a venue for promoting good health and wellbeing, and for engaging with residents on health-related initiatives (other examples include libraries as cancer survivorship hubs, visually impaired reading groups, and befriending groups reducing social isolation). At the same time, libraries can demonstrate the value of residents using our assets and resources, in terms of the positive impact on health and wellbeing, and the positive local economic impact this can have, if, for example, it reduces avoidable GP visits, or reduces social isolation. It is a priority for the service to be able to effectively state what this positive impact is, in health terms used by commissioners, policy makers, senior health managers and practitioners, and also in economic terms.

The Library Service will also work closely with Adult Social Care leaders to develop a plan where the library can be used as an asset of real value in the community which directly contributes to social care priorities, whether as a venue which reduces loneliness and isolation, as a place to receive community-led support, and particularly information, advice and guidance (IAG). Again, how this reduces the cost and other forms of impact on the care system will be made clear and promoted by the service. This takes place already in some areas, such as Your Life Bentley in Bentley Area

Community Library, and Thorne Live Life Local, with opportunities for further growth in peer network support and IAG resources.

Doncaster Libraries also manages a service level agreement between Doncaster Council and Doncaster and Bassetlaw NHS Foundation Trust for the provision of Knowledge Libraries and Information Services for Health. This service is managed at 4 sites: DRI Library, DRI Leisure Library, Montagu Hospital and Bassetlaw Hospital. This is the only model of its kind where a Health Library Service is managed by the Local Authority on behalf of an NHS Trust across 2 Local Authority boundaries. It is one of the most successfully managed services of its kind in the country, having achieved the NHS Library Quality Assurance Framework (LQAF) Accreditation with 100% compliance in 2016-17 and 2017-18. The service is also a pilot for the next version of LQAF being developed, one of only 10 pilots chosen in the north of England in 2018-19. The strategic plan for the service can be viewed here: <https://www.dbth.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2014-17-KLISH-Strategic-Plan.pdf> - a new strategic plan is being prepared for the Trust in 2018, to work alongside this Strategy.

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Health and Wellbeing Library Services

The Knowledge, Library and Information Service is supporting the Trust in its Health and Wellbeing initiatives.

Would you like to learn something new? Are you feeling stressed, anxious, or depressed? Do you want to eat more healthily, lose weight and get fit?



Doncaster Libraries Books on Prescription on the Doncaster and Bassetlaw NHS Trust website

From the Libraries Taskforce:

Libraries contribute to the health and wellbeing and social care of local communities by:

- supporting people with dementia and mental health issues;
- contributing to the preventative health agenda;
- contributing to local councils public health responsibilities for young children;
- supporting people with dementia and mental health issues.

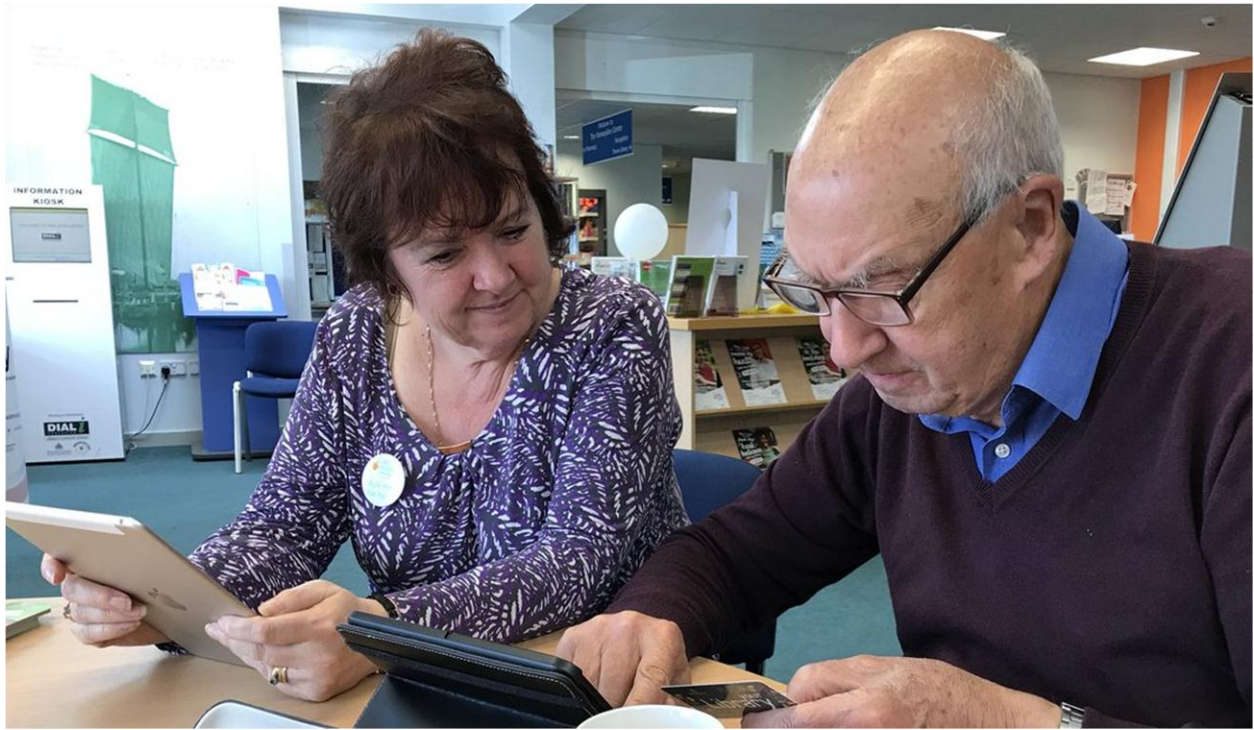
Libraries deliver the national Reading Well Books on Prescription scheme which is part of the national health offer for libraries. The scheme consists of a list of books that is curated and endorsed by health professionals and provides support for those suffering from common mental health conditions (anxiety, depression, phobias and some eating disorders) and dementia. Using the lists, GPs and health professionals can recommend reading materials to patients, which encourages self-management, and can help reduce the need for costly interventions. In the case of dementia, the scheme also provides practical support for carers. There is evidence from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) that self-help books can help people understand and manage common conditions, including depression and anxiety. Books on Prescription is one way in which libraries support mental health, one of the responsibilities passed to local councils by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This is demonstrated in a 2014/15 survey of 170,000 people who borrowed a book from the Books on Prescription scheme. When surveyed on their view of the mental health conditions book list:

- 90% said that the scheme had been helpful for understanding their condition
- 85% said it had helped them to feel more confident about managing their symptoms
- 55% said that their symptoms had reduced or had got better.

Over a 12 month period, 971 books have been loaned from these collections enabling borrowers to self-manage their conditions.

A study on the economic value of the health and wellbeing benefits of public libraries found that using the library has a positive association with general health. The predicted medical cost savings associated with library use is £1.32 per person per year, based on reductions in GP visits caused by improved access to health information, saving the NHS an estimated £27.5 million a year across the library-using population as a whole.

Priority 3: Libraries as commissionable assets to increase local learning and skills



Customer learning to use an iPad at Thorne Library

Doncaster Libraries are well established venues for informal and formal learning, for all ages. The content of classes and activities is very diverse, ranging from language classes, to arts and crafts Groups, such as sewing at Woodlands Community Library and Hub and Thorne Library's Knit and Natter group, through to more formal support for learning, whether working with Family Learning Mentors in the borough to provide libraries as a community learning space and resource, to working with the Princes Trust to support learning for young adults at Central Library.

This part of the service will be further advanced in 2018-21 by;

- Jointly commissioning adult learning activities in libraries working with Adult Learning / Family Learning; working with a range of both in-house, third sector and commercial providers;
- Libraries working with different agencies and partnership to take a whole-life cycle approach to learning provisions, which also encourage intergenerational learning;
- To prioritise learning opportunities in libraries which support local creativity, participation, and STEAM skills;

- To work in a joined up with schools, academies and education providers to ensure that resources and events in libraries maximise opportunities to support the Doncaster curriculum and wider attainment.

Case study from Woodlands Community Library, 2017

A Woodlands Community Library and Hub customer had been made redundant after 30 years working at a pit as an electrician. David needed help learning IT skills so that he could job search and improve his IT skills for his next job role. He also needed to take an electrical course to bring him up to date with his skills and enhance his opportunities for work.

Debbie at Woodlands Community Library sourced a computer course with WEA and David joined the class. Debbie had 1-2-1 sessions with him to show how to apply for jobs online, such as emailing employers and how to attach documents etc. He was also encouraged to come into the library to use the internet to do research on job roles that came up. The fantastic news is that David has now found a job as a maintenance electrician and feels this would not have been as quick if he had not been supported by Debbie and Woodlands Community library. He was so grateful he donated £50 to the library and Debbie received the following in a thank you card:

“To Debbie & all volunteers at Woodlands library. Many thanks for your stirring efforts and for your tremendous help in the past 2 months, communities and people within them need dedicated and kind people that are prepared to go that extra mile. Thank you once again , David”

Feedback from a customer at Doncaster Central Library, 2016:

A customer visited Central library this week to use the computers, and mentioned that last year she had attended a computer course run by Nicola Woods, Systems and Performance Assistant. As a result of attending the course, the customer was able to apply for a job as a Mencap Support Worker and was successful in getting the job. The customer went on to say that if she hadn't attended the course she would not have been able to apply for the job.

Priority 4: Libraries as a contributor to the local economy and increased local productivity

From the Libraries Taskforce:

Libraries can support the local economy by providing:

- advice and support to help people start business and create jobs
- support for job seekers and career development support spaces for co-creation
- volunteering opportunities
- access to advice on money management
- new or refurbished libraries with flexible areas who innovatively use their space can be the catalyst for regeneration.
- Libraries enable people to access employment through job clubs, back to work programmes and facilitated sessions with partner agencies, e.g. Adult Learning and Skills, Job Centre Plus and local organisations.
- Job seekers are offered free internet and Wi-Fi access as well as a range of digital support sessions by staff and other partners, such as digital champions.

Doncaster Libraries provides a range of resources for people who are looking for employment, or to access information, books and other resources. Mexborough, Stainforth and Woodlands Libraries provide dedicated support for people seeking employment, and libraries also provide space to facilitate debt advice services and support groups. In Doncaster's Libraries, Library Supervisors and frontline staff have received digital skills training to enable them to assist over 120 job seekers in the last year with accessing Universal Job Match. Frontline staff have also received training on assisting with accessing Universal Credit online, and since launch in October 2017 we have supported 40 residents with their benefit claims.

This will be further advanced between 2018-21 by;

- Making more spaces in libraries for people to work from, by providing free Wi-Fi, business start-up resources (online resources, books, events) – in this way, libraries become micro and small business in the community;
- Increasing the turnover of library volunteers progressing into employment;
- Expanding the number of job clubs in libraries;
- Working closely with Doncaster Chamber of Commerce and other partner organisations, developing a coherent offer to micro and small businesses using library spaces; this could be to promote the use of free business library resources,

peer to peer business networking and support, particularly creative and digital small businesses.

From the Libraries Taskforce:

Libraries can offer new opportunities for people to create, collaborate and consume, mingle, exchange ideas, and enable co-creation. In addition, some library services provide access to music studios which enables new business development, such as Studio12 in Leeds Central Library.

Libraries can be the focus point for a community, supporting cultural regeneration by driving footfall, reinvigorating local spirit and helping to change people's perceptions about places. Building on the success of the Reading Agency's Summer Reading Challenge, over 9,000 young volunteers have been enthusing children about books and assisting with related activities. Youth volunteering provides the opportunity for the sharing and acquisition of new skills and enables young people to gain accredited recognition of their work through either local or national awards.

Case Studies

From a customer at Thorne Library, 2017

To Thorne Library,

Dear Jenny, Just a quick note to thank you for your help and advice regarding using the computers and setting up a small business. Your advice and support have proved invaluable. In addition Denise and Chui Wan have both helped to solve computer problems for me. The whole team have a wide-ranging depth of local knowledge, council services and both books and DVDs which are available at Thorne Library and from other libraries.

There are always new and imaginative displays in the library and exhibitions by the Camera Club and the Art group for example keep the library in the public eye.

The library is always busy and there are many groups using the facilities each week e.g.

Primary schools, Knit and Natter, Rhyme Time, local child minders etc.

It's a real pleasure to visit this library.

From a customer at Armthorpe Community Library, 2016

"I have lived in Armthorpe now for eighteen months and have begun to work more from home. Consequently, I have made more use of my local library as a place to concentrate - without the distractions of home life etc.

I must say that the staff and volunteers who work here are absolutely delightful. They are some of the friendliest and helpful people you could wish to meet. I have also observed how they interact with those who may have special needs or other difficulties. You should be proud to deliver a service which is obviously appreciated by so many people in the vicinity. It has a real community feel about it".



Photo: Volunteers at Scawthorpe Community Library promoting digital skills

Action Plan for Consolidation, Growth and Inward Investment in our Libraries: 2018-21

The action plan brings together the 7 outcomes, the local need assessment, and objectives which are identified with the aim of fulfilling the outcome. Doncaster Libraries will work with various partners to achieve the ambitions of this plan. These partners include, but are not exclusive to: internal Council departments, the Creative and Culture Strategic Partnership, Arts Council England, local community assets and organisations, and educational providers and practitioners. This strategy and its action plan will support and respond to Doncaster Growing Together, the Social Mobility Opportunity Area, and Doncaster's Public Health Strategy, Adult Social Care Transformation Plan, Culture Strategy, Inclusive Growth Strategy, and Heritage Strategy.

| | Objective: | Strategic Aims: | Supporting Local Need: | Fulfilling the 7 Taskforce Outcomes: | Timescale: | Lead Officer/s: | Working with: |
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| 1 | The service will report on an options appraisal for an alternative service delivery model, demonstrating excellence in service, new opportunities for inward investment, more secure community empowerment, and increased workforce development. The right model will be the one which will enable the service to attract the most investment and strengthen the response to community need. | Transformation; Health and Wellbeing, Education and Skills, Local Economy; Libraries increase local learning and skills. | For all wards and residents, promoting further opportunities for public ownership and public shaping of services, whilst aiming to continuously improve services and achieve value for money. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 | For a decision by Q1 2019-20, implementation by Q3 2019-20 | Head of Libraries and Culture | Community Managed Libraries, Library Service Staff, Strategy and Performance Unit, Legal Services; Corporate Finances, Corporate Procurement, Corporate Communications. |

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| 2 | The New Build Central Library and Museum will be delivered on time and on budget, with an exceptional library service provision for the people of Doncaster, providing particularly an excellence in inclusivity and accessibility. | Transformation, Health and Wellbeing, Education and Skills, Local Economy; Libraries increase local learning and skills. | For the benefit of all wards and all residents. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 | Handover projected in Q4 2019-20, for opening in summer 2020. | Head of Libraries and Culture (service implementation); Strategic Development Manager - New Build (service design) | Major Projects, Corporate Finance, Corporate ICT, Strategy and Performance Unit, Corporate Communications |
| 3 | Develop a new commercialisation and investment plan for the service. Through this plan, show an increase in commissioning, co-productivity and co-location of services, and develop libraries as a model for integrated services. | Transformation | Spend in tradeable and commercial services within library buildings can be turned into spend on resources in targeted areas. | 4, 5, 6, 7 | Q4 2018-19 | Libraries Strategic Manager | Head of Business Development, Inward Investment Team, Business Doncaster, Corporate Finance, Corporate Procurement |
| 4 | Restructure the service ready for 2020 with appropriate development and succession planning, merging roles with Heritage Doncaster where appropriate to do so. Allocate for required new roles and skills focusing on Fundraising, Commercialisation, Retail and new ways of working. | Transformation | Ensuring the workforce's skills, tools and training are suitable to meet residents' needs, in a flexible, responsive and joined up service. | 4, 6 | Q3 2019-20 | Head of Libraries and Culture, HR Strategy lead. | HR and OD, Library Staff, Heritage Services Staff, Corporate Communications. |

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| 5 | Working with communities and funders, secure building improvement investment in at least 3 buildings in the branch library network, prioritising Scawthorpe, Stainforth and Bentley Community Libraries, and explore the development of a community library and café facility at Elmfield Park, as a model for service growth in the community. | Transformation | Focusing on areas of greatest need. Investment in Cantley Community Library's building structure should also be secured. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 | Q4 2020-21 | Head of Libraries and Culture, Strategy and Performance Unit, Inward Investment Team | Inward Investment Team, Corporate Assets, Corporate Communications. |
| 6 | Develop a service advocacy plan and effective performance framework, demonstrating to residents, partner organisations, elected members etc. the value and performance of Doncaster's Libraries, in key areas including improving literacy, improving attainment, skills, health and wellbeing, and supporting the local economy. | Health and Wellbeing, Education and Skills, Local Economy | Greater advocacy will support greater investment, leading to increased usage and more local returns on investment and SROI. | 4, 5, 6, 7 | Q4 2018-19 | Libraries Strategic Manager, Strategic Development Manager - New Build, Strategy and Performance Unit, Corporate Communications | To include a new marketing and Comms plan for the service in 2018-19, and a refreshed brand by 2020. |

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| 7 | Work in an integrated way with other cultural providers in the borough to join up commissioning and access to arts and culture resources and events, e.g. ticket bookings in libraries, and increased arts and culture programming in libraries. In this way, increase libraries outputs as community venues for exhibitions, performances, and touring work. | Transformation, Local Economy, Health and Wellbeing. | Providing greater access to culture and arts in communities. Library workforce become local commissioners of arts and culture. | | 2019-20, 2020-21 | Head of Libraries and Culture, Culture Business Manager, Creative and Culture Strategic Partnership, Doncaster Culture Education Partnership | Doncaster Growing Together Create Doncaster Programme board, Doncaster Culture Education Partnership, Expect Youth, External Funders and Commissioners. |
| 8 | Develop libraries as assets of value, with a separate action plan, supporting priorities in Health and Wellbeing, Adult Social Care, the Opportunity Area, the local economy, and the Doncaster Curriculum / local Education and Skills. | Health and Wellbeing, Education and Skills, Local Economy | Further action plans will be programmed in these themed areas; e.g. developing peer support for living with cancer in libraries; extending the Your Life Doncaster CLS and IAG programmes into libraries; and providing ongoing support for residents living with less and requiring financial information and advice | 4, 5, 6, 7 | 2018-21, reporting quarterly on progress and through the service plan | Head of Libraries and Culture, Libraries Strategic Manager, Business Doncaster, Public Health, Adults PMO, Doncaster Culture Education Partnership | Public Health, Get Doncaster Moving, Your Life Doncaster, Business Doncaster, Family Learning, Anti-Poverty Strategy Group |

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| 9 | Work with Corporate Communications to develop and deploy a high quality brand, marketing suite of assets and Comms plan for the service, to include a refreshed brand and suite of assets for Doncaster Libraries, and also the new build Central Library, which also works with and alongside the Heritage Doncaster brand. This brand should articulate the value and quality of the service to residents, partners and stakeholders | Transformation | Increase in visitor numbers, engagement with the service, and positive customer satisfaction reports. | | 2018-19, 2019-29 | Head of Libraries and Culture, Corporate Communications, Libraries Team | Corporate Communications, Corporate Procurement, Libraries Staff |
| 10 | Create a specific plan for the development of libraries as locations for local creative skills, particularly supporting hand-made, craft, design and digital, as centres for showcasing products and encouraging independent business start ups. | Libraries increase local learning and skills | Increasing levels of participation, Libraries contributing to growth in the CDI sector; Libraries contributing to growth in productive micro and small businesses. | | 2018-19 | Head of Libraries and Culture, Libraries Strategic Manager, Branch Libraries Operations Officer, Central Library Operations Officer, Staff Teams. | Doncaster Growing Together Create Doncaster Programme board, Business Doncaster |

Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators will be reported on the Council's corporate performance management system and the service's annual service plan, as well as in performance information which will be made available to the public at all library service points, online, and to all elected members and corporate leadership. It is expected that KPIs will include;

1. Economic impact of residents using library services.
2. GVA from library service usage.
3. Number of customers reporting that they felt better from using a library facility.
4. Number of customers who did not access a GP or other front door service because they used a library in Doncaster.
5. Number of customers supported accessing Universal Credit, and the economic benefit of this access.
6. Number of prisoners engaging with Shannon Trust literacy interventions at the 4 HMPPS Prison Library sites maintained through a contract with Doncaster Libraries.
7. Number of micro and small businesses set up following access to library resources.
8. Number of residents who reported decreased isolation by accessing a library facility.
9. Number of user groups supported by the service, including vulnerable people.
10. Number of volunteers into work.
11. Positive impact of children and young people accessing libraries on their literacy and wider attainment.
12. Positive impacts from accessing library services for residents with protected characteristics and / or complex needs.
13. Reports on customer satisfaction with the service.
14. Reports on the economic and health benefits of excellence in Knowledge, Library and Health Services to the local NHS Trust.

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