

Schedule 1 Specification of the Library Services 2016-17

Suffolk's Libraries IPS Ltd (referred to throughout as Suffolk Libraries) is commissioned to ensure that the Council's library services are delivered in accordance with the Vision for library services described in the *2011 Review of Library Services* (attached at Appendix 1). The Vision says **Why** these are the library services for the future including **Who** they are for, **What** library services there will be and **Where** they will be, **When** they will be accessible, and **How** they will be provided.

In brief, the services that will be provided are for:

- The community as a whole – as a community hub
- Especially for children and young, vulnerable and older people

The services will be:

- Provision for reading and literacy through books to borrow, books to download and through activities
- Services that address loneliness and social isolation, and provide a shared community space where people feel safe
- Help with learning and skills and finding a job
- Provision of activities that improve mental and physical health and wellbeing
- Information provision and the internet, both self-service and with the help of skilled staff
- Give access to films and music, in the format of CDs and DVDs, and through downloads

It is accepted that Suffolk Libraries will develop over time to become the sum of its constituent local community groups, and that the amount of delivery that Suffolk Libraries will be directly responsible for may vary by location and over time. Suffolk Libraries is expected to ensure that the services and activities in this specification are delivered, whether through facilitating the efforts of other organisations and individuals, or by directly assigning its own staffing and resources.

Principles and professional practice

Staff and volunteers of Suffolk Libraries will be expected to adhere to the professional and ethical principles in

- i) *Ethical principles for library and information professionals*, adopted by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) in 2004¹; and
- ii) *Code of professional practice for library and information professionals*, adopted by CILIP in 2004, amended 2013²

(or by updated replacement versions).

The Council encourages Suffolk Libraries to be an Organisational Member of CILIP.

As reported in the 2011 Review, the local people of Suffolk attach significant importance to the experienced and professional paid library staff, and the Council expects Suffolk Libraries to continue to run library services using paid staff, some of whom will be qualified librarians.

In addition, Suffolk Libraries will develop and offer further opportunities for volunteers to become involved in library services. This includes the already existing roles available to individuals to support the Summer Reading Challenge, to deliver the At Home Library Service, and to become members of library community groups, as well as the opportunity to supplement the work of paid staff to deliver reading, learning and social activities, outreach services including befriending, and other services that assist libraries to fulfil their leisure, learning, cultural and community role.

Volunteers will be offered appropriate training and support to enable them to provide services to an appropriate standard, and to assist with their personal development. A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will need to be carried out where this is appropriate.

Suffolk Libraries is expected to work with other organisations to develop the volunteering and work experience offer, particularly for:

- Young people
- People living with mental ill health
- People living with a physical sensory or learning disability
- People who are on a recognised programme to assist them to get into (or back into) work

for whom the library can offer an opportunity to get experience in the world of work in a structured and supportive environment.

Suffolk Libraries is expected to help deliver the broader aims and strategic goals of:

- Suffolk, as set out in Transforming Suffolk, the community strategy 2008-2023
- SCC, as set out in its published Key Priorities, and
- the Adult and Community Services (ACS) directorate as described in the current ACS Service Plan,.

Reading and literacy

The provision of books and other material for loan and for reference is described in the Stewardship of Suffolk Stock document, attached as Appendix 2.

Suffolk Libraries will explore and assess new alternative book and non-book formats, and advise the Council on those it recommends should be considered for stock/access and loan.

Suffolk Libraries is specifically expected to maintain stewardship of the One Stock as a whole, and therefore not to charge for reservations for Suffolk stock.

Improving the levels of literacy in Suffolk is a priority for Suffolk, and Suffolk Libraries will contribute to raising literacy levels.

Hire of films and music

Suffolk Libraries will offer a hire service that allows users access to recorded music and to films. Currently the formats offered are CDs and DVDs respectively, and as these decline Suffolk Libraries will seek to develop and implement media hire in other and new formats as this becomes appropriate.

Where replacement formats are reliant on ICT with high-speed internet access, Suffolk Libraries will give due consideration to how to avoid exclusion from service of those people who are digitally excluded.

Activities and outreach services

In line with the Association of Senior Children's and Educational Librarians' (ASCEL's) response to the Arts Council consultation document *Culture, Knowledge and Understanding: Great Museums and Libraries for Everyone*:

“Many public libraries are still very local to their communities and there is a strong sense of community ownership. Activities such as baby and toddler times can bring isolated parents together and build relationships and contribute to community cohesion.”⁵

Suffolk Libraries will endeavour to enable libraries to facilitate at least one Bookstart-related (or successor or alternative scheme as agreed) activity per library every week, and will subscribe to and offer the Summer Reading Challenge or any successor or alternative scheme. Suffolk Libraries will ensure that libraries remain friendly and welcoming places for parents and carers to bring babies and young children. It is required that the current policy of allowing mothers to breast feed in libraries will be maintained.

Suffolk Libraries will endeavour to enable libraries to facilitate at least one activity for people over 55 per library per week. The current branding for these activities is “Top Time”, although local variation is acceptable. Rebranding the entire offer may be done only after consultation with both affected groups, and the Council. Consultation must follow the standard for consultation set out in Appendix 6.

Suffolk Libraries will enable libraries to provide services that focus on disadvantaged groups: for example, people out of work, with disabilities and with mental ill health. Suffolk Libraries will address the barriers to library use by disadvantaged groups, as set out in the 2009 research report *Consultation with Customer Groups*, attached at Appendix 3, and the Libraries Strategy 2020 which was co-developed with partners and stakeholders.

In particular Suffolk Libraries will ensure that people can use toilets where these are available, that the addresses and opening hours of libraries are well publicised, and that staff and volunteers make everyone very welcome so that they feel at home in the library.

Suffolk Libraries will plan and implement community outreach activities that will enable the role of the local library as a hub, with activities flowing out to people in surrounding villages or neighbourhoods, in line with the Access Model for Libraries. It is expected that activities will be developed in consultation with communities, and will seek to fulfil the needs and aspirations expressed by local people.

Learning and skills development

Libraries will offer a range of learning support, alongside partner providers, to help people skill themselves for work. They will support and facilitate self-development through access to information, IT, and signposting to other providers, as appropriate. All libraries will be Suffolk Learning and Employment Access Points (LEAP) points. LEAP points offer information on local courses and providers and signposting to local learning providers. People can use the internet to research courses, run job searches and use online resources; library staff will assist people to do this, where help is needed. Advice and signposting will be available to help people make an appointment with the nearest National Careers Service advisor.

Libraries will work to deliver the developing SCL Universal Learning Offer:

- Access to free resources that support learning in a range of formats appropriate for each learner
- Study/learning spaces for children, young people and adults in the library service
- Signposting to a range of free and low cost learning opportunities, available within communities
- Opportunities for exploration and creation, especially for children and young people
- Places where communities and individuals can develop and share their own learning activities

Libraries will encourage intergenerational and family learning, which should include a mix of activities in libraries.

Libraries will endeavour to facilitate appropriate organised and informal learning events. Organised learning events will have formal outcomes and these will be recorded. Typically such sessions would be designed for a specific group and measures of success will include how many people attended and how many achieved the learning outcomes.

Informal sessions can be self-organised, do not usually require formal monitoring and work on a drop-in basis so anyone accessing the library could participate without having to book in advance. Measures of success would typically be how many attended the session and what they got out of it.

Supporting mental and physical wellbeing

Suffolk Libraries is commissioned to deliver the Mental Health and Wellbeing Information Service until 31 March 2017. The commissioning and specification document for this service is attached as Appendix 4.

Suffolk Libraries will continue to deliver this service and will make every effort to negotiate with the funders for an extension to the commission.

Suffolk Libraries is expected to continue to engage and work with organisations that support and advocate on behalf of people with mental health issues and physical sensory and learning disabilities and conditions to ensure that libraries continue to be friendly neutral places that people can use to access information that will help them live their lives as fully and independently as possible.

Information provision

Information services are not in a confined area of the library service or provided by small teams of individuals, they are integral to the daily provision of a public library, interpreted by skilled staff and support teams throughout the wider service. Recent research has shown that internet users trust library staff more than most other providers of online support and information. Public library staff are second only to doctors in terms of the trust placed in them by people looking for information.

While there is a need for enhanced understanding and strategic development at management level, it is important that Suffolk Libraries ensures that all staff and volunteers understand information to be a core service delivered by all libraries.

Suffolk Libraries is expected to contribute to and enable the provision in Suffolk libraries of the developing SPINE Information strategy (Appendix 5). It will engage in discussion on the detail of this delivery at the appropriate time with Suffolk's SPINE partner(s) and with the Council.

Suffolk Libraries is expected to deliver the SCL Universal Information Offer¹. The focus of this offer is on supporting people accessing information and services online in life critical areas such as careers and job seeking; health; personal financial information and benefits. Central to this offer is helping people to use vital government online information and services.

Suffolk Libraries as a community hub is expected to display posters and leaflets relevant to its locality and to tourism, and to maintain them according the commonly accepted standard.

Digital Services and Internet provision

Suffolk Libraries is expected to ensure that the people of Suffolk have free and fair access to information through libraries, whether in printed, online or other form. The Council and government generally prefer customers to do business with them using the internet. Libraries are a core venue in which local people can transact their business with government, if they do not have the internet at home. Adult Social Care expects people to be able to access vital information through the internet in libraries.

Suffolk Libraries is expected to subscribe to high quality paid-for information sites on behalf of the people of Suffolk, and to publicise this service effectively.

Suffolk Libraries is expected to deliver the SCL Universal Digital Offer², and ensure that all Suffolk libraries offer:

- Free access to the internet for any customer (for a minimum period. In Suffolk this is 2 hours per day per customer)
- Clear and accessible online information about library services
- Staff trained to help customers access digital information
- Ability for customers to join online
- Ability to be contacted online/via email for answers to customer enquiries
- 24/7 access to services through a virtual library presence
- Ability to reserve & renew items remotely via an online catalogue

Suffolk Libraries is expected to endeavour to deliver:

- Free internet access for all wanting to use it, including Wi-Fi at all libraries
- Tailored digital information for each customer
- Training in digital information literacy and access for its customers and staff both locally and remotely
- Time-relevant, quality checked digital content for the communities it serves, and support for communities to create their own content

¹ <http://www.goscl.com/universal-offers/information-offer/> retrieved 21/03/2016

² <http://www.goscl.com/universal-offers/digital-offer/> retrieved 21/03/2016

- Opportunity for e-lending of digital books, audio and video with remote access
- Targeted loans of digital devices for those without other access, where this is appropriate
- Access to digitised local archive and local history resources
- Social networking interaction/ engagement opportunities
- The ability to search across locally held online resources
- Access to online learning opportunities (citizenship, language learning, theory driving test etc)

Suffolk Libraries is expected to ensure that every library provides sufficient public internet devices to meet the needs of its users.

Customer Service

Suffolk Libraries will ensure that library services are provided using the best industry practice for customer service. Everyone must be welcome in the library, and feel welcome. The library must never feel like a club from which others are excluded. Everyone is included.

Staff and volunteers will deliver the service in accordance with CILIP ethical guidance for library and information professionals, including any updates that may be issued.

They will, particularly:

- Act with concern for the public good, including respect for diversity, equal opportunities and human rights.
- Promote free and fair access to information, ideas and works of the imagination
- Provide the best possible service within available resources
- Act with impartiality

Staff and volunteers will deliver the service in accordance with the CILIP Code of Professional Practice for Library and Information Professionals.

They will, particularly:

- Ensure they maintain the required level of competence
- Make the process of providing information as clear and open as possible
- Protect the confidentiality of information users
- Deal fairly with demands for their time and expertise,
- Deal with complaints fairly, and keep people informed of the progress of their complaint.

Location of libraries

The Access Model, outside the urban areas of Ipswich, and Lowestoft, uses Borough and District Council Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) as the framework for library services. This is because they support and sustain rural communities; they identify centres of services across the county, from Major Centres to Towns to Key Service Centres to Local Service Centres and Primary Villages. The Council decided in 2011 to arrange library services around these frameworks as they cater for patterns and tiers of service access across the county and build on a sustainable planning model.

For the urban areas of Ipswich and Lowestoft, the Council decided in 2011 to use deprivation as the guiding framework: any additional provision will be focused on the worst areas of deprivation.

The Access model, for the long term future, is based on a mix of libraries and community outreach, with in most cases an extended period of transition when this could mean change from current access points. It recognises the opportunities that sharing premises with other services and businesses brings, and encourages an innovative approach where library services might be co-located in existing or new premises.

Suffolk Libraries is expected to retain the current network of libraries. It is expected, to retain the mobile library service in broadly the form prevailing after October 2012, amending and adjusting stops as appropriate, and developing community outreach activity to supplement this service.

The County Council expects that Suffolk Libraries will work with it to scope, design, cost, and consult with the public on proposals for service changes that may be required in the future.

Suffolk Libraries is expected to work with community groups to take advantage of opportunities for co-location or co-creation of sites, whether this is moving the library service to another shared building, or sharing the library building with other services.

Suffolk Libraries is expected to make a business case, supported by evidence from consultation with the local community, where there is a proposal to move a library from one location to another. Consultation must meet the standard set out in Appendix 6.

The Council will continue, within the Access Model framework, to make the case under Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy negotiations for developer funding for library services. Suffolk Libraries and the Council will work together on the detail. Topic paper 8 in the *Section 106 Developers Guide to Infrastructure Contributions in Suffolk* offers guidance to developers on contributions to libraries and archives.⁶

Suffolk Libraries will work with the council to develop an approach to supporting library access points, which are expected to be predominantly unstaffed, where opportunities arise to use space in community buildings developed using Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy contributions towards library services.

Space requirements

Libraries are more than just the building they occupy, but the physical environment that a local library occupies is important. The Vision for Suffolk's libraries sees libraries as community hubs, providing space to interact, meet and connect. They are a safe place, and provide learning, information and advice, as well as books.

While there is an expectation that Suffolk Libraries will develop outreach services, and staff and volunteers may deliver library services away from the building, it is important that the concept of a community hub; a place for people to go to access a unique collection of services, remains.

Libraries must be located where people regularly and routinely go, accessible by public or community transport as well as by car.

Experience shows that the closer the library is to the shopping centres of towns and villages, the more convenient they are for customers and the better used. Suffolk Libraries should aim to locate libraries as close as reasonable to the shopping centres of towns and villages.

Suffolk Libraries is assigned the lease (or sub-lease) to all existing library buildings. The library estate has grown organically over time, and is leased to Suffolk Libraries "as is" in terms of location, size and type of building, with an acknowledgement that some may be less suitable than others.

Suffolk Libraries, or individual community groups, may choose to explore options to move a library from one building (or part of a building) to another building, or bring other services in to the current library in order to: better meet local need, to take advantage of a co-location or co-creation opportunity, or to operate more economically. This approach is supported and encouraged by SCC. Indeed, the default position is that other services should co-locate with libraries, or *vice versa*.

To be fit for purpose the space a library occupies must be:

- Large enough to house the furniture and equipment necessary to hold a sufficient quantity of books and other items for loan appropriate for the size of the community, and other equipment necessary to provide library services, while still leaving DDA compliant space enough for wheelchair users to move around the library.
- Large enough to accommodate activities occurring during opening hours without making it uncomfortable or unsafe for other people to use the library for other services.
- Capable of being supervised without the need for extra staff or volunteers to be employed for the sole purpose of supervision.
- Physically sound and in a good state of repair to provide an attractive and suitable service point, as at handover.
- Access to the building must be fully DDA compliant with ramps and automatic doors where appropriate.
- The safety of users and staff is very important and must be considered in the design of the building. For example there should be no changes of level, no hidden corners and adequate lighting; there should be a discrete children's area

away from the entrance. The furniture and fittings should be appropriate for a public building. There must be adequate fire detection and means of escape.

Any move must be supported by local library users and the community, as demonstrated through the required consultation process (Appendix 6)

Library Opening Hours

When public libraries were mainly about lending books, the number and range of open hours were less important because borrowers only spent a short time in the library i.e. the time needed to return and choose stock. The 2011 Review confirmed that libraries are community hubs and library services are about much more than only book lending. A good number and wide range of opening hours are important, because library users may spend some hours in the library.

There is a discussion of opening hours set out in section 4.5 of the 2011 Review.

The Council expects that the current number of open hours in each library will be maintained, and if possible extended if this is supported by the local community and library customers.

Any changes to opening hours must go through a process of effective consultation with the local community and local library users. Changes must be supported with documentation to say why the changes are taking place, together the results of the consultation and an analysis which substantiates the changes to Suffolk Libraries.

Subject to the consultation outcomes:

- opening hours should reflect the needs and aspirations of the library's community, with allowances for evening and weekend sessions. The council expects that libraries in major centres and towns at least should open on Saturday and Sunday for a minimum of 8 hours over the two days. It expects that smaller libraries offer a minimum of four hours opening on either Saturday or Sunday, and any proposal to close for the whole weekend must be supported by clear evidence that current users, as well as those targeted as new users, could access the service at another time.
- any particularly low use hours should, if use cannot be increased through marketing, be moved to another time

Extending library open hours should also be subject to the consultation process. Subject to the consultation outcomes:

- community organisations could explore creative opportunities for increasing the use of and access to the library building, optimising self-service and community involvement
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- the clustering of library opening hours across nearby libraries could be explored
- self-service and volunteer led sessions could be considered.

Marketing and Communications

Suffolk Libraries will continue to embed good practice in communications and marketing to all customer groups, but in particular to children, to young, vulnerable and under-reached groups, and older people, and to groups protected by the Equalities Act. Suffolk Libraries will promote libraries as community hubs.

Building Capacity to Govern Libraries

It is part of the direction of the Council and Suffolk Libraries that communities should develop the capacity to become IPS members and to govern and support their libraries.

Suffolk Libraries will assist community groups to develop their capacity to support their library through delegated responsibilities, advocacy and fundraising.

Equalities

Suffolk Libraries will be expected to maintain and implement Equalities Policies at least equivalent to those adopted by the Council and set out in Schedule 19. This is a contractual obligation and measurement of implementation will be monitored through the agreed performance measurement framework.

References:

1. <http://www.cilip.org.uk/cilip/about/ethics/ethical-principles> retrieved 25/07/2014
2. <http://www.cilip.org.uk/about/ethics/code-professional-practice> retrieved 21/03/2016
3. http://www.transformingsuffolk.co.uk/files/comm_strat/suffolkstrategic.pdf retrieved 25/07/2014
4. <http://www.ascel.org.uk/News/Media/file/Response%20from%20ASCEL%20Arts%20Council.doc> retrieved 25/07/2014
5. retrieved 29/03/2012
6. <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/planning-and-development-advice/section-106-planning-obligations/> retrieved 21/03/2016

