

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITIES ADVISORY BOARD**

**01 March 2016**

**Report of the Chief Executive**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)**

**1 KCC REVIEW OF MOBILE LIBRARY PROVISION**

**To agree a response to the consultation**

**1.1 Background**

- 1.1.1 Due to the significant financial challenges faced by KCC, a review of the current mobile library provision is being undertaken. The aim is to make the service more efficient, stopping in only the places where they benefit customers the most. KCC currently operates 11 mobile libraries, visiting 651 locations across Kent.
- 1.1.2 In redesigning the service, KCC have selected one criterion to assess usage: stops that have only had, on average, 2 or less visitors over the period October 2014 – September 2015. Under the current proposals, stops that meet this criterion will be withdrawn.
- 1.1.3 For the stops that remain, each would be on a new, fortnightly schedule, increasing the minimum stop time from 10 minutes to 30 minutes. There are also proposals to expand the home library service and assist people to get online (through the help of a volunteer) to allow customers to order books online and have them dropped off and collected from their homes.

**1.2 Mobile Stops in Tonbridge and Malling**

- 1.2.1 Annex 1 shows the current and proposed stops within the borough. It is clear that, under the suggested criteria, a number of stops will be withdrawn. For some villages, several stops were taking place, so a withdrawal of some stops will not necessarily mean there is no provision in that area.
- 1.2.2 The following areas will have no mobile library service going forward: Addington, Ditton, Dunks Green, East Malling, Golden Green, Ightham, Ivy Hatch, Ryarsh, Trottiscliffe, West Peckham and Wrotham. Whilst any loss of service is unfortunate, it needs to be recognised that due to the very low numbers of residents using these stops (2 or less over a one year period) the impact on users across the borough will not be significant, particularly if measures are put in place

to assist and support residents with the home delivery service. For this reason we cannot see any reason to object to the proposals within the consultation.

**1.3 Legal Implications**

1.3.1 None.

**1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

1.4.1 N/A

**1.5 Risk Assessment**

1.5.1 N/A

**1.6 Equality Impact Assessment**

1.6.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

**1.7 Recommendations**

1.7.1 That a response be made to KCC stating that TMBC has no objection to the current proposals to reduce the mobile library service.

The Chief Executive confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Gill Fox

Nil

Julie Beilby  
Chief Executive