

## Library Services Review

The Library service is currently undergoing a customer focused review to ensure that it meets the needs of local communities and is fit to meet the future demands of the service.

Customer focus groups have been conducted across the county, capturing the views of a wide range of people including:

- Those in different geographical locations
- Those from a wide variety of ages (pre-school, youth, working age and Age UK)
- All genders
- Minority groups
- Staff
- Users and non users of the service

In addition, all Area Boards are being consulted on what is important for their communities. This is expected to be completed by the end of September.

In summary the feedback received to date can be described as follows:

- **Customer Service**

That staff provide excellent customer service but there does need to be additional IT support available for those times outside of normal working hours.

- **Buildings**

Toilets, coffee shop, meeting areas and more car parking were all issues that the groups wanted from the library buildings. There was also a strong view expressed around the various areas available within a library. For example, whilst it was accepted that activities brought people into the library it was felt appropriate that areas for silent reading should be kept.

- **Access**

The service should be available Monday to Friday core opening hours with two evening openings. The views on weekend opening were mixed. There was quite a strong feeling that the library should be the face of the council providing other services.

- **Technology**

Colour photocopying, WiFi, e-books and readers were all things that people wanted more of. Greater uses of technology like e-alerts were also suggested.

- **Products**

Wider range of reading material and greater access to the internet.

Subject to the outcome of discussion at the meeting, the Committee is asked to note that a report on the redesign and modernisation of Library Services, including £500,000 savings target achievement, will be considered by Cabinet on 19 October and it may be that the Committee will wish to comment in advance. If so, the Committee will need to determine its approach, i.e. rapid scrutiny exercise.