

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **LIFELONG LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**
DATE: **THURSDAY, 14 FEBRUARY 2013**
REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING**
SUBJECT: **SALTNEY LIBRARY UPDATE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To update Members on work to provide a permanent library in Saltney.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The current library is located in a temporary building (since 2008) on the site of the original library in Salisbury Ave, Saltney (CH4 8TF). The library, which has 1,230 registered users, lent 17,215 items and recorded 8,892 visits in 2011-12.

2.02 In considering the potential for a scheme to build a new library for Saltney, reference must be made to the Corporate Asset Management Plan 2010-2015. Collaboration is a key theme in the Plan which stresses the need to create multi-functional accommodation with provision for the public to access a wide range of Council services, drop-in facilities for officers and the sharing of facilities with other organisations. An integrated development of this type would improve accessibility, increase take-up of services and reduce operating costs. Under-utilised assets, such as the present Saltney Library which operates for only 14 hours a week and remains empty and unused for the rest of the time, are inefficient and unsustainable. Any proposal for the development of a library in the town must include other elements of direct public service provision by the Council and by other organisations.

2.03 On 14th August 2009 the Council entered into a Section 106 Agreement with Morrison's supermarkets in relation to a new superstore at High Street, Saltney. The Section 106 Agreement provided for the transfer of a parcel of land from Morrison to Flintshire County Council for the development of a public library. The site is 1200sq metres. The agreement stipulates a 7 year timescale for the development.

- 2.04 A steering group was set up to investigate the provision of a multi-use building in Saltney located on the land acquired under the 106 agreement. Representatives on the group included: Head of Culture & Leisure, Principal Librarian, elected members for Saltney wards, officers from Planning and Regeneration departments and Flintshire Connects, Saltney Town Council members, representatives from BCUHB and N W Police.
- 2.05 The group commissioned a feasibility study to investigate the potential of the site as a multi purpose community facility centred on a relocated library facility. The feasibility study found that a multi use building could be accommodated on the land despite various limitations of the site. Initial outline costs for a range of options ranged from £1.1m to £2m (at 2011/12 prices). Insufficient funding was in place at that time to proceed with the project and as other sites in the town had been suggested for a multi-use facility, it was decided that an options appraisal should be undertaken.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 The options appraisal is ongoing and is being led by the Flintshire Connects project officer. Working with elected members and officers from regeneration and planning departments, several sites in Saltney have been investigated as to suitability for such a project. This has included a reappraisal of the Morrison's site. A full options appraisal report will be ready by April 2013.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to accept the report.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None arising from this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

None arising from this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

None arising from this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

None arising from this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

None arising from this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

With potential partners, identified in 2.04

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

With potential partners, identified in 2.04

12.00 APPENDICES

None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Flintshire County Council, Report to Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 January 2011, Saltney Library

Flintshire County Council, Corporate Asset Management Plan, 2010-2015.

Contact Officer: Lawrence Rawsthorne
Telephone: 01352 704400
Email: lawrence.rawsthorne@flintshire.gov.uk