

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND LIBRARIES COMMITTEE
Thursday 7 March 2019

ITEM 5 – PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Note

At the meeting a total of 30 minutes is available for public questions and comments. The questioner may ask one supplementary question at the meeting which will be answered without discussion. The supplementary question must be relevant to the original question put to the Chairman.

Public Comment - up to 3 minutes per comment

Agenda Item No	Public Comment Request
Item 7 - Outcome of annual Strategic Crime Needs Assessment	Ms Barbara Jacobson
Item 10 – CLLC Delivery Plan	Ms Barbara Jacobson
Item 8 – Nomination for Asset of Community Value – College Farm	Mr Mick Crick

Qn No	Agenda Item No	Raised By	Question Raised	Answer
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1.	Item 7 - Outcome of annual Strategic Crime Needs Assessment	Ms Barbara Jacobson	What consideration has been given to the role libraries could play in preventing crime, for example by providing a safe and interesting environment for children?	<p>The Library Service provides a wide range of activities for children of all ages. These include regular weekly groups and targeted or one-off sessions such as those developed for the 2019 Year of Learning. The Library Service also provides a number of volunteering opportunities for young people both to support the annual summer reading challenge and as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. There are currently 22 such volunteers working with libraries in the borough. These activities are part of a wider network of positive activities available to children and young people.</p> <p>The Library Service also works closely with local police and community safety colleagues and a number of libraries including Hendon, Chipping Barnet and Golders Green have hosted police drop-in sessions.</p>
2.	Item 8 - Community Right to Bid Nomination for Asset of Community Value - College Farm	Ms Barbara Jacobson	By refusing to give College Farm ACV status, the council will be denying the community the opportunity to restore and re-open the farm for everyone's benefit. The council claims to encourage residents' engagement and action. For example, Item 10 states it is 'focusing on the strengths of the community and what they can do to help themselves and each other, so why would the council want to deprive residents of this opportunity, especially when it does not cost the council money?	<p>An asset of community value (ACV) is land or property of importance to a local community which is subject to additional protection from development under the Localism Act 2011. The Council has a quasi-judicial role in implementing this Act at a local level as it must assess whether a nomination meets the criteria set out in the legislation. In this instance, the nomination does not meet the criteria set out in the Localism Act 2011. The report details the reasons for why it does not meet the criteria.</p>
3.	Item 10 – CLLC Delivery Plan	Ms Barbara Jacobson	The only action in this item relating to libraries is listed as an 'Additional Priority'. Why is it an afterthought rather than of the same importance as the other priorities?	<p>The priorities in the committee delivery plan are taken directly from the corporate plan. There is not a specific priority in relation to libraries in the corporate plan and because it is a priority for the committee it has been added as an additional priority, agreed at the November committee meeting, and has the same level of importance as those taken from the corporate plan.</p>

4.	Item 10 – CLLC Delivery Plan	Ms Barbara Jacobson	<p>The delivery plan for libraries states ‘Continuing to maximise access to libraries through a technologically and digitally enabled service that serves our communities’. Since access to the library is restricted by technology and thus does not serve the community fully, what does this statement mean and what are the specific ways in which you plan to accomplish this?</p>	<p>The deployment of self-service opening technology has enabled the council to extend library opening hours so that libraries are now open for an additional 170 hours per week including early mornings and late evenings in all libraries Monday to Friday as well as extending Sunday morning opening in four libraries. The digital library of electronic resources (e-books, eAudiobooks, e-magazines, e-newspapers and online reference databases continues to grow providing increased access to library services outside physical library buildings.</p> <p>We are also in the process of upgrading our Library Management System which includes a significantly improved customer interface with the ability to pay for items online, receive notifications of items about to go overdue and to place reservations directly from the catalogue. This will be launched on 21 March 2019. Alongside this system we are also introducing an online booking system through which customers will be able to hire community rooms in libraries and to book events and activities.</p>
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