

# Denbighshire County Council

**Length of review: 15 days   Savings: £90,000 per year**

Denbighshire Council was seeking to reduce year-on-year revenue expenditure on its Library Service by £90,000 from 2010 onwards. The Council had considered introducing or raising existing income targets but felt that this was not an achievable solution since it would impose further burdens on the service area.

## **Objectives:**

- **Efficiencies:** to explore reductions in expenditure whilst maintaining an acceptable service to the library users of Denbighshire.
- **Retain quality service provision:** the Denbighshire Library Service plays an important role at the centre of the community and had high levels of customer satisfaction. A recent report on collaboration with a range of organisations demonstrates the need to retain provision as far as possible.
- **Options and risk analysis:** to present elected members with a series of options for making the savings required, and provide a risk analysis for each option and impact on the Library Service.

## **Outcomes:**

- **Efficiency savings of £90,000 a year**
- **Performance improvement recommendations**
- **Location of the service's role in the community and within the wider Council agenda**

APSE established that the Denbighshire Library Service was well run, effective and efficient. The central focus of the review was how to reduce revenue expenditure by £90k from 2010/11 onwards without further reducing access to customers or damaging the quality of current provision.

The review provided elected members with an opportunity to consider the Library Service in the context of its contribution to the wider Council agenda, its role in local communities and its core function as a foundation for learning; key players from the Council and other sectors were invited to the Partnership Consultation Meeting to discuss opportunities to improve the position of the Service in communities. Site visits were undertaken to all libraries and the response of staff to the challenge of the review was positive in terms of their commitment to both customers and partners.

A meeting with a representative group of staff was arranged for staff to brief

colleagues on the Review and to receive their views on how the Service could address the £90k savings required.

In addition to the options available to the Council, the review provided a series of savings-related and non-savings related recommendations to ensure that a consistent approach to the changes ahead could be assessed and debated.

Key themes emerging in the review included:

- Savings - reducing the burden of shared facilities by identifying the true costs of joint provision and providing options for recharges or service level agreements to manage the cost of shared sites. Producing efficiency savings through a new Library Service Management structure, including the Schools Library Service; reviewing opening hours; and the possible closure of a library.
- Current provision - improving the customer experience ; further cross border provision ; increasing partnership working ; confirming the core business of the Service and aligning the draft Library Vision with the Council Vision.
- Management of the Service - reviewing the current structure and proposing a new model that provides savings and is more effective; realigning the Archives Service within the new structure; providing a new system for back office support within budget.
- Future provision - Denbighshire Library Service in five years time ; Welsh Assembly requirements ; Denbighshire County Council's vision of services closer to communities; realising the Vision and Mission of Libraries in Denbighshire; developing flexible multi-purpose centres offering local communities a range of Council facilities based on the core values of the Library Service.