



Read
learn
explore

CORK CITY COUNCIL
Library Development
Programme 2015-2019



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Ardmhéara & Chief Executive

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO PRESENT THIS LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR 2015 TO 2019 Read~Learn~Explore.

The Cork City Council Library Service is a popular and well-loved resource, with seven libraries around the city. The service reaches out to people through its websites, the unique Library App, and social media – tweets, blogs, Instagram – as well as to people confined to their homes with the housebound service. The rhythm of the city's social and cultural life is marked in a very real sense in the city's libraries, through the year: the Lifelong Learning Festival in spring, leads on to the Cork World Book Fest, to the children's summer programme, to Heritage Week, and to the Children's Book Fest in October. This is, of course, in addition to the evolving everyday service provided to the public.

This Programme meets the requirements of the 2001 Local Government Act regarding local authority library development programmes. It covers the same period as the Council Corporate Plan, and, like that Plan, takes account of the changed environment in which local government services operate. Like the Council in general the library service is facing a period of major, perhaps unprecedented, change in the years to 2019. The implementation of the library development programme will be aligned with the Council's annual service delivery plans, and monthly and annual reports.

In this era, with its greater focus on local accountability, it is the outcomes that matter. The Development Programme is structured to achieve key outcomes, with clear strategic actions to achieve the goals and objectives which the Council believe are most important in order to meet the current needs and priorities of the city and its people.

Cork City Council Libraries will

Foster lifelong learning
Nurture a Reading City
Provide for cultural expression } for children and adults

In support of these goals, the Council will enhance access and social & cultural inclusion, through its collections, library spaces, and digital content. It will reach out to everyone in the city, through well-trained and committed staff, and by building and strengthening partnerships with relevant agencies.

The biggest challenge will be to achieve real social inclusion, ensuring that there will be no obstacles to access. Libraries have become a diversified meeting place; few other public arenas are so diverse in terms of usage by the local community. The Council has already removed membership fees, and over the course of this programme will make every effort to ensure that its Libraries will be a resource used by everyone in the city, including the 'new Corkonians'.

This programme places Libraries at the heart of Cork the Learning City. Lifelong learning – and not least literacy, including digital literacy – will become more and more important in the 21st century, and learners' needs will become more diverse and personal. Our Libraries will be making significant contributions to achieving the commitments of the UNESCO Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities in the city. A related set of objectives will support job opportunities and enhance the job-seeking skills of all citizens. While not a new area for the library service, there will be a much sharper focus on achieving these objectives, as all sections of the City Council seek to support a thriving city economy.

The new Hollyhill Library will be a flagship in achieving these core objectives. This beautiful new facility for the people of the north west of the city, designed to support literacy and lifelong learning, is above all a welcoming and democratic community space. It is a huge statement by the Council of the value it puts on the people of the North West ward.

The City Council is ambitious for the city centre. One of the key objectives in this programme is to develop a new City Library building with a net usable area of 5,000m², which will be a vibrant destination, one of Cork's most important social, educational and cultural spaces, and an active partner in the cultural, social and educational life of the city. The proposed new City Library will be crucial element in revitalising the city centre.

In preparing this development programme, the Council consulted widely, in a process led by City Libraries staff, and the priorities of the public are front and centre in the programme's goals and objectives.

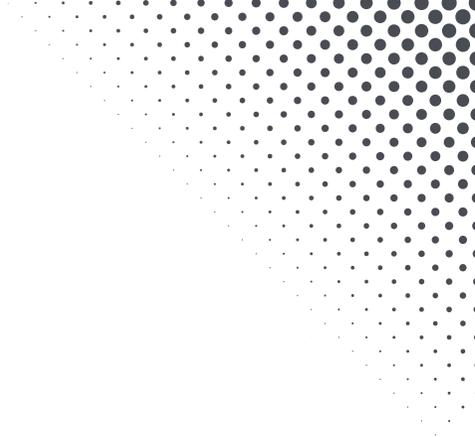
The question might be asked of any public service "if it did not exist, would we invent it now?" We are certain that an innovative and well-used public library service is vital to the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of this city. We are equally certain that the partnerships built up by our library service in recent years – with UCC, ETB, CIT, Triskel, COPE and many others – will continue to bear fruit in the future. Through our library service, communities come together to achieve outcomes – in terms of lifelong learning, reading & comprehension skills, digital literacy, and creative expression – which they could not do without their library. Libraries staff, with the full support of all sections of the Council, are fully committed to achieving the objectives set out in this Libraries Development Programme, which we warmly commend.

Councillor Chris O'Leary
Árdmhéara Chorcaí



Ann Doherty
Chief Executive





Our Mission

“to welcome and support everyone in their enjoyment of reading, and in their pursuit of learning, knowledge, and culture”

Acknowledgements

This Development Programme was prepared by an editorial group of library staff comprising:

Eibhlín Cassidy, Matthew Farrell, Breda Hassett, Tina Healy, Helen McGonagle, Elizabeth McNamara, John Mullins, Sheila O'Mahony, Ann Riordan, and Liam Ronayne. David O'Brien was involved in the early stages of its preparation.

Socio-economic statistics in relation to the city were provided by the Social Inclusion Unit.

The Programme was edited by Liam Ronayne, Cork City Librarian.

The contributions of all library staff are gratefully acknowledged, along with those of:

Elected members of Cork City Council; members of the Strategic Policy Committee for Tourism, Arts and Culture;

Director of Services, Corporate & External Affairs, Cork City Council (Valerie O'Sullivan to August 2015, Paul Moynihan from September 2015);

John Ger O'Riordan, SEO, and other staff of Corporate & External Affairs;

Maeve Dineen A/Arts Officer, and Community Arts Coordinator, Cork City Council;

Michael Burke, A/Director of Services; Human Resources & Organizational Reform; and staff of Human Resources, Finance, ICT & Business Services, and Strategic Planning Directorates of the City Architects Department and of the Social Inclusion Unit, Cork City Council;

Members of the public who contributed suggestions, comments and ideas.

Research and Preparation

The process began on 12 November 2014, when the entire library staff participated in a morning-long strategy session. The topics for discussion had been identified in individual team meetings held in local libraries and in City Library departments. The keynote addresses were given by Ann Doherty, Chief Executive, and Valerie O'Sullivan, Director of Services. The results of the discussions on that day are summarised in Part B: SCOPE in this programme.

Having collated staff input, the Council then sought public input. In January 2015 posters were displayed in libraries and ads placed in local papers seeking public submissions. An article on the challenges facing the library service appeared in the *Cork Independent* newspaper, on 17 January, encouraging the public to submit their views. This was followed by a radio interview on Cork's 96fm involving the City Librarian, on 20 January; this interview led to significant feedback in the form of comments on a phone-in on the same day, and on the radio station's social media streams.

Some 200-plus public comments & suggestions were received in various formats: written submissions using the forms circulated by the library service, emails, and other written suggestions.

Local, National & EU Contexts

This Development Programme has been prepared in the context set by local, national and EU legislation and policies, which include:

Cork City Council

Cork City Council Corporate Plan 2015-2019.

Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021.

City Centre Strategy, 2014 (prepared by Colliers International).

Cork City Council and Cork County Council

Cork Area Strategic Plan [CASP] 2001-2020.

Ireland. Oireachtas

Local Government Act 2001

Local Government Reform Act 2014.

Ireland. Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government

Opportunities for all: the public library as a catalyst for economic, social and cultural development 2013-2017, 2013.

Managing the Delivery of Effective Library Services, September 2014.

Relevant EU programmes

www.librariesforall.eu

www.europeana.eu

<http://ec.europa.eu/culture>

<http://www.ccp.ie/>

Executive Summary

The Cork City Council Library Service is a popular and well-loved resource, but one facing a period of major, perhaps unprecedented, change in the five years up to 2019. The factors influencing change include

- > increased demand for borrowing and use of library spaces and facilities, for study spaces, classes, and attendances at events;
- > the 'Digital Revolution' in all its aspects;
- > adoption of a national Library Management System, and consequent changes to library operations.

The SCOPE analysis, on pp 23-25, sets out the positive and negative factors regarding our Situation, and Competencies, and the Obstacles we face. Looking to the future, our Prospects and Expectations are also detailed.

The Council has submitted a Workforce Plan for the Library Service to the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government, as required by the Department. This Workforce Plan, once approved, will provide for the appropriate numbers and grades of staff to sustain the library service over the medium to longer-term period. In the meantime, the Council faces serious difficulties in maintaining the opening hours of a number of libraries in the city.

At the time of preparation of this document, opening hours have had to be curtailed indefinitely in some of the departments of the City Library, Grand Parade. The Children's Library is now closed every second Monday; the Reference Library has been reduced from a six-day to five-day-per-week service; and the Local Studies Library has been reduced from a six-day to four-day-per-week service. There have also been unplanned closures in some local libraries, due to the reduction in staff numbers since 2009 – a total of 16 staff have retired and not been replaced since that time. Local libraries have suffered similar short-term closures, at lunchtimes, etc., and such unplanned closures are likely to reoccur until Departmental sanction is received to recruit additional staff.

Despite these serious challenges, Cork City Libraries face the future with confidence, based on the commitment and skills of library staff, and on the strength of the relationship between libraries and the people they serve. During the next five years, the new Hollyhill Library will embody the Council's commitment to social and cultural inclusion and to lifelong learning, and will spearhead the implementation of the relevant objectives in this Programme. The Council intends to develop a new City Library of 5,000 m² of net usable area, on the Grand Parade. The Council also intends to transform the service through the use of appropriate technology, while still keeping the human touch front and centre.

Cork City Council seeks to ensure that its Libraries are a resource used by everyone in the city. Cork City Council Libraries will strategically concentrate on areas that meet the current needs and priorities of the city and its people. Specifically Libraries will work to

Foster lifelong learning
Nurture a Reading City
Provide for cultural expression } *for children and adults*

In support of these goals, the Council will enhance access and social & cultural inclusion, through its collections, library spaces, and digital content. It will reach out to everyone in the city, through well-trained and committed staff, and by building and strengthening partnerships with relevant agencies.

Cork City Libraries will improve Access to library resources and enhance Inclusion in all its aspects:

1. We will develop collections policies that will help us achieve real access and inclusion;
2. We will take active steps to include everyone in the city;
3. We will make library buildings and facilities fully accessible for all;
4. We will make our libraries welcoming intercultural venues;
5. We will develop strategically-focused policies and programmes on access & inclusion.



Read • learn • explore

Cork City Libraries will promote early literacy and learning for children & young people

- > We will develop Collections which will meet the needs of children & young people
- > We will support family reading and literacy and help create a foundation for educational success
- > We will provide focused services for education in the city
- > We will provide suitable spaces for children and young people

Cork City Libraries will promote lifelong learning, help jobseekers and entrepreneurs, and encourage civic participation

- > We will develop Collections which will meet the needs of adults for learning, research, and information of all kinds
- > We will provide appropriate spaces for learning, research, and study
- > We will support enterprise, employment, and career development
- > We will support participation in the social, economic, and cultural life of the city
- > We will significantly enhance digital literacy & learning in libraries
- > We will develop the Cork Past & Present website in functionality and content

Cork City Libraries will develop the Reading City for children & young people

- > We will provide the right book, at the right time, for the right young reader
- > We will continue to develop services for teen users

Cork City Libraries will develop the Reading City for adults

- > We will provide the right book, at the right time, for the right adult reader
- > We will continue to develop innovative reader initiatives
- > We will continue to develop creative writing initiatives

Cork City Libraries will develop Music and Cultural Expression in Libraries

- > We will ensure that libraries continue to feed children's curiosity and imaginations
- > The City Library and local libraries will be key cultural resources and spaces in the city
- > We will continue to develop the Rory Gallagher Music Library as a key focus of the city's musical and cultural life

Cork City Libraries will enhance outreach and partnership

- > We will focus on evolving public needs in order to serve patrons effectively
- > We will actively promote the value of library use, and will market library services
- > We will be active partners with relevant agencies and community groups.

Read • learn • explore

Access & Inclusion

- Implement objectives on
- > collections
 - > community groups
 - > accessibility of buildings & facilities
 - > inter-culturalism
 - > access & inclusion strategy

Implement objectives on **Learning & Information:**

- > collections
- > family reading
- > learning spaces *for children*
- > collections
- > learning spaces
- > enterprise & jobs
- > digital literacy & learning *for adults*

Further develop Cork Local Studies / Cork Past & Present

Implement objectives on **Reading & Books:**

- > collections
 - > services *for children & teens*
 - > collections
 - > reader initiatives
 - > creative writing *for adults*
- incl. 'One City, One Book' 2016

Reaching Out

- Implement objectives on
- > focus on public needs
 - > promoting value of library use
 - > nurturing partnerships
- incl. Develop marketing strategy / digital communications strategy 2015-6

Implement objectives on **Music and Cultural Expression:**

- > resources to feed children's curiosity & imaginations
- > lectures, talks, workshops, exhibitions
- > participation in festivals, annual programmes

Continue to develop Rory Gallagher Music Library

MAKING IT HAPPEN

Implementing the Development Programme

Building programme

- Develop a new City Library building: 2015-18
- Develop & open Blackrock-Mahon Library: 2016-18
- Refurbish & extend Frank O'Connor Library, Mayfield: 2018

Human resources

- Implement the City Council Libraries Workforce Plan: 2015-19
- Continue Staff Training & Development: 2015-19

Technology Roadmap

- Technology Roadmap to scope the way forward for ICT in libraries:
 - > prepare: 2015-16
 - > implement: 2016-19

Implementation Programme

- Enhance internal communication channels: 2016-19
- Review all service delivery structures: 2016
- Carry out functional / quality reviews: 2016-18

Finance

- Reach national per capita Bookfund target of €3.77: 2017
- Reach appropriate levels of investment in all aspects of service: 2016-19
- Assemble capital packages for Building programme

Part A

Cork: the City and its Libraries

Cork City Council Library Service is a popular and well-loved resource, contributing to the social, cultural and economic life of the people of the city. It will celebrate its 125th birthday during the course of this development programme.

- > Citizens borrow between 900,000 and one million items from the city's libraries each year;
- > Between 33,000 and 35,000 people are members in any given year;
- > An estimated further 20,000 people use the libraries' services;
- > The Libraries' two main websites on average attract 330,000 visitors each year, with a total of 845,500 pages viewed.

The library service faces a period of major, perhaps unprecedented, change in the five years up to 2019. Over recent years we have seen greatly increased demand for both borrowing and use of library spaces and facilities. Demand for study spaces, classes, and attendances at events are all on the rise. While heartening, and indicating the value of a library service, this presents obvious challenges to us. Furthermore the digital revolution, now well underway, will impact on us in three main ways:

- Firstly*, the move beyond printed materials to eBooks, eJournals, apps, etc.; and changes in how people access digital materials: 'renting', not 'owning';
- Secondly*, major shifts in the media ecosystem, most of which are responses by the commercial world to digital developments;
- Thirdly*, the demand and expectation on the part of the public that a modern public library should provide a range of digital services, such as more extensive Cork Past & Present web content, music downloads, web videos, etc.

In 2016 the library service is due to adopt the new national library management system, known as Sierra; this will provide significant benefits for the public and the staff, but will entail considerable work in planning and implementation.

Ireland has experienced widening socio-economic inequality over the years since the economic downturn. The library service needs to re-focus its policies and programmes to respond more effectively to social, educational, and cultural exclusion.

Cork City Libraries face the future with confidence, based on the commitment and competences of library staff, and on the strength of the relationship between libraries and the people they serve. To respond to the challenges we face, we will need to reconfigure ourselves: in our staffing structure, in the adoption of appropriate technologies, and in the physical layout of libraries. The reconfiguration required forms a central part of this development programme.

Hollyhill Library
Harbour View Road, Knocknaheeny, Cork
021 4924928 | hollyhill_library@corkcity.ie

Blackpool Library
Redforge Road, Blackpool, Cork
021 4924933 | blackpool_library@corkcity.ie

Frank O'Connor Library, Mayfield
Old Youghal Road, Mayfield, Cork
021 4924935 | mayfield_library@corkcity.ie

The CITY LIBRARY
Lending (Children & Adults) | Music
Reference | Local Studies
57-61 Grand Parade, Cork
021 4924900 | libraries@corkcity.ie

Tory Top Library
Tory Top Road, Ballyphehane, Cork
021 4924934 | torytop_library@corkcity.ie

Douglas Library
Douglas Village Shopping Centre, Cork
021 4924932 | douglas_library@corkcity.ie

Bishopstown Library
Wilton, Cork
021 4924950 | bishopstown_library@corkcity.ie

Cork City: a socio-economic snapshot

Statistics in this section are derived from the most recent Census, in 2011, except where otherwise indicated.

The population of Cork City was 119,230 in the 2011 Census, a decrease of 0.16% on 2006. The population of the environs grew by 35,000 in the same period.

There are 83,783 people of working age – i.e. aged 15 to 64 – in the city.

The average age in the city is 38.7.

There are 17,950 persons aged 65 and over in the city, equal to 15.1% of the population of the city.

Almost one in three people over the age of 65 live alone.

The standardized death rate in the city is 9.7 per 1,000 compared with 6.3 per 1,000 in the State as a whole.

Almost half the households in the city are home to two people, while almost a quarter have three per household.

There are 28,235 family units in the city; 31% of families have one child; 24% of families are headed by a lone parent.

The city has 47,163 housing units; the proportion of flats or apartments in Cork is 50% greater than in the State as a whole. More than 8,000 of these housing units are unoccupied.

One in three houses are rented privately, while 15.4% are local authority rentals.

Cork City Council's budget for investment in social housing is less than a tenth of the figure it was in 2009, i.e. €5 million vs €54 million.

There are 51 primary schools and 18 second-level schools in the city.

Overall trends in the city are towards a more educated population. 15.3% had a third-level qualification in 2006, whereas 24.3% had an ordinary-level degree, national diploma or higher in 2011.

University College Cork and Cork Institute of Technology have had a strong influence on the distribution of socio-economic groups across the city. Combined, these institutions have over 35,000 students.

There are 55,328 persons in the labour force, equal to 46.4% of the population, 30,323 males and 25,005 females.

Use of public transport is less than the national average (9.1% versus 12.9%); a surprise perhaps, considering the array of public transport options available in Cork city. The larger numbers walking, however, illustrate the fact that Cork city fares well in terms of sustainability – 33.9% of persons walk or cycle to work, school, or college.

Disadvantage: there is a distinct spatial component to disadvantage in the city. RAPID areas suffer disproportionately from deprivation, as well as the northside more generally. Areas around Turner's Cross and Ballyphehane south of the River Lee also have pockets of deprivation.

According to the *Children's Occupation Study* of children aged between 5 to 8 in Cork city:

- Boys and girls in that age group in Cork city spent 18% of their time during the week on play;
- 55% routinely played outside after school;
- At the weekend, significantly more boys than girls engaged in extra physical activities such as soccer and cycling.

According to the *National Adult Nutrition Survey* (2008-2010):

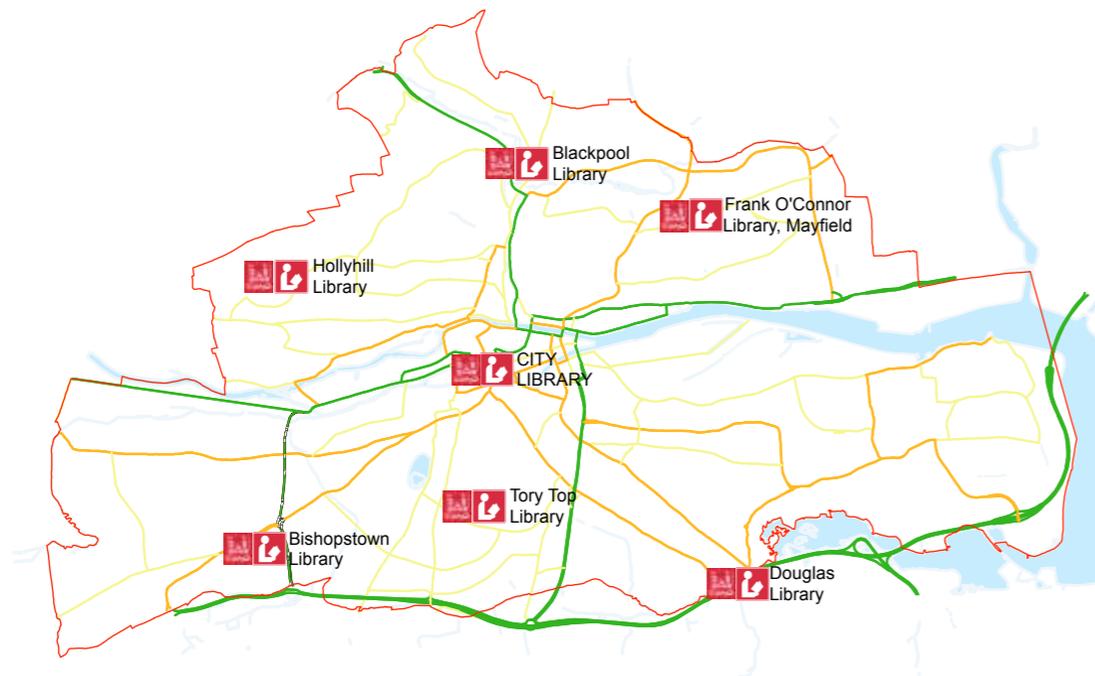
22% of men and 23% of women nationally smoke. Levels in Cork city are in line with national levels, however, the percentage of persons never having smoked was significantly higher in Cork South Lee (47%) compared to Cork North Lee (38%).

The areas with the highest levels of their populations having 'fair', 'bad' or 'very bad' general health are in Fair Hill, Gurrabraher, and around City Hall. The areas with the lowest levels are: Bishopstown, Browningstown, Mardyke, and Tramore; these are among the most affluent areas in the city and are characterised by high educational attainment and low unemployment.

Cork City Libraries: resources, services, and locations

Cork City Libraries provide a range of library and information services to the people of Cork, children and adults, and to anyone interested in the history and culture of Cork. We provide books, CDs, DVDs, and audiobooks, for use within the library or for home use, and a full range of learning, reference and information services and resources, in particular at the City Library.

Cork City Libraries provide user-centred services that seek to meet the diverse and changing needs of the communities we serve. Traditional library usage is enhanced by access to new technologies and media. Our digital services provide downloadable eBooks, audiobooks and magazines, and access to a range of databases. We provide a well-developed and well-regarded Local Studies service; our www.corkpastandpresent.ie website mirrors the Local Studies Library, and is a unique resource for the history, culture and genealogy of Cork. We also provide computers with high-speed Internet access throughout our network of libraries, easily downloadable eBooks and audiobooks, and a library app which enables the public to access library services on handheld devices.



The Cork City Libraries network comprises

The City Library, Grand Parade, is the main library for the city and environs. While the population within the city boundary is just under 120,000, the population of the greater Cork area is ca 290,000. People from the wider catchment area use the specialist services in the City Library. As well as Reference and Local Studies services, the City Library offers an Adult Lending library, with a major focus on literature and reader promotion; Children's Services; and the Rory Gallagher Music Library.

Six local libraries: there is one library in each of five of the six Ward areas which make up the city, i.e. Hollyhill (North West); Blackpool (North Central); Frank O'Connor Library, Mayfield (North East); Tory Top (South Central); and Bishopstown (South West). In addition the City Council provides a local library in Douglas, located in Douglas Village Shopping Centre in the county area, which serves a catchment both within and outside the city boundary. This is jointly funded by Cork County Council. Plans are at an advanced stage to provide a new Blackrock–Mahon Library to serve the remaining Ward, i.e. South East. When this comes on stream the entire city will be fully served, with seven local libraries.

Housebound service: Cork City Libraries provides a housebound service called, Library Link, to people who cannot travel to their local library. The service is available to individuals, nursing homes, and day-care centres. This service is available five days a week and has proved to be highly successful.

Mobile library service: The mobile library service has been suspended since the summer of 2014 due to the serious staffing difficulties faced by the service.

Online presence, 24/7: We provide online access to our catalogue in our libraries or through our Library app and websites www.corkcitylibraries.ie and www.corkpastandpresent.ie. Everyone may browse our catalogue, which includes an index of articles from newspapers and periodicals since the mid-1990s. The catalogue also allows members with a PIN number to view their accounts online, with the option of requesting or renewing items.

At the time of writing, the City Library and Bishopstown Library are open six days per week, Monday to Saturday, and our other local libraries are open Tuesday to Saturday (except for Saturdays of public-holiday weekends). Everyone is welcome to use our facilities free of charge for on-site reading/enquiries. Registered membership entitles members to borrow items for home use. Library members have access to all lending stock (books, CDs, DVDs, etc.), irrespective of which service point they use. The facility to return borrowed items to any service point offers improved access and choice to library users. Enquiries can be in person, by telephone, letter, or e-mail and are welcome from everybody; whether members or not.

Current structure

Cork City Libraries forms part of the Directorate of Corporate & External Affairs. The City Librarian reports to the Director of Services, Corporate & External Affairs, and to the Strategic Policy Committee for Tourism, Arts & Culture. The library service works closely with the Cork City & County Archives, with the Arts Office, in the same Directorate, and with the Cork Public Museum, the Heritage Office, City Archaeologist, and Conservation Officer. The library service has a close working relationship with the Information & Communications Technology and BPI unit of the Council, both in terms of the ICT on which a modern library service depends, and also in the development of digital library resources – websites, unique online content, library app, and social media.

The City Council sees the library service as a vital means of reaching communities all over the city, and as a key resource for achieving real social and cultural inclusion. Through the library service the City Council fosters lifelong learning, reading, cultural expression, and knowledge and appreciation of the city's history and culture, by children and adults. These are real and tangible contributions to meeting the City Council's core goals regarding enabling communities, and fostering city identity and a quality urban environment.

Governance: 2015 to 2019

The next five years will be a period of major change for the library service, not only in terms of services provided and how they are delivered, but also in terms of governance. At the time of compilation of this Development Programme the Cork Local Government Review Committee is preparing a report for the Minister for the Environment, Community, & Local Government on future local government structures in Cork city and county. In addition the Minister for the Environment, Community, and Local Government issued a policy statement in the autumn of 2014, *Managing the Delivery of Effective Library Services [MDELS]*. Together with Circular Letters LLS 1/2014 & LLS 2/2014, issued on foot of that document, this policy proposes that there be one library service for city and county.

Notwithstanding these two separate but related considerations, the City Council has prepared this programme and strategic actions for the city as it currently exists.

125 years of service

Cork was the first Irish city to adopt the Public Libraries (Ireland) Act, 1855, but it was not until 1892 that the then Cork Corporation established a public library. In 1905, the Library service moved from its first location in Emmet Place to a new building in Anglesea Street designed by architect Henry A. Cutler, then City Surveyor. That library, although funded by Scottish-American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, was built on a site provided by the Corporation on Anglesea Street, adjoining City Hall. Only fifteen years later, however, during the War of Independence, the building, along with many other city-centre buildings, was destroyed by arson attacks started during the night of 10/11 December 1920 by British armed forces.

After the burning of the Anglesea Street library, the city was without a public lending library for almost four years, until a lending service was restored in temporary premises in Tuckey Street at the end of September 1924. Ten years after the burning of the Carnegie Library, a new purpose-built library was opened to the public on a large site, fronted by no. 57 Grand Parade, in September 1930. The Library was built mainly on the site of former warehouses between Tuckey Street and Kift's Lane; to this day this space forms the nucleus of the Central Library.

For its first eight decades, the City Library service consisted of just the one city-centre facility. Between 1972 and 1998 five local libraries were built: St Mary's Road, Tory Top in Ballyphehane, Douglas, Mayfield, and Hollyhill. In 2005 a new Tory Top Library was opened, followed by Bishopstown Library in 2006; in 2009 Blackpool Library replaced St Mary's Road Library, and Douglas Library reopened in new, much larger premises.

Achievements 2004-2014

The libraries development programme adopted by the City Council a decade ago – **Books Bytes & Buildings 2005 to 2009** – ushered in an era of great achievement. New libraries were built at Tory Top Road in Ballyphehane, and in Bishopstown, and the very popular Cork Past & present website (www.corkpastandpresent.ie) was created, full of unique images and maps of the city. A highly successful library programme of events was organized as part of the 2005 European Capital of Culture, which was the springboard for the Libraries' annual programme supporting learning, reading, and heritage. The period also saw a renewed focus on children's reading and events.

By way of contrast the follow-up development programme, though a continuation in name – **Books Bytes & Buildings 2: 2010 to 2014** – was concerned with sustaining levels of service in the face of the worst and longest economic recession in the history of the state. While the last five years have been difficult ones, the library service has continued to make progress in meeting the public's needs, as shown by the receipt of a national accolade in the autumn of 2014 when *Public Sector Magazine*, the main periodical covering public service issues in Ireland, selected Cork City Libraries as outright winner for Best Local Authority Library Service 2014.

In the first of these programmes *Books Bytes & Buildings 2005 to 2009*, it was stated that
the City Library has established itself as an integral feature of the city's cultural landscape, so woven into the fabric of the lives of countless Corkonians over the years as to be almost invisible.

While the library service is still woven into the fabric of the lives of the people, and will continue to be so, it could not be said to be invisible. Its profile has been raised in so many ways over the past decade – through our programme of activities, through 'the poetry of the everyday', i.e. the unstinting quality of service to our constant readers, through our websites, and through the attractive new library buildings in Ballyphehane, Bishopstown, and Hollyhill.

Part B

SCOPE Analysis

Methodology

As an integral element in preparing the development programme, Cork City Libraries embarked on a consultation process with the public and with staff.

1. Public consultation was carried out using newspaper ads, posters and fliers, radio interviews and phone-ins, and social media. This led to more than 200 public submissions;
2. Meetings and focus groups were held with all library staff.

A SCOPE (Situation, Competencies, Obstacles, Prospects, and Expectations) analysis was then developed, based directly on the contributions of public and staff.

Situation

Our current situation has both positive and negative factors, which have been heavily impacted by ongoing lack of funding for new staff, buildings, stock, and programme development

1. We have continued to expand our service, a new purpose-built library in Hollyhill is due to open in summer 2015, and plans for a new library in the Blackrock–Mahon area are already underway. However, staff shortages have led to reduced opening hours in some branches and departments.
2. We are the proud recipients of Best Local Authority Library Service award, 2014, the International Association of Music Libraries award, 2010, and the Chambers Ireland award for Outstanding Customer Service for our Housebound Service, 2008.
3. We have a highly successful Housebound Service, visiting individuals, nursing homes, and day-care centres.
4. We have continued to develop our digital services with further development of our two library websites and the expansion of our digital material. In 2014 we launched our new library app.
5. We are dedicated to supporting cultural events and exhibitions. Our ongoing History is to Blame programme, the annual Bealtaine festival and Book Fest as well as the Children's book festival are all very successful.
6. We have continued to maintain the number and quality of initiatives for children and teenagers.
7. We continue to nurture an independent, informed, and confident user through the availability of self-service technology.
8. An increased workload due to staff shortages means that staff members are frequently stressed and have little prospects for career development.
9. Lack of funding has meant that the physical condition of the Central Library on the Grand Parade is not at a satisfactory standard. What should be our flagship library is currently in a state of overall disrepair.

Competencies

1. We have an experienced, willing and knowledgeable staff dedicated to developing library services, maintaining opening hours, and helping its users.
2. We are proud of our book stock and our commitment to stock development.
3. We offer an excellent range of services, books, music, DVDs, photocopying, printing, etc.
4. We provide help and support to groups and families in the areas of literacy and Information Technology.
5. We offer a wide-ranging and successful programme of literary and cultural events.
6. We are members of Cork PAL, a regional scheme whereby all participating institutions offer free reciprocal access to their hard copy resources.
7. We offer free Wi-Fi and express internet access for members and non-members in all our libraries.

Obstacles

1. Overall there is a lack of funding for new staff, buildings, stock, and programme development.
2. The City Library on the Grand Parade and the library in Mayfield are not fit for purpose and lack basic facilities needed by both public and staff.
3. Staff shortages have led to the suspension of our mobile library service and to reduced opening hours in some of our specialized departments and libraries.
4. Staff shortages and funding shortages have also led to a lack of opportunity for staff to attend training courses and to develop their library skills.
5. Staff not being replaced when they retire leads to an inability to reach the standards of service we set for ourselves.
6. An ever-increasing amount of staff time is now being spent helping people with PC, printing, and photocopying problems.
7. Lack of security provision in some of our libraries has put staff in a stressed and vulnerable position.
8. Staff are still working in places which fall short of best ergonomic practice: inadequate desks, unsuitable chairs, unsatisfactory work stations.
9. An increased marketing and clarity of visual identity is needed in order to make users and non-users aware of our services and opening hours.

Prospects

1. That adequate funding will be available for staff training, and to support flexible working arrangements for staff.
2. That increased funding will allow career development, promotion, and recruitment to become a priority.
3. That any new library buildings will be purpose-built and that our buildings infrastructure will continue to be developed and improved to reflect the needs of both public and staff.
4. That the introduction of RFID-enabled self-service with sufficient IT support will allow for an improved and more efficient service to the public.
5. That we will continue to promote and facilitate IT literacy.
6. That we will continue to grow and develop our library collections with increased emphasis on our local studies, reference, and digital music offering.
7. That we will continue to attract and retain new users, in particular young people, and continue to be socially and culturally inclusive to all.
8. That we will ensure equality of access to our buildings and services for all users.
9. That we will continue to improve and develop our visual identity and branding.

Expectations

1. That funding will be provided for training, promotion, and recruitment.
2. That funding will be provided for repair and enhancement of library buildings.
3. That with full training for staff, and clear instructions to the public, implementation of RFID-enabled self-service will be a success.
4. That each library service point will have immediate access to IT help, including on Saturdays and evening open hours.
5. That staff will be encouraged to progress their continued professional development (CPD).
6. That staff rotation will be fair at all grades.
7. That senior staff will be available to support frontline staff when difficult situations arise.
8. That we will attract new users, in particular young people and that we will accommodate the changing needs of these users.
9. That we will continue to evolve and develop new literacy strategies, and new inclusion initiatives, in particular with regard to the inclusion of adults with intellectual disability.
10. That the importance of the libraries' digital presence is recognised by having a dedicated and well-trained staff.

Part C

Strategy 2015-2019



Our Mission

“to welcome and support everyone in their enjoyment of reading, and in their pursuit of learning, knowledge, and culture”

Strategic Goals: Introduction

Cork City Council seeks to ensure that its Libraries are a resource used by everyone in the city. To make this overarching ambition a reality in the years 2015 to 2019, the Libraries will work to achieve the objectives set out in the following pages.

Cork City Council Libraries will strategically concentrate on areas that meet the current needs and priorities of the city and its people. Specifically it will work to

Foster lifelong learning
Nurture a Reading City
Provide for cultural expression } *for children and adults*

In support of these goals, the Council will enhance access and social & cultural inclusion, through its collections, library spaces, and digital content. It will reach out to everyone in the city, through well-trained and committed staff, and by building and strengthening partnerships with relevant agencies.

Collection development will support each of the strands set out below.

You can't be too young to use the Library! Shay O'Neill, Laura Buckley and Carleigh O'Neill enjoy what the Library has to offer.

Read • learn • explore



Access and Inclusion

Why Access and Inclusion is important for Cork City Council Libraries

Public libraries are open to all. Libraries have become a diversified meeting place. Few other public arenas are so diverse in terms of usage by the local community. Cork City Libraries are well placed demographically to provide access to all, not only to our current users but also to the large groups of people we have not as yet reached.

We are committed to providing broad access, and to enhancing real inclusion, minimizing barriers to use, and to giving everyone the means to read, learn, explore. Providing every person in Cork city, regardless of their background, with access to knowledge, information and the means for personal development is fundamental to the mission of Cork City Libraries, and fundamental to a functioning democracy.

Supporting integration and shared understanding, using an intercultural approach and recognizing the potential cultural and other benefits of migration, is the way forward for libraries in meeting the needs of the new Corkonians, from other EU countries and from farther afield.

How we enhance Access and Inclusion

Cork City Libraries make knowledge and information available to everyone in the city through high-quality and relevant collections, library spaces, and digital content. Our collections are in all formats, including digital, and driven by evolving patron needs and interests.

To make Cork City Libraries socially and culturally inclusive we aim not only to build on past success, but continually to evolve and develop new strategies.

We strive to have library buildings that are safe, welcoming and accessible to all, fitted with relevant and accessible technology. We aim to learn more about our non-users and what they need, before we can begin to provide for them. Libraries typically provide access to materials and resources by using service priorities which, however, often work in favour of current library users rather than excluded or disadvantaged groups; this will be addressed in 2015-2019.

We also strive to make our websites relevant, engaging, and accessible to all — allowing users to access content, explore interests, and collectively create communities of interest.

Cork City Libraries will improve Access to library resources and enhance Inclusion in all its aspects

1

We will develop collections policies that will help us achieve real access and inclusion:

- > Ensure that all children in Cork city, regardless of age, socio-economic or ethnic background, location, race, or learning ability will have **equal access** to a high-quality library service with a book stock that meets their learning and leisure needs;
- > Ensure that children and adults with disabilities have equality of access and service provision;
- > Endeavour to include migrant communities in stock selection and programming;
- > Further enhance our range of collections, by stocking books in relevant languages, particularly those of Central Europe and the Baltic States, and strengthen foreign film and music collections;
- > Provide materials for Irish people on the cultures of different countries, and expand our range of Learning English packages for adults and determine if we need the same for children.

2

We will take active steps to include everyone in the city:

- > Make special provision for individuals and groups in the community with special needs
 - > children and adults with literacy difficulties;
 - > people with disabilities, and housebound persons;
 - > homeless men and women; the Traveller community; and immigrants;
- > Support local literacy schemes by providing book collections, free membership, and information open-days;
- > Further develop programmes such as the Growing Imaginations programme designed to encourage adults with intellectual disability to use libraries;
- > Make appropriate provision for older citizens;
- > Engage with advocacy and provision agencies such as Cork Simon, and relevant interagency groups;
- > Work with the Irish Prison Service to provide a much enhanced library service in the new Cork Prison.

3

We will make library buildings and facilities fully accessible for all:

- > Ensure that all new buildings completed or designed during the period 2015-2019 are fully accessible for people with physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment;
- > Ensure that remaining physical obstacles in existing library buildings are removed, and ensure that signage in libraries is fully accessible for everyone in the community;
- > Make Library websites fully accessible for everyone, and make computers in libraries fully accessible for people with disabilities, including software and other facilities, as required.

4

We will make our libraries welcoming intercultural venues

- > Foster, in policies and actions, intercultural awareness for both migrant and host communities;
- > Facilitate events on cultural inclusion, including intercultural storytelling and music events, and other forms of creative expression;
- > Facilitate conversation exchange sessions in a range of languages;
- > Provide space and learning materials for English-language classes.

5

We will develop strategically-focused policies and programmes on access & inclusion

- > Set up an Access / Inclusion advisory forum which will include library staff and representatives from disability groups, state agencies, and community bodies to advise on what is needed to achieve access and inclusion;
- > Establish baseline parameters, using for example *Cork City Profile 2014*; and
- > Develop guidelines of best practice in engaging with marginalized groups.

Read • learn • explore

At the heart of Cork City Council's library service are books and other materials, and the skilled and committed staff that connect these resources with the people of the city. Books and other library materials can be used for a variety of purposes – for learning, for pleasure and as the basis for cultural expression.

Learning and Information

Why Learning is important for Cork City Council Libraries

For almost a century and a quarter Cork City Council Libraries have been a key resource for learning in the city. We are committed to encouraging and supporting learning through life; everyone from toddlers to senior citizens use libraries.

Lifelong learning – and not least literacy, including digital literacy – becomes more and more important in the 21st century, and learners' needs become more diverse and personal. Cork City Libraries' commitment to meeting the learning needs of children and adults evolves to meet these needs, supplementing traditional education with our collections and learning spaces.

Cork City Council has adopted the UNESCO Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities; libraries will have significant contributions to make in achieving the commitments of the Declaration in the city.

How we provide for Learning in Libraries

Cork City Libraries strive to provide the people of the city with the knowledge and information skills they need in the 21st century, and the workplace skills they need for their own advancement, and for the economic development of the city. These skills include digital, cultural and information literacy, communication skills, critical thinking and problem solving, creativity, and innovation.

Libraries provide an extensive range of resources for formal education, and informal personalized learning, and have very close relationships with primary and secondary schools in the city, and with third-level education institutions. Libraries participate in Bealtaine, Lifelong Learning Festival, and adult education initiatives which support lifelong learning, and provide space and supports for classes organized by Centre for Adult & Continuing Education, UCC.

Cork City Libraries host basic literacy classes and classes on Basic English in partnership with Welcome English and Altrusa. Our libraries provide basic computer classes in partnership with Solas, Get Ireland Online initiative, and other agencies.

The Local Studies Library holds material on all aspects of the history and culture of Cork city and region, in a range of formats. Local Studies staff answer wide-ranging queries, advise on genealogical searches and queries, index and make accessible unique resources for local knowledge, to spread awareness and appreciation of Cork's heritage.

Cork City Libraries will promote early literacy and learning for children & young people

1

We will develop **Collections** which will meet the needs of children & young people:

- > Ensure that the provision of quality book stock remains at the heart of children's and young people's library service;
- > Provide books, CDs, DVDs to support homework and research; and
- > Provide materials to support bibliotherapy for children.

2

We will support **family reading** and **literacy** and help create a foundation for educational success:

- > Support early years, laying foundation for literacy and lifelong readers;
- > Support children learning to read, and to become independent readers;
- > Support family-centred literacy and learning initiatives;
- > Nourish digital literacy, and foster coding classes;
- > Foster and develop relationships with literacy partners, to work together to deliver national literacy projects.

3

We will provide focused services for **education** in the city:

- > Build on existing relationships and establish new relationships with schools;
- > Provide suitable resources for studying and research;
- > Provide programmes and events to enhance reading and information-handling skills for school children;
- > Continue to develop programme of fun library skills and orientation for DEIS camps.

4

We will provide suitable **spaces** for children and young people:

- > Safe and welcoming library spaces that advance learning through reading;
- > Technology-enhanced spaces with children at their centre;
- > Age-appropriate spaces within the library;
- > Suitable space for homework, studying, and research.

All supported by knowledgeable well-trained library staff

Cork City Libraries will promote lifelong learning, help jobseekers and entrepreneurs, and encourage civic participation

1

We will develop **Collections** which will meet the needs of adults for learning, research, and information of all kinds:

- > Continue to enhance the range and quality of book, journal, newspaper and online collections for lifelong learning, research, and reference;
- > Continue to develop Local Studies collections on the history, culture, places, people, and events of Cork, in all formats, including books; journals of historical societies etc.; newspaper collections; maps; local newsletters; prints; programmes, posters and other ephemera; and audiovisual materials.

2

We will provide appropriate **spaces** for learning, research and study:

- > Make best and most appropriate use of the facilities of the Reference Library;
- > Make best and most appropriate use of the facilities of the Local Studies Library, for study, research, and learning;
- > Continue to develop spaces for lifelong learning in all local libraries, and maximise the use of these spaces by individuals and groups in the community.

3

We will support **enterprise, employment, and career development**:

- > Connect job-seekers to the information resources they need;
- > Provide accurate and up-to-date information in all formats on jobs, CVs, interviews;
- > Develop resources on innovation, enterprise, and job creation;
- > Continue to enhance information, in all formats, on the economy and businesses.

4

We will support **participation** in the social, economic and cultural life of the city:

- > Provide information and background reading materials;
- > Organize relevant exhibitions;
- > Provide space for talks and discussions, and for sharing of ideas on social, economic and cultural life.

5

We will significantly enhance **digital literacy & learning** in libraries:

- > Enhance use of digital learning and information resources, in-house and by remote access;
- > Develop the programme of free computer classes, in partnership with the Cork Education & Training Board, 'Get Ireland Online', and Age Action Ireland;
- > Develop self-directed learning facilities in Libraries;
- > Establish an open learning centre for language learning and computing in the City Library;
- > Provide access to online language and computing courses.

6

We will develop the **Cork Past & Present** website in functionality and content:

- > Carry out regular structural revamps to enhance functionality and ease of navigation;
- > Continue to add unique material on the Cork area, previously not easily accessible to the public;
- > Provide for more contributions from organizations and individuals — including from local historians and writers.

All supported by knowledgeable well-trained library staff

The Reading City

Why Reading is important for Cork City Council Libraries

Books and reading are at the heart of the library service. Reading provides access to knowledge, ideas, and culture, and encourages creativity. Cork City Libraries recognises that access to books from the earliest age is an essential right that should be afforded to every child. Access to books places children in the best possible position to grow into confident and competent readers, and gives children a clear advantage in their educational path.

Providing up-to-date book stock for children and adults, which meets the evolving needs of library users, is central to our service.

How we make the Reading City real

Cork City Libraries have excellent general book stock and media stock. Through the years of the economic downturn that began in 2008, the Council has maintained a reasonable level of expenditure on stock. In particular the Council has maintained spending on stock for children and young people with 31% of total bookfund in 2014 and 2015 committed to this area.

Cork City Libraries promote reader development through the Cork World Book Fest each April, and through book launches, author visits, and readings throughout the year. These events give library users opportunities to meet authors and poets, and to discuss books and the writing process. Conversations about books and literature are also facilitated by our book clubs. On a day-to-day basis, library staff – through the promotion of specific authors, genres, or aspects of stock – help readers to find the right book, at the right time.

Cork City Libraries will support creative writing through workshops during the Cork World Book Fest and the Summer School of Creative Writing. Cork City Libraries facilitates creative writing groups, both fiction and non-fiction, and the Irish writing group Peann agus Pár.

Cork City Libraries will develop the Reading City for children & young people

1

We will provide the right book, at the right time, for the right young reader:

- > Nourish a reading culture through staff commitment and vision;
- > Ensure that the provision of quality book stock remains at the heart of children's and young people's library service, accounting for at least 30% of the annual expenditure on new stock;
- > Provide book-centred programmes and events to stimulate the imagination and encourage a lifelong love of reading.

2

We will continue to develop services for teen users:

- > Provide appropriate and interesting stock, run suitable programmes and events, and examine the transition between teen users and adult service users to develop lifelong readers;
- > Build on Teen Day partnerships, and develop a teen committee for future events and teen service development;
- > Offer interest-based activities and mentorship to develop teens' 21st-century skills, and provide connection to educational and career pathways;
- > In general, recognize the rights of teen users to their own library space and identity as unique library users.

All supported by knowledgeable well-trained library staff

Librarians are the custodians of literacy – they lay the stepping stones that start the journey from one book to another, widening horizons and the reading experience

CHRIS RIDDELL, Children's Laureate UK, 2015-2017

Cork City Libraries will develop the Reading City for adults

1

We will provide the right book, at the right time, for the right adult reader:

- > Strive to meet national per capita targets on expenditure on new stock;
- > Continue to develop fiction and non-fiction collection in all formats, including large print, audiobooks and DVDs;
- > Expand fiction and non-fiction eBooks collection and eAudiobooks collection;
- > Continue to develop Irish language and literature collection, with an emphasis on expanding stock of non-academic and audiovisual material, and continue to develop foreign language collections in all formats.

2

We will continue to develop innovative reader initiatives:

- > Organize author visits, book launches, and other reader-promotion initiatives under the banner of **The Constant Reader**, the unique Cork City Libraries programme to get people reading and to connect writers and their readers;
- > Continue to facilitate and support book clubs and creative writing groups, in the City Library and local libraries, and online through e.g. The Writing Room blog;
- > Develop new reading initiatives, e.g. initiate a 'One City, one Book' programme on the 50th anniversary of Frank O'Connor's death in 2016;
- > Develop a range of reading lists and posters, in online and digital formats, to encourage readers to try new writers and genres, and continually update book displays and promotions;
- > Continue to work in partnership with Munster Literature Centre, Triskel Arts Centre, Ó Bhéal, HSE, and other groups to nurture the Reading City.

3

We will continue to develop creative writing initiatives:

- > Continue to develop the participation of book clubs and creative writing groups in the Cork World Book Fest, Lifelong Learning Festival, Seachtain na Gaeilge, etc.;
- > Continue to facilitate the Summer School of Creative Writing;
- > Continue to support and facilitate Gaelic-language creative writing.

All supported by knowledgeable well-trained library staff

I was always very fond of heights, and afterwards it struck me that reading was only another form of height, and a more perilous one. It was a way of looking beyond your own back yard.

Queer treasures I clutched to my chest, coming over Parnell Bridge in the evening on my way from the Public library.
FRANK O'CONNOR, *AN ONLY CHILD*

Cultural Expression

Why Music and Cultural Expression is important for Cork City Council Libraries

The City Library and six local libraries are spaces where people freely come together for cultural and community activities. Because of our presence in the city centre and in each Ward in the city, we are visible to and available for every individual and community. Because of trust built up over decades of service, we are used by people who might be reluctant to engage with other cultural centres in the city.

The Libraries' programmes of lectures, talks and exhibitions – particularly a major series such as History is to Blame – enrich the cultural life of Cork. Local libraries provide a space for diverse cultural groups to participate in and contribute to the cultural life of their communities.

How we enhance Music and Cultural Expression

Cork City Libraries plays a central role in the cultural life of Cork City. Libraries are involved in many of the festivals and cultural events in the city, hosting events during the Jazz Festival, Choral Festival, Folk Festival, Heritage Week, Culture Night, etc.

Our exhibitions – those created by Libraries staff and those generated elsewhere – are appreciated by the people of the city, as are the talks and other events on a wide variety of topics and interests.

Local Studies are a unique heritage resource archiving the history and cultural memory of Cork. The Music Library's varied programme of performances, recitals, lectures and exhibitions contributes to the music culture of Cork. The rich music heritage of Cork is preserved by the Cork Music Archive.

The Rory Gallagher Music Library is a unique resource in the city, providing music materials in all formats – music books, scores, CDs and DVDs – in all genres – classical, choral, traditional, jazz, contemporary, rock & pop – for lending, reference, and archival purposes. The Rory Gallagher Music Library provides resources for leisure and entertainment, for information and study, and for understanding and appreciation of all genres of music.

Cork City Libraries will develop Music and Cultural Expression in Libraries

1

We will ensure that libraries continue to feed children's curiosity and imaginations:

- > Continue to be resources for creative expression by children, providing materials and spaces;
- > Continue to provide books and other materials for creative expression by children;
- > Continue to provide spaces and facilities for creative expression by children.

2

The City Library and local libraries will be key cultural resources and spaces in the city:

- > Continue the varied programmes of lectures, talks, and workshops;
- > Continue to develop Libraries involvement in festivals and annual events, Bealtaine, Heritage Week, Culture Night, etc.;
- > Continue exhibitions programme in the City Library with a national/international focus;
- > Continue exhibitions programme in local libraries with a community focus.

3

We will continue to develop the Rory Gallagher Music Library as a key focus of the city's musical and cultural life:

- > Continue to develop its music collections in all genres and in all relevant formats;
- > Continue to develop its informational and reference role for all aspects of musical culture in the city;
- > Continue with, and expand, support for the music curriculum and, where appropriate, provide space for classes in music appreciation and instrument tuition;
- > Continue with, and expand, the current calendar of live music performances and gramophone recitals, and explore possibilities for music performance in Libraries;
- > Continue to develop the Cork Music Archive (see Appendix 3).

All supported by knowledgeable well-trained library staff

Reaching Out

Why reaching out is important for Cork City Council Libraries

"If we build it they will come" is not an adequate maxim for public libraries. Public libraries are an intervention in local communities paid for out of the public purse, and intended to be used by everyone in those communities. Reaching out to individuals and groups in the community goes hand in hand with the provision of library buildings, resources, and other facilities.

Libraries are beacons of learning and inclusion in the community, strengthening community life. Each local library in the city responds to the particular nature and needs of the area it serves; collectively our libraries meet the diverse needs of the city.

We are much better, and we achieve much more, if we work in fruitful cooperation with partners in the city. We achieve more, for example, working with UCC and Cork Education & Training Board (ETB) in lifelong learning, with Triskel Arts Centre and Munster Literature Centre in promoting the reading city, and with Welcome English, NASC, COPE Foundation, and Cork Simon in enhancing access and inclusion.

How we reach out to the city and its communities

Cork City Council Libraries reach out in a variety of ways.

We have an extensive range of well-designed and attractive promotional and informational materials – brochures, leaflets, bookmarks, factsheets, and reading lists.

We make space available to a variety of groups, for a variety of purposes. We reach out to elderly and infirm members of the public with the Library Link service, which brings books and other resources to people's homes.

We are active partners in initiatives such as Cork PAL – with other libraries in the Cork region; the Lifelong Learning Festival – with the Cork ETB, CIT, UCC and the HSE; the Cork World Book Fest – with Triskel, the Munster Literature Centre, and Ó Bhéal. We work with the COPE Foundation and develop initiatives for adults with intellectual disability, such as the **Growing Imaginations** project. We work very closely with the Irish Prison Service in providing a library service in Cork Prison.

We also reach out 24/7 through our digital resources and applications – two websites providing unique digital content and enabling users to find, reserve, and renew books and other items they want online; and through our Library app.

Cork City Libraries will enhance outreach and partnership

1

We will focus on evolving public needs in order to serve patrons effectively:

- > Actively engage staff, library users, and other stakeholders in the Libraries' mission, goals, and objectives;
- > Know more fully the communities – their needs and preferences – with whom we need to communicate;
- > Make effective use of surveys and other forms of feedback;
- > Develop further an emotional connection with libraries and the sense of a 'library community', communicating a passion for what libraries do;
- > Put the public's needs at the top of our agenda, and be accountable to the public.

2

We will actively promote the value of library use, and will market library services:

- > Devise a marketing strategy for libraries, incorporating a marketing plan with annual targets for usage and membership, and other relevant key performance indicators;
- > As part of that strategy, develop a digital communications & marketing strategy;
- > Continue to develop printed and online materials, targeting specific users, and potential users;
- > Make the best possible use of social media in communicating our message; and
- > By implementing these above-listed actions, increase usage and membership of libraries.

3

We will be active partners with relevant agencies and community groups:

- > Identify new prospective partners in achieving the Libraries' mission, goals, and objectives, and deepen relationships with existing partners;
- > Use CorkPAL and MusicPAL to provide a better service to our users;
- > Enhance cooperation with other educational and cultural agencies in the region;
- > Strengthen links with libraries in Cork's twin/sister cities.

The supporting objectives, listed on pages 30-42, will be vital in achieving our Strategic Goals.

Making it Happen: state-of-the-art library spaces

A New City Library: a Transformational Project for the city

Cork City Council will develop a new City Library building with a net usable area of 5,000 m², which will be

- > A vibrant destination, one of Cork's most important social, educational, and cultural spaces;
- > An active partner in the cultural, social, and educational life of the city; and
- > A resource to be used by everyone living in, working in, or visiting the city.

To achieve this landmark ambition, the Council will

- > Assemble the land package necessary to facilitate development;
- > Assemble the funding package; and
- > Develop the detailed design.

The **City Development Plan 2015-2021** identifies the need

"To create a new vibrant face to the upgraded public realm of Grand Parade through the redevelopment of the existing City Centre Library."

What the Council is proposing is not merely a similar facility on a larger scale. The proposed new City Library will be a key transformational project in the city, and in particular in the quadrant bounded by the Grand Parade, South Main Street, Tuckey Street and the River Lee. The Council believes that the development of a new City Library will contribute in a major way to urban regeneration, because of the civic, cultural, social, and economic role of the Library.

The need for a new City Library building and the facilities to be included in the proposed new City Library are set out in Appendix 1.

The Council will complete the network of purpose-designed local libraries

Cork City Council will

- > Develop the Blackrock–Mahon Library through the refurbishment and extension of the former ABODE building on the Skehard Road;
- > Carry out a detailed study of the proposals from the Cork Centre for Architectural Education in respect of a library for the Blackpool area, and how these proposals might contribute to achieving a purpose-designed Blackpool Library;
- > Refurbish and extend the Frank O'Connor Library, Mayfield, by adding space for a multipurpose community room, and generally upgrading the fabric of the building.

Mobile Library services: in addition, the Council will carry out research on the long-term needs for customized service, e.g. in suburban housing estates, and for particular sectors of the community, over the next two decades, and on how best to meet these needs.

Making it Happen: Well-trained and Committed Libraries Staff

Cork City Council will implement the City Council Libraries Workforce Plan

Since 2008, a total of 16 staff have retired or resigned from the Cork City Council library service, and have not been replaced. Staff who have taken maternity leave and career breaks since 2008 have not been replaced during their absence. All service points have been forced to reduce levels of service due to non-replacement of staff. It is the Council's intention to restore staffing to sustainable levels, to ensure continuity of service, and to ensure that the library service continues to meet the needs of the people of the city.

Early in 2015 the Council (Human Resource Management & Organizational Reform, and senior Library Service management) prepared a Workforce Plan for the library service to scope the way forward, and provide for appropriate succession planning. The Workforce Plan is set out in three main sections, covering the numbers and grades required in:

1. The City Library frontline lending staff;
frontline Reference & Local Studies staff;
2. Frontline staff in Local Libraries, and Relief Panel;
3. Management & Support staff.

The grades and numbers in the Workforce Plan represent what is required for the effective operation of the library service in Cork city. This Workforce Plan is for an RFID-enabled service, and reflects the experience in other similar services that 60-70% of the staff complement will need to be available for duty in public areas at any one time, allowing for leave of various types, and for training.

Through the implementation of the Workforce Plan, the Council will:

- > Ensure that there are well-trained, committed, and competent staff working in all areas of the library service;
- > Ensure that libraries are staffed with sufficient numbers and grades of staff, capable of responding to the changing needs of citizens;
- > Ensure that there are adequate staff numbers for planning and managing events, programmes, training, and outreach;
- > Provide for succession planning, and the retention of corporate memory.

Cork City Council will provide for Staff Training & Development

The Council is committed to training and development of Libraries' staff to ensure that:

- > Staff are trained in skills relevant to the developing library service;
- > Staff are trained in child protection, health & safety, and other statutory requirements, in full compliance with national legislation;
- > Staff are enabled to acquire competencies to achieve the objectives set out in this development programme, and to encourage innovation in services generally;
- > Staff have the necessary ICT skills to deliver services, and that they remain current and able to respond effectively to change.

Appendix 2 lists the key Training & Development actions.

Making it Happen: Technology Roadmap

Given the rapid rate of change and innovation in the use of technologies in libraries, we need a Technology Roadmap to scope a way forward that will enable us to keep a focus on what is most important. We will use appropriate technologies to help us deliver the Strategic Goals in this programme; technologies are means to an end for us.

One of the great challenges for public libraries, indeed all public services in the 21st century, is how to strike a creative balance between traditional ways of doing things, on the one hand, and on the other hand using the potential of a variety of technologies and new ways of working to improve service delivery. Routines, technologies, and procedures, must continue to allow for creative interaction between staff and public.

People are and will remain our greatest strength: the people who use the service, and the people who provide the service.

To ensure that we make the best possible use of the range of digital resources and technologies available to us, the Cork City Council will, as a matter of urgency, undertake a review of what we want to achieve with websites and social media, and, on foot of that review, the Council will:

significantly enhance our digital content; in particular we will:

- > Carry out a root & branch upgrade of www.corkcitylibraries.ie;
- > Continue to enhance digital content, including online access to digitised music and user-generated content;
- > Carry out regular revamps of the Cork Past & Present website (see Appendix 3);
- > Generally enhance the 24/7 possibilities of library services.

prepare a digital communications & marketing strategy (see also Reaching Out: 2), to:

- > Clarify how best to use the Library app, blogs, and other social media to help us achieve our objectives;
- > Provide for digital conversations on books etc. in real time;
- > Enhance the use of technology generally in two-way communication with the public;
- > Use social media to enhance our web presence, and to provide for fruitful cross-fertilisation.

The digital communications & marketing strategy will aim to

- > Bring people to Cork City Libraries' websites and social media;
- > engage them while they are there;
- > Acquire / retain their contact details;
- > Maintain a continuing two-way relationship with them;

With the ultimate goal of increasing footfall and usage, both physical and virtual.

In addition, Cork City Council will:

- > Continue to provide appropriate technology in libraries, including Wi-Fi, public-access PCs, printing & copying facilities, and assistive technology;
- > Implement a range of self-service options service-wide, to improve the functionality and quality of service to the public, including
 - a) RFID-enabled self-issue and self-return of books and other materials;
 - b) self-booking of library computers;
 - c) self-service printing & copying.

Appendix 3 scopes potential ways forward for www.corkpastandpresent.ie and digital music resources.

Making it happen: Implementation / Structures

The implementation of this development programme will go hand in hand with the continuing reconfiguration of the library service. As already outlined in the introduction to this programme, over recent years we have seen greatly increased demand for both borrowing and use of library spaces and facilities. Demand for study spaces, classes, and attendances at events are all on the rise. While heartening, and indicating the value of a library service, this presents obvious challenges to the library service. In addition we face major challenges because of the digital revolution.

Cork City Council Libraries will respond to these challenges in a strategic way, making best use of the staff resources we have, and greatly enhancing our digital content.

In developing the library service over the period 2015 to 2019, Cork City Council will

1. Ensure demonstration of good governance, at all levels of the library service;
2. Enhance the quality of management systems in the operation of the service;
3. Integrate the practice of managing risk into all the operations of the service; and
4. Seek to protect the Council from adverse impact of any kind.

Cork City Council will implement the objectives and strategies in this development programme in a structured way:

- > In partnership with all staff, enhance internal communication channels for greater transparency and feedback;
- > Compile and implement annual libraries operational plans, in tandem with the annual Council-wide operational plans;
- > Carry out half-yearly and annual reviews of implementation;
- > Carry out a thorough review of all service delivery structures, at senior and middle management levels, in line with the priorities in this development programme;
- > Carry out functional and quality reviews of key aspects of service.

Library Service: Finance

Revenue Budget, i.e. investment in continuing services & resources

The City Council's investment in the library service can be grouped under the following main areas:

Staff Costs

Salaries & Wages; Training; Subsistence

Operational Expenses

Expenditure needed to keep the Library Service running: utilities, essential maintenance of buildings and equipment; rent; insurance

Materials & Resources

Collections of books, CDs, DVDs, newspapers & journals, and other library-specific materials we need to purchase

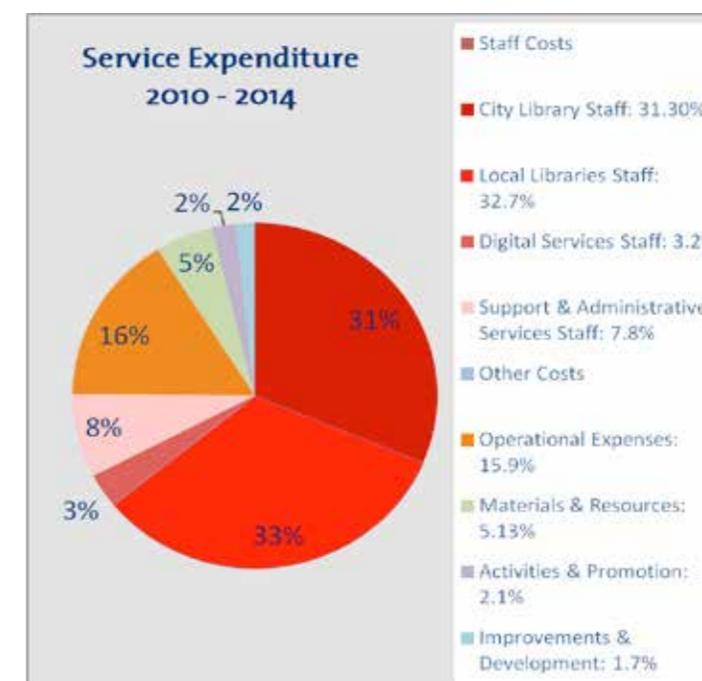
Activities & Promotion

Libraries' programmes of events & activities, and the promotion of these programmes

Improvements & Developments

Replacing or repairing, and purchase of new and/or additional shelving, furniture, equipment; general improvements of premises or facilities.

Total average annual expenditure over the years 2010 to 2014 was €5,392,360. The major part of that expenditure is on staffing and other operational costs, i.e. 91% or €4,907,048. Since the economic downturn of 2008 the amount available for new stock, programmes and promotion, and improvements has been greatly reduced, and now comes to just 9% of the total. The breakdown was as follows:



It is the Council's intention that this spending pattern will be broadly similar in the years 2015 to 2019, with, however, a stepped increase in investment in Materials & Resources, so that spending in Cork city will reach the national target per capita spend of €3.77 for Bookfund by the mid-point of this development programme, i.e. 2017, and be maintained at this level, or higher. The Council recognizes as well that greater continuing investment is required in facilities management of library buildings, and in digital resources.

Capital Budget, i.e. investment in new buildings, ICT etc.

The largest capital investment in the years 2010 to 2015 was in the new Hollyhill Library, which cost just over €4.1 million.

The Council's largest capital project in the years of this programme will be a new City Library for Cork, which is estimated to cost ca €25 million. In addition the Council will have the following capital investments:

| | |
|---|------------|
| Implementation of RFID-enabled self-service | €105,000 |
| Interim improvements in the City Library | €55,000 |
| New Blackrock–Mahon Library | €2,600,000 |
| Refurbishment & Extension of Frank O'Connor Library, Mayfield | €1,200,00 |

Appendix 1

The Library in the City: nature of the City Library

A place where Cork will ... *Read • learn • explore*

The proposed new City Library will be

- > A **Vibrant Destination**, one of Cork's most important cultural spaces:
 - a major attraction for the city centre, and a major tourist destination (genealogy etc.), open at times which suit a changing population;
 - offering spaces for learning and cultural enrichment, with a mix of quiet and vibrant spaces;
 - where individuals and groups will spend time, meet, and enjoy – a crossroads for meetings and exchanges;
 - hosting classes, readings, festivals and other events throughout the year.

Note: the library might be combined with another major attraction, similar to 'Les Champs Libres' in Cork's twin city of Rennes.

- > An **Active Partner & Agent** in the cultural, social and educational life of the city:
 - actively helping children to develop their literacy and information skills
 - at the heart of the learning city, supporting lifelong learning, both formal and informal;
 - promoting interest in literature, books and reading, in English, Gaelic, and other languages;
 - at the heart of the cultural life of the city, offering accessible resources for creative expression, supporting cultural and social inclusion;
 - supporting regional publishers and cultural producers.
- > A **Resource** to be used by everyone in the community
 - for learning, reading and creative expression, for children and adults;
 - with comprehensive and specialist collections, tailored to meet the needs of a learning and culturally-active city, including genealogical resources for tourists;
 - with the unique resources of Cork Local Studies, and the Rory Gallagher Music Library and the Cork Music Archive;
 - with total collections of books, journals, maps, prints, CDs, DVDs, vinyl and other materials of ca 500,000.
 - With ca 300 study spaces (individual and group), ICT and other equipment & facilities, in a technologically cutting-edge building.

With a comprehensive **digital presence**, enabling users to carry out transactions online, and to access unique digital content.

Appendix 2

Business case for a new CITY LIBRARY

The reasons why the city requires a new City Library include the fact that the existing building cannot accommodate the stock resources, specially-focused collections, and the study and other spaces required in a 21st-century library;

- > cannot meet the needs of the public in terms of ICT, specialist services, exhibitions, talks, workshops and other activities;
- > is very poor in terms of fabric, with leaking roof, and porous external cladding;
- > is very inefficient in terms of energy use, and is, on many counts, an unsustainable building;
- > does not meet standards of accessibility for people with disabilities.

A new City Library on this site would be a boon, not only to those directly using the facility, but to the entire city. A new City Library would enhance the quality of life for city-centre residents, many of whom live in fairly modest-sized apartments, and who would be able to use the spaces of a City Library as their collective front room; it would contribute to encouraging city-centre living. A new and attractive facility, housing a one-stop shop for information on the city's history and culture, as well as a mix of exhibitions and other events, would also enhance the quality of the city's tourism offer, and would be a major attractor in itself in terms of cultural tourism and genealogy.

New City Library as Transformational Project: Context

Cork City Council sees the proposal to develop a new City Library as a key transformational project in the city, and in particular in the quadrant bounded by the Grand Parade, South Main Street, Tuckey Street and the River Lee. The Council considers the development of a new City Library as a contribution to urban regeneration, because of the civic, cultural, social and economic role of the Library.

The Grand Parade is one of the main thoroughfares in the city, but on its western side is badly in need of regeneration. The two blocks immediately south of the library site are lying unused or underused: the first is in effect a derelict site, while the site closer to the river is being used as a car park.

The Council recently adopted the **City Development Plan 2015-2021**; on page 200, in the section 'Transformational Development Projects: Grand Parade', it states:

"Proposals for development should take into account the following policies and objectives for the area:

- > To create a new vibrant face to the upgraded public realm of Grand Parade through the redevelopment of the existing City Centre Library."

The specially commissioned City Centre Strategy, due to be published in 2015, will endorse this objective, and will elaborate on how a new City Library will aid transformation and regeneration.

In a part of the city that needs to be transformed, a new City Library would meet all the requirements of an 'anchor' development: the library has an established clientele, which would grow further in line with enhanced facilities.

The Council intends to lead the regeneration of the Grand Parade by assembling a large block of contiguous properties, to facilitate development.

Staff Training & Development Actions

Develop a Training and Development Programme for staff of all grades backed by investment in training.

Update our Skills Audit to identify and prioritise training requirements. Meet staff individually to discuss their needs.

Utilise PMDS — Performance Management and Development Systems.

Encourage teams to focus on sharing skills to the benefit of all.

Maximise professional and personal growth by

- > Facilitating staff to undertake professional qualifications in librarianship;
- > Giving staff an opportunity to spend time in specialist departments, either by staff transfers or short-term training opportunities;
- > Providing for Continuing Professional Development of middle and senior management staff.

In consultation with the staff and the eLibraries Team, research the ICT skills required by staff and arrange a training programme to fulfil training requirements.

Comply with statutory training in a timely fashion by arranging further training sessions.

Ensure continued professional development through internal opportunities to experience all aspects of the service.

Encourage staff to participate in interactive online training such as Frontline reader-development courses as they become available.

Appendix 3

Digital Resources: overview of future plans

At the time of preparation of this programme, Cork City Libraries' two main digital resources are the Cork Past & Present website, and the Digital Cork Music Archive. We will take a more strategic approach to Cork Past & Present content.

The **Cork Past & Present** website is a unique resource for the history, culture and genealogy of Cork, offering digitized maps, images, texts and audiovisual materials. We will

- > Develop more content in the 'Cork Places' strand; the criteria will be a) places with a historical resonance, e.g. Blackpool, Coal Quay, Mardyke; and b) for which visual and textual material is available;
- > Highlight key moments in the history of city and region, using a 'Timelines' approach;
- > Continue to digitize content likely to be of use to researchers, scholars and persons interested in the history and culture of Cork;
- > Commission historians and scholars to write additional text for the web;
- > Create a range of 'virtual visits', in response to the public's preference for interactive audiovisual material.

We will also take a more strategic approach to digitizing **Cork Music Archive** content.

The Rory Gallagher Music Library and Local Studies Library established the **Cork Music Archive** in 2007 to give a permanent home to the wealth of music, print, and audio produced by Cork people: classical, choral, traditional, jazz, contemporary, rock & pop. Cork Music Archive will continue to:

- > Collect, document, preserve and make available the musical heritage and current musical output of Cork – the city and region;
- > Make the most important and most relevant resources available in digital format through the website www.corkcitylibraries.ie;
- > By so doing promote awareness and enjoyment of Cork's music.



'It Seems History is to Blame' is a decade-long Cork City Libraries programme, looking back to the years 1913 – 1923, the period which forged the Irish state, and looking forward to the kind of Ireland we want to live in. President Michael D. Higgins – here with former TD Máirín Quill and then Lord Mayor Cllr. John Buttimer – opened the first exhibition of the 'History is to Blame' programme in May 2013



Every year since 2005, for five days each April, Cork City Libraries and Triskel Arts Centre have organized the Cork World Book Fest. Paul McVeigh and Louise O'Neill (pictured above) are among the writers who have featured at the Fest

Read • learn • explore



Our Mission

“to welcome and support everyone in their enjoyment of reading, and in their pursuit of learning, knowledge, and culture”