
Report To: Regeneration Committee

Date:
01/09/2011

Report By: Corporate Director Regeneration
and Environment

Report
No:R214/11/AF/AG

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Subject: Inverkip Library

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek Committee approval for the inclusion of the Inverkip Library within the proposed Community Centre and an expansion of the current Service.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The School Estate Strategy includes for the extension of Inverkip Primary School and the completion of the refurbishment of the school. The extension comprises two new classrooms with associated toilets and circulation space. Concerns were advised to the Education Committee in respect of the overdevelopment of the site if the extension was built.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 10th May 2011 the Education and Lifelong Learning considered a report on the development of Inverkip Primary School. This report indicated that if the library was taken out of the school it would provide sufficient room to expand within the existing building. The report indicated that it might be possible to include the library within the proposed new community centre and that to facilitate this funding saved by not building the extension could be vired to the budget for the community centre to pay for the construction of the library. The Committee agreed to proceed with the refurbishment only this year and to remit consideration of the future of the Library to the Regeneration Committee.
- 2.3 Inverkip library is an inadequate size for a community library, has limited opening hours and is consequently not well used. It is felt that this is due more to location than a lack of demand.
- 2.4 Proposals are currently being developed for a new Community Facility in Inverkip. Putting the library with the Community Facility would result in a significantly improved service and would be a good fit. A separate report on the development of the Community Centre is included elsewhere on the agenda

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Committee approve, in principle, the relocation of the Inverkip Library from the Primary School and remit to the Corporate Director Regeneration and Environment to enter into discussions with the Community Group to agree a suitable scheme and lease agreement, following which a report will be brought back to Committee.
- 3.2 That Committee approve the proposed funding adjustments shown in Section 8 and notes that the Corporate Director of Education & Communities will submit proposals to Committee at a later date detailing how he will contain any extra revenue costs within his Directorate's budget.

Andrew Gerrard
Head of Property Assets & Facilities Management

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Education and Lifelong Learning Committee has agreed to delay construction of an extension to Inverkip Primary School pending investigations into the relocation of the Community Library facility. Relocation of the Library would allow the school to expand without the need for an extension.
- 4.2 Proposals are currently being developed for a new Community Facility in Inverkip. Putting the library with the Community Facility would result in a significantly improved service and would be a good fit with the Community Facility. This would result in additional costs which are detailed in section 8. Details of the proposals for the Community Facility and the current status of the project are given by the Head of Regeneration and Planning in Section 6.

5.0 INVERKIP LIBRARY

- 5.1 Inverkip Library is the smallest library in the Council's portfolio, with the shortest opening hours and lowest issue, visitor and PC use figures. The combined population figures of Inverkip and Wemyss Bay were 5,200 in mid 2006 (latest figures available from Council website). Given the pace of population growth in both of these areas, this figure is likely to be significantly higher in 2010. In terms of population then, Inverkip/Wemyss Bay is more than half the size of Gourock and accordingly, key performance indicators for Inverkip Library should be about 50% of Gourock's – this is clearly not the case:

2009/10 Figures	Gourock Library	Inverkip Library	Inverkip as a % of Gourock	Inverkip performance c/f Gourock
Visitors	47,372	3,914	8.25%	1/6 th
Issues	45,716	3,141	6.9%	1/7 th
PC Use	6,512	372	5.75%	1/8 th

Clearly there is a significant underperformance in Inverkip. The social make-up of the Inverkip/Wemyss bay areas contains many young families as well as many elderly people – the libraries' key demographic. Although overall, Inverkip's book issues are poor, the library's children's issues are the second highest in Inverclyde. Crucially, it is the one area of Inverclyde where population is rising rather than falling. It is far more likely that the figures are so poor for Inverkip Library due to the inadequacy of the branch and not due to a lack of demand for services.

Inverclyde Libraries last carried out a Service Review in 2008 and the results were presented to the Regeneration Committee at its meeting of 15 January 2009. As part of the Review, various user surveys were undertaken. A Community Council consultation exercise took place in August in 2007; its findings in relation to Inverkip Library were that:

- PC provision (4 PCs) was considered poor, and does not meet James Watt College's minimum number of 10 for classes. Very difficult therefore to provide lifelong learning in Inverkip Library
- Part-time opening hours at Inverkip (16 hours per week – other branches open 34) are very limited and cannot be increased due to the library's location in the school
- The size of the library is not adequate – a larger improved facility would be more appropriate for the population growth taking place in the Inverkip/Wemyss Bay area
- Lack of disabled access – Inverkip Library is accessible only by steps
- No public toilet available to library users

According to the minutes of the 15 January 2009 Regeneration Committee, Members decided that Inverkip Library should be maintained in its current location, however should there be an opportunity in the future to accommodate a small branch library in a community

facility in West Inverclyde, that a new library for Inverkip/Wemyss bay should be considered.

While no consultation has been done specifically with Inverkip residents, the residents of Kilmacolm were surveyed for the KNCCC Feasibility Study for the New Community Centre in that village, and they rated the library very highly. It is proposed to carry out a similar consultation for Inverkip library.

6.0 INVERKIP COMMUNITY FACILITY

6.1 The Corporate Director Regeneration and Environment has established the Inverkip Community Facility Working Group to look at the feasibility of the introduction of a community facility in Inverkip using the phased £600,000 resulting from planning gain. The working group have developed a scheme for a 391m² facility which was the subject of wider community consultation in March 2011. The concept of a library requires to be presented to the Group and this will be undertaken prior to Committee. Officers involved in the working group believe that the library would be welcomed by the group as the library could potentially be an income stream from the Council for the facility, however the increased infrastructure demands of the library would need to be met from the library budget.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Inverkip Community Library does not meet the needs of the Community and is underused. The inclusion of a larger facility within the new Community Centre would ensure that a much improved facility is provided, giving the opportunity to perform in line with expectations. The Community Facility gains by having an additional element to it which will assist in establishing the Centre. This is the same model as has been developed in Kilmacolm in a partnership between Kilmacolm New Community Centre Ltd and the Council. In terms of the capital investment required the saving from not building the classroom extension will provide sufficient funding for the library element of the Community Facility.

The Nursery requires additional accommodation from August 2012. Unless the decision was taken to temporarily cease the provision of the library service until the Community Facility was built temporary accommodation would be required. This could be provided by one or more temporary units. A unit of 25m² would cost approximately £2,600 per annum to rent, with fixed costs of £1,500. If more space was required, a further unit or units could be provided and linked together. This arrangement would require to be in place from August 2012 until the new Community Centre opened, currently estimated to be in 2013/14.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 This proposal will result in a significant capital saving in the Inverkip Primary School project however on the assumption the Council wishes to continue the provision of Library facilities within the Inverkip/Wemyss Bay communities, there would be a need to provide capital funding for the library element of the community facility. The Library in the community facility would be approximately 150m² therefore funding of £300,000 would be required, being £250,000 for the building and £50,000 for fitting out. This can be vired from the budget from the Primary School as the extension will no longer be required.

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend	Virement	Other Comments
Education	Inverkip	2011/12	(£300,000)	Vired to	

Capital programme	Primary School			Regen Committee	
Regeneration Capital Programme	Inverkip Community Centre Grant funding	2013/14	£250,000	Vired from E&LLL Cttee	
Regeneration Capital Programme	Inverkip Library	2013/14	£50,000	Vired from E&LLL Cttee	

8.2 If the Library Facility has expanded opening hours there will be additional staffing costs and there will also be property costs associated with the community facility. As the Primary School will not now be as large as planned Property costs will not be as much and there is therefore potential to vire the budget to the Libraries Budget to meet the property cost of the new Library.

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend	Virement	Other Comments
Inverkip Primary School	Property costs	2012/13 & future years	(£9,120)		Potential virement to libraries to meet short & long term costs.
Inverkip Library	Property costs	2012/13 & future years	£15,000		This allowance will also meet the property costs for a temporary library facility
Inverkip Library	Staffing costs	2011/12 & future years	£14,000		

9.0 CONSULTATIONS

9.1 The Libraries Manager comments that feedback, both formal and informal, that we have received from Inverkip residents in recent years, indicates that the current library is inadequate in size, in location and in its restricted opening hours. Many residents do not even know that it exists or that they are able to access it, because it is located within the primary school. We would strongly support the addition of a library to a community facility in Inverkip, which would allow us to offer the same level and quality of library services that we are able to offer to residents in other areas of Inverclyde.

9.2 There are no Legal implications and therefore the Head of Legal and Democratic Services has not been asked for comments.

9.3 The Chief Financial Officer comments that the revenue implications arising from the proposals will be extra costs to the Council and as they are below the De Minimus level of £50k would need to be contained by the relevant Committee.

9.4 There are no HR implications and therefore the Head of Organisational Development, HR & Performance has not been asked for comments.

10.0 EQUALITIES

10.1 The proposals will improve access to the Library.