

CORE OFFER BUDGET FOR REMODELLED DOLPHIN CENTRE INCLUDING THE CENTRAL LIBRARY

WHY DOES THE COUNCIL HAVE TO PROVIDE THIS SERVICE AND WHAT DOES IT NEED TO COVER?

The duty to provide free libraries is covered in Section 7 (1) of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 “provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for persons desiring to make use of it.”

Section 7 (2) requires authorities in fulfilling the duty to have particular regard to the desirability of:

- a) Keeping of adequate stocks by arrangements with other library authorities and by other appropriate means that facilities are available for the borrowing of or reference to books and other printed matter, and pictures, gramophone records, films and other materials sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the general requirements and any special requirements both of adults and children, and
- b) Encouraging both adults and children to make full use of the library service and providing advice as to its use and of making available such bibliographical and other information as may be required by persons using it.

There is no statutory definition of “comprehensive” or “efficient”.

The Council does not have to provide the Dolphin Centre or any of the activities and facilities within there.

HOW DOES THE CORE OFFER BUDGET MEET THE COUNCIL’S OBLIGATIONS?

The proposed core offer detailed below will meet the Council’s duty with regard to the Library service. Spaces within the Dolphin Centre will be remodelled to enable the relocation of the central library service to the Dolphin Centre.

DOES THIS DIFFER FROM THE CURRENT SERVICE?

Cockerton Library

Cockerton Library is the only branch library within Darlington and would be closed as part of the core offer. There were approximately 86,000 books loaned from Cockerton Library during 2014/15 with 42,050 visits in the same period. There are 10 computer terminals for use by the general public within the library providing 280 hours of access per week.

Mobile Library

The mobile library service will be withdrawn as part of the core offer. This service visits 90 locations across the Borough in the town and villages providing opportunity for residents who can’t visit or choose not to, either the main library or Cockerton to borrow books or have access to the internet. On average there are 110 adults using the mobile library per

week and approximately 154 children when the mobile library service visits their school or nursery.

Local Studies

The Local Studies service aims to collect, preserve and make its local and family history stock available for reference to customers in person, over the telephone and by email. The collection centres specifically on the Borough of Darlington but also includes general items on County Durham and the wider north east. The collection contains a wide range of material including photographs, maps, newspapers, sales catalogues, posters and ephemera, as well as books and some materials on microfilm. The service is used by individuals, groups, schools, businesses, researchers, care homes as well as other Council departments. In the last 12 months, over 17,200 individuals have used the Local Studies service either through post, email, phone or in person, of which 16,100 were actual individuals visiting the library and using the service.

Local Studies will be relocated to the Dolphin Centre with the front of house service being provided in the existing Registrar's Office space, which will be remodelled to enable the relocation to take place.

The existing archive will be relocated into another Council owned building within the town centre.

There will be a reduction in staffing for the Local Studies service and therefore it will not be as responsive as it currently is. Whilst some of the archive material would be available within the front of house space in the Registrar's Office, the majority will be located off site albeit close by in another town centre building. This will have an impact on speed of access to material requested, which will have to be booked.

Main Central Library

The main central library will be relocated from Crown Street to the Dolphin Centre within remodelled space above the soft play area, seminar room, wedding suite. The following library service will continue to be provided:

- Lending library
- Children's library
- Reference library
- Centre for Local Studies
- Library events
- ICT facilities

There will also be 'quick picks' and ICT facility at the front of the Dolphin Centre where the Healthy Hub is currently located.

There are a number of benefits by relocating to the Dolphin Centre including:

- Sustainable Library service and Dolphin Centre
- Improved baby changing
- Improved toilet provision
- Further develop the family learning experience

- Café/catering facilities
- Social spaces
- Ability to expand a number of programmes, particularly for children and young people
- Updated ICT provision
- Improved access and facilities for all residents
- Extended opening hours

Dolphin Centre

Remodelling of the Dolphin Centre to accommodate the central library will result in the soft play expanding into the squash court area as the upper floor of the existing soft play is being utilised by the Library service. However through the reconfiguration, one squash court will be retained. The Registrar's service and wedding suites will be relocating to the Town Hall.

The Dolphin Centre is the Council's major leisure facility located in the town centre and receives in excess of 900,000 visits per annum. The main facilities will include:

- 25 metre, 8 lane pool
- Small toddler pool
- Diving pool with boards
- 25 metre, 4 lane training pool
- 2 water slides
- Main sports hall (8 badminton court size)
- 1 squash court
- Fitness suite
- Soft play studio
- Small multi-purpose studio
- Meeting rooms
- Major catering facilities
- Central Hall (multi-purpose space)
- The facility is also the base for 36 clubs/societies.

WHAT IS THE CORE BUDGET MADE UP OF?

2019/20 budget £1,650,882

	Budget 2019/20 £
Employee	2,720,725
Premises	978,824
Transport	3,263
Supplies & Services	825,425
Support Services	38,428
Capital Charges	106,590
Income	(3,083,255)
Overheads	60,882
Total	1,650,882