

Decision Maker: RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE.

Date: September 2nd 2020

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: PROVISION OF LIBRARY SERVICES - CONTRACT
PERFORMANCE REPORT

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Chief Officer: Sara Bowrey, Director of Housing, Planning and Regeneration

Ward: All

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Provision of Library Services contract with Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL) over the last six months of operation. The value of the contract over a ten-year period is £40,908,465.
 - 1.2 This report updates Members on the performance of the Contractor since the last report in March 2020.
 - 1.3 The report demonstrates how the Contractor has delivered the service in line with the contract, specification and Key Performance Indicators.
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2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 Members of the Renewal, Recreation & Housing Policy, Development and Scrutiny Committee are asked to review the report and to note the performance of the service provider in the last six months of the contract.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: The findings of the full Equality Impact Assessment which was conducted upon contract award showed that there were no negative impacts from the performance of GLL on children or vulnerable adults in Bromley. The contract has been designed to ensure that the previously existing levels of service are protected. Online library services were provided for children and vulnerable adults during the closure of libraries due to COVID-19
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Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council Supporting Independence Vibrant, Thriving Town Centres Healthy Bromley Regeneration:
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Libraries Services contract
 4. Total current budget for this head: £4.79m
 5. Source of funding: Existing 2020/21 revenue budget
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 2.19 fte (Client Team)
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement: The Public Libraries and Museum Act 1964
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable:
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Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): The library service has a statutory duty to be available and accessible to all those who live, work and study in the borough. A 2017 estimate identified that 330,909 people live in the London Borough of Bromley. 34,962 registered users used their library card to borrow an item in 2019, representing 10.6% of the population of Bromley. This does not include additional users who used the library solely for other purposes such as studying, attending activities, or using public PCs.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
 2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:
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3 COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The contract is for a term of 10 years with the option of a further 5 years by mutual agreement. The contract commenced on 1st November 2017 and is now over halfway through its third year. The contract makes specific provision for scrutiny by elected Members twice a year.
- 3.2 This report on the performance of GLL covers the six-month period from January-June 2020, this spans Quarter 4 19/20 January-March and Quarter 1 20/21 April-June. The last six months has been a period of great change and unprecedented challenges as well as new opportunities to develop Libraries and Historic Collections in Bromley.
- 3.3 In Quarter 4 service performance was monitored in the usual way as set out in 3.4 below, however performance monitoring systems were disrupted on 23rd March when the temporary closure of libraries was mandated due to COVID-19. This report covers both the performance of the first quarter when libraries were open and the performance of an entirely online library service during closure in the second quarter. Whilst it has been difficult to benchmark and compare them, the consistent factor has been the way each quarter has been strictly measured as set out below.

PERFORMANCE: JANUARY-MARCH 2020

- 3.4 During the Commissioning process a suite of 26 bespoke Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with significant financial penalties for KPI breaches not mitigated were developed. The KPIs ensure compliance with the method statements and the outputs of the specification and submission of data. The Client Team continues to apply and monitor this robust monitoring programme. In Quarter 4 January - March performance was monitored in the usual way in relation to delivery of the following services and no KPI breaches occurred.
- The Frontline/Operational Library service.
 - Specialist and Support functions including Strategic Management, Stock and Reader Development, Children and Families, Information and Learning, IT Support and Development, Improvement, Training and Marketing, Business Support.
 - Bromley Historic Collections
 - Facilities management including cleaning and security
- 3.5 It was detailed in the March 2020 Committee report that there was a strong indication that GLL could breach KPI 12 if they did not achieve Museum Accreditation. However, this KPI was not breached as temporary accreditation was awarded, therefore no performance adjustment points were applied. See section 6.5.
- 3.6 The eight-month period of industrial action which was fully detailed in the March Committee report ended on Monday 3rd February 2020 and staff returned to work. This was a continuing challenge which was resolved during month two of this review period when an agreement was reached between GLL and Unite. All libraries opened as normal during this period and ran their usual programme of events see 3.27
- 3.7 The March 2020 Committee report gave a full update on the project to refurbish the Central Library. Work continued in Quarter 4 to install public toilets and a picket fence to

the Children's Play area which was completed in March 2020. The refurbishment has transformed the Central Library into a flagship facility which brings together Bromley Historic Collections and an excellent Central Library facility as an integrated offer for residents of the Borough as well as visitors to the area.

MEASURING PERFORMANCE: COVID 19

- 3.8 Due to government advice in response to COVID 19 Library buildings were closed for the entire 2020-21 Quarter 1 period, April to June 2020. This impacted on the monthly and quarterly KPIs with 6 being temporarily or partially suspended during this time see section 5. To allow the Council to measure and monitor performance of the services available, a temporary reporting system was put in place which measured social media activity and usage by users, issues from the range of e-items offered online, and numbers attending or watching online activities. GLL provided a full monthly report including statistical breakdowns of the service - See Appendix 1. The existing suite of KPIs will be re-instated when all libraries are fully re-opened.
- 3.9 Libraries in Bromley were closed to the public on Monday 23rd March 2020 due to the coronavirus. Following closure GLL reacted quickly and launched a full online activity programme which went live ahead of branch closures and has expanded and gone from strength to strength during closure, see section 5. During the closed period GLL kept library phone lines and email accounts open in order to answer queries, support customers to access online services and chat to isolated customers. Staff also referred members of the public to the Council's Operation Shielding programme.
- 3.10 During lockdown GLL has created and developed the online 'Library Without Walls' offer, taking advantage of the altered staff work streams and stock fund priorities following branch closures. They have been able to develop the new timetable of online activities and videos and making use of modern technology to reach their audiences, adding additional services to their digital reading and listening offer including PressReader and uLibrary, and improving the wellbeing of users through virtualising reading groups and offering workout and exercise videos. Due to its success, at the request of the Council, after libraries re-open this will be retained and marketed as the 15th Bromley Library offering 24/7 access to Library services.
- 3.11 Library staff worked on a varied and extensive programme directed by the Client following the closure of the library buildings, which included developing and supporting Libraries Without Walls by providing online events and activities and digital content such as videos and podcasts. Other tasks included wellness calls to customers, digitising and updating event calendars and developing programmes for reopening. Staff undertook online training for professional development, which was provided by Libraries connected, Cisco and Open University literary courses, plus GLL online training for professional development. Staff also updated risk assessments policies and procedures ahead of re-opening. Other staff worked with the stock team and online team to enhance the catalogue by creating book lists and reviews on topics/interests based on customer choices, running virtual reading groups, and designing educational activities-see Appendix 1.

SERVICE RECOVERY- COVID 19

- 3.12 From the point of closure the Client Team worked with GLL on their service recovery plans - see Appendix 2. Extensive work took place behind the scenes to make library buildings COVID secure. Preparations included the development of risk assessments, carefully assessing requirements of each building and the subsequent adaptations to buildings including the installation of protective acrylic screens, the installation of hand sanitiser stations, the creation of separate entrance and exit lanes, the removal of relaxed seating, the distancing of public PCs to allow for social distancing and the installation of a range of signage encouraging customers to stay safe during the pandemic, featuring the recovery branding slogan “Better, Safer, Stronger”. PPE was purchased for members of staff, so they have the option of wearing visors, face masks and gloves in the workplace. A stringent cleaning regime has been adopted in the libraries, with a ‘housekeeper’ in each library throughout the day.
- 3.13 A phased approach was agreed in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for service recovery with six libraries opening as part of phase one on Monday 6th July with reduced opening hours from 10.00am-2.00pm. A decision was taken not to open all libraries immediately based on the advice from key agencies including Libraries Connected who produced a valuable Toolkit to aid service recovery. Local decisions were made based on a variety of factors with size being a main driver to ensure that there was enough space to adapt buildings for the new ways of working e.g. separate entrance and exit routes for customers. Of the libraries opening as part of this phase Beckenham, Chislehurst, Orpington and West Wickham were chosen because of size, Penge due to the high demand from residents to make cash payments using the Council Tax kiosk. St Paul’s Cray Library was chosen due to the higher levels of deprivation in the area and the need to make free IT and Wi-Fi available as quickly as possible. Track and trace systems are in place at the libraries that are now open. It had been hoped to re-open the Central Library as part of phase one, but due to the complex facilities management procedures for re-opening the building this was not possible.
- 3.14 As part of phase one, the following services were made available to the public:
- Access to public computers and printing (limited to 30 min slots – appointments are to be booked daily on a first come first served basis, secondary school aged children (11+) and adults only at this stage)
 - Library Take Away (Pre-prepared bags of 5 books for adults or children in a genre or category of their choice e.g. crime, romance, picture books)
 - Reservations for open libraries (using our online catalogue – fees suspended)
 - Browse and Borrow – Face-on selection of popular titles
 - Sale of Food Waste Bags & Garden Waste stickers
 - Home Delivery Service – delivered by RVS volunteers
 - Digital activity programmes and online offers continue
- 3.15 Service recovery has started well, statistics show that 1,234 visits were made on the first day of re-opening with a total 758 items borrowed by customers that day. Chislehurst was the busiest Library followed by Orpington as shown in the table below.

Service Recovery - Bromley Libraries Visits Day 1 -Monday 6th July 2020 - 10.00am-14.00pm	
Beckenham	200 (estimate-people counter not operational)
Chislehurst	248
Orpington	234
Penge	145
St Paul's Cray	196
West Wickham	211
TOTAL	1,234

Feedback showed that customers have been patient with the limited services GLL are currently able to offer and were pleased with the organisation and cleanliness and are clearly pleased that some libraries are now open again. Lessons learned from phase one was that more staff were needed including experienced Managers to lead on queue management and the safe flow of customers and to reassure staff some of whom were apprehensive about returning to frontline duties

- 3.16 Biggin Hill Library - As the pool remains closed, a decision was made by the Council to re-open the Library only. Changes were needed to grant key holding access to GLL. The risk assessments were more complex due to the shared facility. Extra cleaning usually provided by the Leisure Provider was put in place in line with the other GLL Libraries.
- 3.17 During recovery planning, it was envisaged that recovery would be a phased approach dependent on the success of phase one and the staff and sufficient resources to keep both staff and customers safe. At the time of writing this report phase two of the re-opening of Libraries is anticipated to commence on 27th July when Biggin Hill, Central, Mottingham and Petts Wood will re-open. If safe to do so it is envisaged that phase two may also include an increase to services available to customers in the phase one group of Libraries.
- 3.18 Bromley Historic Collections (BHC) will also offer a limited service as part of phase two. Staff areas including the archives store, the museum store and reserve book stack are well controlled. The main focus for service recovery has been around safety and security within the public search room. Using the flow of advice available from specialists such as The National Archives, National Conservation Service, London Archives Project, Museums Association and Libraries Connected), procedures have been drawn up and will be implemented for BHC users when the Central Library reopens fully.
- 3.19 The final phase of service recovery will take place one week later on 3rd August when Burnt Ash, Hayes, Shortlands and Southborough will re-open to the public. This final phase has been included to ensure that all libraries have enough staff available to safely re-open and manage the safety of customers. The complexity of the re-opening of Bromley Central and Biggin Hill and the staff and resources needed to re-open them impacted on this decision. The implications of Track and Trace on staff numbers were also a consideration of this approach.

BENEFITS AND QUALITY

- 3.20 GLL is in the main successfully managing the service whilst continuing to drive down the Council's costs. The commissioning of the Library Service was carried out with the goal of maintaining high quality delivery of this statutory service whilst achieving lower ongoing revenue costs, this benefit has been delivered by the contract which is now mid-way through its third year. Taking this approach has enabled the Council to avoid more extreme measures that other authorities have taken.
- 3.21 GLL are the UK's largest public libraries provider which has ongoing benefits for Bromley including the input and expertise of the GLL specialist team led by the National Director of Libraries who work across all partnerships to assist in developing services and bench marking performance against other libraries.
- 3.22 The National Director of Libraries led on service programming and service recovery during the COVID-19 crisis and was invited to join working groups by key Library agencies to lead service recovery. All five partnerships collaborated to share best practice, activity programming including, organising and buying in activities, all to ensure that the highest quality of services could be provided for Bromley residents during this period. GLL were the first library authority to contact publishers and ask for copyright removal for digital story times and joined a working group with colleagues across the UK to create a list of publishers that agreed to the removal of copyright. They were amongst the first authorities to contact Ancestry to make this product available for customers at home due to the lockdown.
- 3.23 The shift to producing a more extensive online offer from the end of March has afforded a new suite of measurable performance statistics including user reach and engagement, video activities created and views, and page followers for the Bromley Libraries Facebook page. Prior to the closures, regularly monitored statistics included visits and item issues per branch, usage of public PCs and the Home Library Service.
- 3.24 A key aim of Bromley Libraries is to promote enjoyment of reading and sharing of books and to increase the number of items issued. Since the GLL contract commenced there has been a continued increase in items borrowed annually resulting in Bromley Library Service moving to become the third highest issuing outer London authority per 1,000 population last year which has been maintained this year. The COVID-related closures in March have naturally made a dramatic decrease to the number of items issued physically at library branches, with all issued items having their return date extended to 1st August initially. All library authorities will be similarly affected.
- 3.25 Digital Items – The expansion of the digital offer and increased spend in this area - see section 7.4 - has seen an increase in eBook and eAudiobook titles offered. New services were introduced between April and June, including PressReader – giving free access to over 2,700 English-language newspapers and periodicals plus 4,700 in other languages, plus a new audiobook provider uLibrary. In combination with the addition of the pre-established services that offer eBooks & eComics, eAudiobooks, eMagazines and music, issues of items from the digital offers almost tripled in June in comparison to the previous year. Bromley Library users were also given free access to the Better Leisure full catalogue of workout and wellbeing video-on-demand service.

RISK

- 3.26 The current main operational service risk within the Library Service contract currently relates to Force Majeure. The sudden lockdown enforced to control the spread of COVID-19 meant the sudden closure of all Bromley libraries in line with government advice. At the time of writing libraries have just commenced the first phase of recovery from lockdown following their recovery plan. Following the closure of physical library buildings, GLL reacted quickly and moved the Library service online demonstrating their ability to adapt and provide a different type of library service resulting in the launch of the Library without walls – see section 3.7. GLL were also pro-active in recovering physical Library services and implemented phase one as soon as government advice changed, and specified Libraries could re-open from July 4th 2020 - only 28 out of the 150 English library services announced their reopening plans from this date.
- 3.27 A further operational risk relates to keeping libraries open during industrial action. In the period covered by this report GLL demonstrated that they could fully withstand the risk of library closures during industrial action. All libraries remained open throughout the 8-month Unite dispute which was ended with staff returning to work on 3rd February. See section 7.1 for further information.

MANAGEMENT

- 3.28 The Libraries Client Team continues to demonstrate how it can successfully manage and monitor the contract on an ongoing basis which has been reinforced by the findings of the recent audit which demonstrated substantial assurance. The team still consists of 2.19 FTE staff though changes have taken place within the team due to the retirement of the Principal Client Tim Woolgar. A new Principal Client and Contracts and Development Manager are now in post following an external recruitment process.
- 3.29 The Client team work closely with the GLL Bromley contract leads including the GLL National Director of Libraries and interim Head of Libraries to ensure the development and successful delivery of the library service. Good working relationships have been maintained through regular ongoing communication relating to day to day running of the service. The established reporting system requires that any issues affecting performance are reported to the Client immediately when they occur. During the COVID-19 period the Client Team had daily contact with GLL and was involved in directing the focus of the Library without walls offer and for prioritising which libraries re-opened first.
- 3.30 As part of quality control processes, regular spot checks on all libraries are made by the Client Team. This involves members of the team visiting all the libraries in turn without prior arrangement to ensure that the required standards are being met. As part of this process a checklist of assessment criteria is completed at each visit which is used to inform a summary of findings produced after each round of visits. See Appendix 3 for the summary of the findings from the last round of visits which took place in quarter 4 from January-March. Any major issues identified are then raised with GLL management for rectification. Since the libraries closed due to COVID-19 the Client Team have been monitoring the quality of the online services instead by testing the range of services available and their quality and have visited the libraries who re-opened in phase one. Spot check visits will commence when all sites re-open.

REVIEW OF CONTRACT PURPOSE

- 3.31 There continues to be a statutory requirement for the Council to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service to all those who live, work or study within the Borough as outlined in the 1964 Public Libraries Act. The provision during COVID-19 fulfilled this requirement as online library services were made available for all in line with the 1964 Act and libraries re-opened as soon as government guidelines allowed.

REVIEW OF CONTRACTOR'S LEARNING AND MATURITY TARGETS

- 3.32 The contract requires that the learning and maturity targets of the Contractor are constantly reviewed. The successful recovery and development of the Library service by GLL outlined in 6.2 is the top priority for the service going forward. The Client Team has identified several areas where the service can be improved further which relate to the renewal of accreditation of Bromley Historic Collections outlined in section 6.5 and the completion of the backlog of cataloguing of Bromley Historic collections see section 6.6.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 4.1 The impact of the commissioned library service on vulnerable adults, children and young people continues to be reviewed and considered. No negative impacts were identified during the transfer to GLL as delivery of the service is like-for-like.
- 4.2 GLL continues to offer a diverse programme of services and activities for vulnerable people including the growing elderly population by offering a programme of activities which support their health pressures. Activities in Quarter 4 before lockdown included Social Saturdays at Chislehurst Library where adults meet for puzzles, board games and quizzes. Other events ranged from Dementia cafes to Reading friends groups.
- 4.3 GLL regularly review services for vulnerable adults and children which has been more important than ever in lockdown when services quickly moved online. The popular sing and sign initiative initially piloted at Mottingham Library moved online. The staff member leading the session uses Makaton signs along with songs and visual support to help build understanding and knowledge of vocabulary. As a measure of success this activity was featured on the regional BBC news. Weekly sessions have taken place online including a special session for Empathy Day. The session leader recorded an online training session to teach parents and carers how to do this.
- 4.3 Activities, posts and videos were created in support of awareness weeks including VE Day (8th May), National Numeracy Day (13th May), Mental Health Awareness Week (18th – 24th May), Empathy Day (9th June), High-Vis Week (1st – 14th June) for blindness and visual impairment, Carers Week (8th – 14th June), and Refugee Week (15th – 21st June).

5. SERVICE PROFILE / DATA ANALYSIS

JANUARY-MARCH 2020

- 5.1 The suite of KPIs attached to this contract includes a range of monthly, quarterly and annual indicators. Failures of performance in the service are identified and managed through a points-based system described as Performance Adjustment (PA) points which are awarded if GLL do not meet a standard identified by a KPI.

- 5.2 As part of this process GLL must submit to the Client within ten business days following the end of the month a report outlining achievement against all applicable service levels, reports and KPIs. Following analysis, if applicable, a monitoring notice will be issued for non-performance of each KPI not met. In response GLL are required to supply mitigation which is used by the Client Team to decide as to whether a financial penalty will be applied. GLL is fully compliant with this system
- 5.3 KPI failures and their mitigation are discussed at monthly contract monitoring meetings with GLL and dealt with on a case by case basis, meetings moved online during the closure period. See Appendix 4 for a summary of the reports covering the last six months. No KPI failures occurred in Quarter 4 in the period from January to March when libraries were open as usual before closing on 23rd March due to the pandemic.
- 5.4 Pre-COVID-19 data was collected on a monthly basis by GLL and provided to the Client on key areas such as visits to library branches, item issues per branch, public PC usage, activities and the number of attendees to these events to enable trend analysis. As a result of the closures in Quarter 1, it is impossible to collect useful data for these metrics. In February 2020 before closure, there was a brief increase in issues in branches between the end of the industrial action and COVID concerns in March.
- 5.5 In comparison to the previous year, issues of digital items such as eBooks, eAudiobooks and eNewspapers have increased dramatically. In the Jan-Mar period prior to lockdown, digital issues rose by 64% and increased their share of all items issued in Bromley from 5.5% to 7.7%, making it the 4th biggest 'library' under Beckenham.
- 5.6 New Library Members – Compared to the same period in the previous year, registration of new members to the library service in Quarter 4 fell due to a combination of factors. Industrial action continued throughout January into early February, while concerns about COVID-19 leading into the closure of library branches in March onwards prevented many new users from joining. See section 5.11 for the full 6-month breakdown.

APRIL-JUNE 2020 (COVID-19 CLOSURE PERIOD)

- 5.7 As mentioned in section 3.8 library closures in response to COVID-19 resulted in some changes to the KPI monitoring. Six KPIs could not be monitored-see table below. A temporary reporting system was applied, reducing the number of KPIs monitored but expanding reporting of areas relating to the range and scope of the online offer. GLL were required to submit a monthly COVID-19 report detailing online activities including videos and posts produced for their social media, a higher-detail breakdown of digital items issued, and the work streams of library and BHC staff as shown in Appendix 1.

KPIs SUSPENDED DURING COVID 19		
Summary		
The following KPIs: 1, 6, 8, 9, 21 related to services which were suspended due to the closure of libraries due to COVID-19 on 23 rd March 2020. KPI 13 relates to the Home Library Service which was adapted due to COVID-19 and could not be monitored against the KPI.		
KPI ID	Title	Description
1	Opening Hours	Failure to open a library during minimum opening hours
6	Public IT Facilities	Unavailability of public ICT facilities (public PCs, self-service kiosks and sorters, MFDs)
8	Hire of Spaces	Management of booking of hired spaces (halls, meeting rooms) within library buildings

9	Local Studies and Archives Availability <i>Online access availability not suspended</i>	Local Studies and Archives/Search Room at Central Library available during minimum opening hours
13	Home Library Service	Percentage of Home Library Service users who received an in-person visit monthly
21	Library Management System and Archive Management System Availability	Systems not being available for a duration within the Minimum Opening Hours

DATA ANALYSIS-DURING COVID 19

- 5.8 The closure of Libraries has impacted on data collection and analysis methods. Please see section 7.5 for commentary on issues of items via online services during Quarter 1.
- 5.9 Observing trends over time has allowed the Client to measure the effectiveness of the contract by comparing the trends to previous years, however given the enormous impact of COVID-19 on library services, service recovery will be gradual and it will be some time before statistical trends and data comparison can be made in the current way. Adaptations will need to be made which will include comparing between months rather than with the same point last year to benchmark performance.
- 5.10 Existing statistical trends alone are unlikely to be able to effectively measure the performance of the GLL post service recovery. In future this will be analysed using both qualitative and quantitative data from a range of sources including the service plans which specify key actions for the service and measure their outcomes. All other library authorities will be similarly affected which will have an impact on CIPFA benchmarking, however comparison with other authorities will still be possible. The key data that has been used to measure performance of online services will be continue to be measured o enable us to evaluate the impact of the reach of online services.
- 5.11 Registration of new members to the library service fell due to a combination of factors. Industrial action continued throughout January into early February, while concerns about COVID-19 leading into the closure of library branches in March onwards prevented many new users from joining. The number of customers joining online during lockdown, in April-June although lower than during normal service, was encouraging. A total of 429 customers joined online during lockdown.

Bromley Libraries - New Members			
Month	2019	2020	% Difference
6-Month Total	8,205	3,470	-52.4%
January	1,573	1,365	-13.2%
February	1,399	1,281	-8.4%
March	1,459	824	-43.5%
Q4 Total	4,431	3,470	-21.6%
April	1,280	167	-87.0%
May	1,332	135	-90.0%
June	1,162	137	-88.2%
Q1 Total	3,774	439	-88.4%
Libraries were closed from March 23rd and for the entire Quarter 1 period			

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES-PRE COVID 19 CLOSURE: JANUARY-MARCH 2020

- 5.12 A wide range of children's events took place in Libraries from January to March. Activities delivered during this period included regular Baby Bounce and Rhyme, Lego Clubs and Storytimes plus additional bought-in events. The number of events run or cancelled, along with the numbers attending, is usually detailed in this report. However, as libraries closed suddenly before the end of the quarter branch managers were not able to safely access the records of events which are recorded physically at each branch and, as a result, the quarterly report could not be compiled. A full statistical report of the range of events and activities within this period will be provided within the next Committee report.
- 5.13 As with the children's events, Library Managers are currently unable to access statistical data relating to the numbers of events for adults in January to March, This included a wide range of activities ranging from Reading Groups to Knit and Natter and one-off Author Events. This data will also be provided in the next Committee report.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES DURING COVID-19 CLOSURE

- 5.14 All events and activities in Bromley Libraries including the re-launch of the refurbished Central Library were suspended on 17th March due to the growing pandemic and the need for social distancing.
- 5.15 Online events and activities – beginning 18th March an online programme of live and pre-recorded video events were posted online on the Bromley Libraries Facebook page. A regular timetable of events was produced including Bounce and Rhyme, Great Reads for Older Children, Singing and Signing, Armchair Talks, StoryTime, and Poetry Reading for adults. Since the programme was launched, the average video is viewed 445 times (123,399 views over 277 videos). Bounce and Rhyme videos have proven to be exceptionally popular, averaging 1,004 views each. In the first 4 weeks of the launch of the social media programme, over 64,000 unique users viewed content on the page, retaining 24,00 users through May and June. Appendix 1 gives details of the full programme.
- 5.16 To help combat loneliness and isolation in lockdown, popular activities for the elderly as part of the online offer included reading groups via Zoom, the weekly Library Podcast, poetry reading sessions and a series of armchair walks which will continue to develop as part of service recovery. Staff were available by phone to assist customers to get online
- 5.17 The Summer Reading Challenge (SRC) encourages children aged 4 to 11 to read at least six library books during the long summer holiday. In 2019 Bromley Libraries were ranked 4th overall in the London Statistics for the Annual Summer Reading Challenge. Due to COVID-19 this launched initially online on 6th June, the theme of the 2020 SRC is the Silly Squad. Unlike some authorities who are running the SRC online only, GLL have also bought the promotional packs and resources. GLL have worked with schools to promote the challenge. Materials will be distributed via the Library Take Away service. The exciting programme of summer holiday events and activities which usually takes place is being delivered in an exciting new way via a You Tube channel. The programme includes:

- A promotional video from a Magical Quests Theatre Company
- 6 Dance Classes – Street and modern dance for children with Fiction Dance Company
- 6 Mamma G Story Times – Pantomime Dame stories
- 3 Jambs Owls sessions – Live Owls, discussion, talk and information
- 1 Roald Dahl’s Twits – Performance by John Kirk
- 6 Additional staff run events

5.18 On behalf of the Council GLL delivered a full programme of events and activities for Children’s Art Week, a national initiative which spans for three weeks between June 29th and July 19th. The three themes for 2020 were Natural World, Connecting Across the Generations, and Literature and Creative Writing. The Bromley events programme ran entirely on-line which was a new approach, though lockdown has given GLL a better insight into managing online activities which proved to be a benefit. Library staff delivered an exciting programme of 8 online events to engage children and in art activities at home which included Live streaming of activities by staff with children participating at home and posting pre-recorded videos of staff delivering the advertised events. Facebook Statistics for the first week show a positive response with a wide reach - see table below. Other activities took place on the Libraries Twitter page.

Week 1 Children’s Art week 29thJune- 5th July 2020			
Children’s Art Week 29th June - 5th July 2020	Videos	Quotes/book reviews/ recommendations/ Information posts	Total
Number of posts on FB	8	14	22
Views on FB	1863	6854	8717

BROMLEY HISTORIC COLLECTIONS

5.19 As set out in their Annual Service Plan, during Quarter 4 Bromley Historic Collections delivered a programme of exhibitions, talks and events As is the case with the Adults and Children’s Quarter 4 events outlined above in section 5.12 and 5.13 events data could not be retrieved before lockdown and will be provided in full in the next Committee report. Highlights included the development of the school loan box scheme to include a photography box and displaying two temporary exhibitions

5.20 GLL have entered a partnership with Earth Museum which will allow Bromley residents to have access to more resources and will highlight the John Lubbock Collection. This project supports six volunteers. Work involves correcting and amending content and creating training notes for each volunteer that will develop their skills in undertaking their tasks.

5.21 Work on the Preservica (Digital Preservation System) Project is also progressing well, preparations are underway for the final stages of launching Preservica for BHC which will integrate the CALM catalogue database with the Preservica systems.

5.22 Bromley Historic Collections (BHC) provided a full service via phone and mailbox which was monitored daily. They have also developed the ‘Lockdown Stories’ programme, encouraging Bromley residents to write stories, diaries and take photographs to add to a

COVID-19 collection to the Archives. The BHC team supported the Social media activities including VE Day posts each day in the week approaching 8th May, a picture of the week, and promoting online resources to help people with historical research and general information enquiries. Work on the Community Directory continued during lockdown and a new category for Foodbanks was created. The directory has been rigorously kept up to date

6. PLANS FOR ONGOING IMPROVEMENTS IN PERFORMANCE

- 6.1 The Libraries contract was designed to encourage the Service Provider to think innovatively and continually look for ways to develop and improve the performance of the service as described in section 5 above. Plans for ongoing improvements in performance are detailed in paragraphs 6.2- 6.7.
- 6.2 Recovering and developing Library Services is now a key focus for the Library service. GLL are working with the Client Team to develop a new Library Strategy which will incorporate recovery plans and new services. The virtual library service has been so successful that GLL will retain it and include it as our 15th Library. User needs will be different following COVID-19 and GLL will work to understand and develop services to meet this need e.g. provision for job seekers will need to be part of new service planning. Together the Client Team and GLL are undertaking a full review of services to ensure that these meet the changing needs of Bromley residents going forward.
- 6.3 As detailed in the March 2020 report there are currently several new library schemes under consideration at Beckenham, Chislehurst, West Wickham and St Paul's Cray, either as mixed schemes or more prominent high street positioning in order to increase membership. When other libraries within the borough moved to prominent high street locations at Penge and Orpington their membership, issue and visit statistics increased. It is anticipated that the delivery of services from new, re-modelled or co-located buildings will have a positive impact on usage.
- 6.4 It is a contractual requirement for GLL to produce strategic plans which deliver the agreed objectives for the Library Service for the year ahead aimed at improving performance. The Annual Service Plans have measurable outcomes which ensure that performance can be measured at key milestones throughout the contract which is more important than ever due to the impact of COVID-19 on benchmarking. The 2020 service plans which took effect on 1st April 2020 Appendix 6 were approved by the Client Team. The first quarterly update will be provided in July 2020.
- 6.5 Museum Accreditation – As described in the March report GLL is currently working with Arts Council England (ACE) and an independent advisor to gain full Museum Accreditation. It was uncertain as to whether GLL would obtain this due to the delay in their submission. However the accreditation process was suspended also due to COVID-19 and despite having already been awarded by temporary accreditation by ACE for a maximum three periods due to the pandemic, this has now been extended for another year. Of the 6 action points previously identified by the Assessor for Museum Accreditation at ACE, GLL have completed 5 and are now finalising the last action point which is to develop a new Forward Plan which has been agreed by Council Officers. The final version includes agreed service changes including the addition of an education officer to enhance the services provided for Bromley residents. GLL will submit their application for accreditation when this resumes.

- 6.6 CALM Catalogue data cleansing project –This requires updating individual museum catalogue records continues and is being worked through year by year. The Council had asked for this to have higher priority. Work has escalated during lockdown and approximately 2,700 records have now been cleansed during this period. As part of the process, entries are being updated with new information including those in the Lubbock Collection which require careful updating. The lessons learned from the initial stages of this project have resulted in drafting a procedures manual for use by a documentation assistant. Recruitment for this post is about to commence in order to complete this project and improve the accessibility of records for Bromley Historic Collections.
- 6.7 In Quarter 4 GLL engaged with LBB Adult and Social Care Services to promote the free Home Library Service in order to increase membership, this will continue when services are recovered. This valuable service which is delivered by RVS volunteers was modified during the COVID-19 crisis as home visits were suspended, instead staff made wellness phone calls to combat social isolation and loneliness, the Home Library service has now resumed with books available again.

7. PLANS FOR ONGOING IMPROVEMENTS IN VALUE FOR MONEY

- 7.1 As part of its tender position GLL proposed a 3 year strategy to review the staffing model it inherited. Now the contract is in its third year, following consultation with Library staff the restructure which consists of 4 phases is now underway and will result in an appropriate staffing model to deliver the best service possible to library users. GLL have completed phases 1-3. Phase 4 which involves changes to work patterns to fit with customer need will be implemented when all libraries are fully re-open. Unite have indicated in consultation meetings relating to the restructure that they will ballot their Members to test the appetite for further industrial action in opposition to the final phase.
- 7.2 The contract price for Year 3 shows a further decrease as set out in the pricing document for this 10 year contract demonstrating ongoing value for money.

STOCK PURCHASING

- 7.3 As detailed in KPI 22 relating to stock purchasing, the stock fund for the current financial year remained at £450k per annum which was confirmed in the Stock Policy submitted by GLL for 2020/21. GLL submit monthly stock purchasing reports which demonstrate that this ring-fenced stock purchasing fund is used specifically for the purpose intended. Please refer to Appendix 7 for a summary of annual spend up to June 2020.
- 7.4 Due to COVID-19 stock budget allocations were adjusted to rapidly expand the range and availability of e-resources-see section 7.4. There was an underspend at the end of the 2019-20 financial year due to COVID-19. GLL transferred this £10k to Overdrive which would normally have been spent with Askews on physical books. Additionally, as shown in the is the budget plan for this year in Appendix 7, GLL have moved £25,400 from physical stock funding to eBook funding, just over £5,000 of which has already been spent. This is over and above our normal annual funding of eBooks of £14k which covers the annual support and an element of content credit. Additionally, Bromley Libraries received a grant from Arts Council Grant for £1,000 to spend on eBooks, which was given to all UK Library services due to COVID-19.

7.5 Online resources - In the period prior to lockdown, digital issues rose by 64%, Following lockdown in the period April to June, digital issues rose by 159% and represented 87.0% of all issues (up from 5.6%). The remaining issues primarily represent physical items whose loans were renewed online or by phone. The great performance of the digital library and uptake of services by library users has shown why reallocation of the stock budget to enhance its availability and range of items would be a boon to customers.

BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

7.6 GLL are driving change to ensure library facilities change with the times making sure that customers can access the services they want and need in a 21st Century library experience. Their focus for 2020 is enhancing and improving the customer experience, freeing up staff to spend more time helping library users get the most out of their visit.

7.7 A £320k investment from Bromley Council resulted in the refurbishment of the Central Library. The planned re-launch of the Central Library scheduled for 17th March was cancelled due to the growing pandemic. This will be rescheduled at a future date when services are fully operational.

7.8 Refurbishments have taken place at other libraries including at Orpington and Chislehurst Libraries. The children's library at Orpington has been renovated to have a more playful and imaginative theme to be more appealing for children and young people. Chislehurst Library has been repainted to ensure that the Library is appealing to Bromley residents. It previously had a worn appearance, but now looks fresh.

7.9 Bromley Historic Collections - The exhibition areas were repainted as part of the Central renovation. The BHC museum displays have been reviewed and as part of the accreditation requirements, GLL have installed a glass case to secure the 'Squirt' and ensure that it remains in good condition as part of the collection.

8. USER / STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION

8.1 In order to obtain current opinions of Bromley Libraries, GLL carry out their own Annual User Satisfaction Survey. The 2019 Annual survey which featured new questions ran from 4th June - 30th December online, the full results of which were included in the March Committee report.

8.2 Plans are in place to schedule the 2020 annual survey later in the year as it is not normally run in the first quarter of the calendar year. This reason for this is to give GLL time to assess the results of the previous year, review the questions and decide on any changes before launching the next year's survey.

8.3 From their extensive experience of surveying customers GLL have found that a short break in the survey avoids 'survey fatigue' which can result from the survey being run continuously and have found having a few months break at beginning of the year helps in generating responses to the new survey. The take up rate of the Bromley 2019 survey was lower than anticipated which could have been as a result of industrial action.

8.4 The 2020 survey which will take place after libraries are fully re-open and will be revised to include questions which ask customers about their experiences of using online library

services during lockdown including what they would like to retain. This invaluable feedback will enable GLL to review and modernise the services they offer.

COMPLAINTS

- 8.5 The number of complaints directly received by GLL is reported to the Client on a monthly basis as part of KPI reporting. The number of complaints received and answered by GLL directly is recorded in the table below. The majority of complaints showed concern about the refurbishment of Central Library and the inclusion of the new soft play area's effect on noise. A full summary is included in Appendix 8. During the closed period customers were able to complain using the library branches' usual email addresses and phone numbers, or via the feedback form on the Better website; however no customers chose to submit any feedback between April and June.

GLL Complaints Summary		
Month	No. of Complaints	Complaints Categories
January	5	Central Refurbishment Customer Service ICT
February	17	Central Refurbishment Stock Environment/Premises, ICT, Other Customers, Prices and Fees
March	4	Stock Environment/Premises ICT
April	0	None received
May	0	None received
June	0	None received
Total	26	

- 8.6 The Contractor works with the Council in accordance with its complaints procedure to respond to and resolve customer complaints. Zero complaints were passed to the Client Team for response between January and June. Two queries were received in June requesting information about services that would be open following the re-opening of branches in July.
- 8.7 In addition to complaints, comments and compliments are also received about Bromley Libraries proving what a positive difference the Library service continues to make in the lives of customers see Appendix 1 for further information. Users submitted 9 comments, ranging from queries about the refurbishment of Central, requesting information about events and groups and recommending additions to the stock offer. GLL also received 2 compliments, praising staff at Chislehurst for their professionalism and a Librarian in Local Studies for their assistance.

9. SUSTAINABILITY / IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 9.1 The Client Team continue to monitor impact on an ongoing basis and to ensure that any new risks are recorded within the contract risk register and are fully considered and addressed as has been the case with COVID-19.

10. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 The Executive Committee approved the commissioning of the Library Service on 19th July 2017 following pre-decision scrutiny by the Renewal & Recreation Policy Development & Scrutiny Committee on 5th July 2017.
- 10.2 This approach is consistent with the council's stated ambitions around vibrant, thriving town centres, supporting independence, children and young people, and an excellent Council under its vision for Building a Better Bromley.
- 10.3 The Council's Corporate Operating Principles include the commitment that services will be provided by whoever offers customers and council tax payers excellent value for money.

11. PROCUREMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 This is the third year of a ten-year contract with the option for both parties to extend for a further five years. This report demonstrates that the contractor is performing well and provides evidence of how GLL continue to improve key outcomes for borough residents. This report demonstrates that there is no current need to consider alternative provision.

12. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 The Library Services contract is expected to be within the 2020/21 budget of £4.79m.

13. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 The contract with Greenwich Leisure Limited for the provision of library services is in the third year of its ten year term. The contract has an option to extend for five years and has an estimated total value of £40,908,465.
- 13.2 The report author requests Members to review the contents of the report and to note the service provider's performance in the last six months of the contract.
- 13.3 The Council's specific requirements relating to contract monitoring, evaluation and review for a contract this value are covered in the Contract Procedure Rules (Rule 23) and must be complied with.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	DRR17/034 and DRR17/035 Contract Award for the Provision of Library Services – PARTS 1 AND 2 Reports to Executive Committee on 19 th July 2017 (with pre-decision scrutiny by the Renewal & Recreation Policy Development & Scrutiny Committee on 5 th July 2017)