

## **SHEPTON MALLET TOWN COUNCIL**

Meeting	Place-making and Protection Committee Item 2.11
Date	23 February 2021
Author	Project Officer
Subject	Library refurbishment and new hours

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 For councillors to receive and note an update on the progress of the library refurbishment and the change to its opening hours as a result of town council funding.

### **2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The Town Council have committed to contribute £15K per annum for five years towards the library remaining in its current location and its hours being increased.
- 2.2 At a meeting of this committee on 08 September 2020 it was agreed that Cllr Hale be nominated lead councillor to work with the project officer to progress the terms of the funding agreement with the library.
- 2.3 The terms of the funding agreement were agreed to by the Policy & resources Committee at a meeting on 17 November 2020. Cllrs Harrison and Hale were named as co-signatories along with the town clerk. The funding agreement was successfully executed on 04 December 2020.
- 2.4 The work to refurbish the library is scheduled to begin in mid-April 2021 and will last approximately 8-12 weeks. During this time, the library will be closed but a bi-weekly mobile library service will be provided.
- 2.5 When it reopens, the library will have extended opening hours. Mondays, Tuesday, Thursdays and Fridays hours will increase by 2 hours per day and Saturdays increased by half an hour. In addition, there will be two members of staff on duty during all opening hours except for lunchtime which significantly increases the staffing resource. These additional hours will in part enable the library team to carry out more outreach work.
- 2.6 The 7 Starlings community group will have a right to use the library space outside of its regular opening hours. This time will be used to organise community events, activities, workshops and educational activities for all ages. The town council representative to the 7 Starlings group will be able to provide updates to the People & Promotion committee on the group's planned activity and identify opportunities for further partnership work.

### **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The first payment of £15K will be due during the financial year 2021-2022.

### **4.0 TOWN PLAN REFERENCE**

- 4.1 Placemaking

<p>Ensure the town centre is attractive and welcoming</p>	<p>Invest in improvements in the Market Place, in partnerships with others</p> <p>Support the retention of the Library in the centre of town and its development into a wider Community Hub</p> <p>Improve the signage, information boards and street furniture to make the town more welcoming</p>
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## 5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 For councillors to note that the council has successfully fulfilled its pledge to enter in to a funding agreement with the library and in so doing, help retain the library in its current location.
- 5.2 For councillors to note that Cllr Hale will continue to act as Town Council representative to the 7 Starlings and be involved with the development of the library's role as a 'community hub'. To note that updates on the relationship with the 7 Starlings will be given to the People & Promotion committee.