
**Meeting of the Executive Member for Leisure
Culture and Social Inclusion Advisory Panel**

15 July 2008

Report of the Assistant Director (Lifelong Learning and Culture)

City of York's Library Stock Policy

Summary

1. This report asks the Executive Member to approve the principles of a new stock policy.

Background

2. A draft stock policy is attached at Annex A. Its purpose is:
 - to enable members of the public to have clarity over how stock funds are allocated, why we buy what we buy
 - and to get involved in the purchase and display of stock
 - to provide a framework for staff to understand their roles and responsibilities in managing the stock
 - to determine which libraries hold which types of materials and how we display our stock
 - to set out a procedure for withdrawal of stock
 - to meet the requirements of The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP)

Consultation

3. The Museums Libraries and Archives Council document "Securing Excellence: Delivering for Communities" highlights the value of involving communities in decision-making. By involving communities in York in the stock selection process we will increase the levels of satisfaction for the library service. The draft policy sets out how we will go about consulting users and communities about our stock.

The Principles

4. The overarching aim is to have library stock that is of excellent quality, matches the needs to the communities it serves, performs well, and offers our customers excellent choice, whether for recreational or for educational purposes. The following principles are proposed:

- All the stock belongs to York libraries rather than being the property of one particular library. All types of stock will be circulated round all our libraries to ensure as much choice and variety as possible.
- The system will aim to balance breadth of stock with the need to supply specialist materials. The breadth of materials held will encourage new customers and will meet the needs of all sectors of the local community.
- The majority of stock will be chosen by our Suppliers (in line with our specification) so that our staff can spend their time engaging customers and promoting reading.
- Books will be bought in a ratio of 80% paperback and 20% hardback. This is in direct response to customer consultation on preferred format.
- The service will assess new formats as they appear on the market and monitor their appeal and usefulness before considering purchasing them for the library service.
- Stock will be selected in various formats (e.g. large print and spoken word) in order to ensure all customers have access to the best resources
- The service will provide stock which is bright, attractive, well-presented and constantly refreshed by purchase and rotation.
- A free request service for books held within the city will ensure that everyone has access to all our stock. This will encourage reading and support learning.
- Stock will support both formal and informal learning across the city and the service will work with Adult and Community Education and other learning providers to ensure that learners needs' are supported
- We will challenge reading habits by offering a wide variety of fiction titles including new and emerging authors, promote the use of books for recreation, support formal and informal educations of customer of all ages and meet the information needs to the local communities.
- Members of local communities will be involved in the selection of stock
- Donations to stock will also be encouraged but will only be accepted if they meet with the selection criteria set within this policy. Library staff will have the right to dispose of any unwanted donations.

Options

5. Members are asked to give their views on the following:
 - i. The principles set out above
 - ii. The best ways for the library service to consult with members of local communities in order to get their ideas in terms of what stock we hold in libraries
 - iii. The best way to display and promote stock. The majority of libraries have separate areas in the library for titles in paperback and hardback meaning customers have to look in two places to find an author they may want to read. Does the panel have a view on this or any other thoughts on the display of fiction?

Corporate Priorities

6. Providing the widest and most accessible range of high quality stock for the City is an essential element in delivering the council's priorities of increasing people's skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects.
7. By providing free and equal access to information, the library service contributes to improving the economic prosperity of the people of York with a focus on minimising income differentials and improves the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in the city.

Implications

Financial:

8. The library stock budget for 2008/09 is £299,490. Stock is purchased in a trans-regional consortium of 33 authorities with a budget of £11.3 million to achieve the highest possible discounts.

Other implications:

9. There are no HR, legal, equalities, crime and disorder, property or IT implications.

Recommendations

10. The Executive Member is asked to agree to:
 - The principles of the stock policy
 - Delegate to officers the drawing up of the final document

Reason: In order that purchasing and management of stock will be more effective by reflecting the needs of local communities.

Contact Details

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Report ✓ **Date** 27.6.08.
Approved

Specialist Implications Officers:

Wards Affected:

All ✓

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annex A : City of York Council Libraries and Heritage Stock Policy (draft)

worddoc/reports/emap/stock policy.doc