



<b>Report to:</b>	Environment and Neighbourhood Committee	<b>Date:</b>	30 March 2017
<b>Report title:</b>	Libraries Volunteer Pilot		
<b>Report from:</b>	Tolis Vouyioukas - Strategic Director, People Directorate		
<b>Ward/Areas affected:</b>	Borough Wide		
<b>Chair of Committee/Lead Member:</b>	Councillor Jill Whitehead		
<b>Author(s)/Contact Number(s):</b>	Jan Underhill, Executive Head of Wellbeing, 020 8770 4359		
<b>Corporate Plan Priorities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Open Council</li> <li>• A Fair Council</li> <li>• A Smart Council</li> </ul>		
<b>Open/Exempt:</b>	Open		
<b>Signed:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	14 March 2017

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the progress made since September 2016 and way forward for the volunteer pilot which is being conducted at Cheam and Circle libraries, in partnership with Volunteer Centre Sutton.

## 2. Recommendations

The Environment and Neighbourhood Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the rate of progress made with the recruitment of volunteers and development of the volunteer role at Cheam and Circle libraries, through the pilot
- 2.2 Note the additional, continued development of a range of opportunities for volunteering across the Libraries, Heritage and Arts Service

## 3. Background

- 3.1 As part of the overall review of Sutton's Library Service a public consultation on the future of the library service was carried out in the autumn of 2015. A clear message from those who took part in the consultation was that there should be more use of volunteers and more community involvement to support modernisation and add value to the work of paid library staff. It should be noted that the recruitment of volunteers is part of usual business within Sutton Libraries, Heritage and Arts services and staff working within the service will continue to recruit volunteers in the future. However, in order to devote more time to attracting volunteers and to look new ways in which the service offer might be enhanced by working with volunteers, Members agreed



that a volunteer pilot project should be set up. Circle and Cheam libraries were selected and the pilot was established in partnership with Volunteer Centre Sutton (VCS). These libraries were chosen due to the different local demographics and patterns of use at the libraries. The pilot was to be set up in the autumn of 2016 and to run for one year. At the end of the pilot, the results would be analysed and if the outcomes were positive, consideration would be given to rolling out the initiative across all sites. This report contains interim findings and progress made with the pilot, for agreement by Members. Committee is also asked to note the continuing development in the design of volunteer roles and their deployment across the whole of Libraries, Heritage and Arts services. In addition, a post of Volunteer Manager has been established within the new Libraries, Heritage and Arts staff structure, to ensure that volunteering continues in order to enhance the service offer across the Borough.

- 3.2. Volunteer Centre Sutton was commissioned to work with the libraries Development Manager and branch library managers to develop roles and to recruit volunteers as part of a volunteer pilot. A set of success criteria were agreed with Volunteer Centre Sutton (VCS) at the outset, in September 2016. As well as recruiting volunteers, VCS advised on and delivered staff training. Priority roles were identified that the library managers considered would add value to the services being delivered from the branches, for example Rhyme Time, homework help club, job club support and a reading group for children aged 8-10 years. Highlights from the pilot to date can be found at Appendix A of this report.
- 3.3. The volunteer centre drew up a performance framework outlining good practice in recruitment, induction and retention of volunteers and staff training sessions, devised for managing volunteers. The first of these was delivered in January 2017.
- 3.4. Various methods of recruitment are being utilised and these will be evaluated for their effectiveness throughout the pilot period. These include using the VCS online recruitment platform, LB Sutton website, outreach in the community, open days, social media and hard copy postcards, and posters. Library managers were trained to use the online platform and manage the recruitment interface once a potential volunteer applies. VCS staff contacted 28 local venues to promote the pilot and held open days and reported that local businesses and groups were supportive of the initiative. Initial volunteers have been recruited and this approach will be developed to continue to grow volunteer opportunities for the service.

#### **4. Issues**

- 4.1. Currently the service is not paying expenses and this has been an issue for some potential volunteers.

#### **5. Options Considered**

- 5.1. Options were considered as part of the public consultation in autumn 2015 and a pilot project was subsequently agreed by Members.

#### **6. Impacts and Implications**

##### Financial

- 6.1. A cost benefit analysis will be undertaken to enable a decision to be taken on the provision of volunteer expenses.

Legal

6.2 There are no legal implications

**7. Appendices and Background Documents**

<b>Appendix letter</b>	<b>Title</b>
A	Interim highlights from the pilot

<b>Background documents</b>
N/A

<b>Audit Trail</b>		
Version	Final	Date: 14 March 2017
<b>Consultation with other officers</b>		
Finance	No	N/A
Legal	No	N/A
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes	Completed as part of library service review and consultation

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