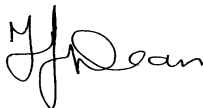


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| LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN | WARD: ALL |
| REPORT TITLE: Growing Your Library programme | |
| REPORT OF: Director of Culture and Environment | |
| FOR SUBMISSION TO: Culture and Environment Scrutiny | DATE: 20 July 2009 |
| <p>SUMMARY OF REPORT This report advises Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee on the Growing Your Library programme, including the key stages taken in the next few months to transform the service and make it more cost efficient and customer focused.</p> <p>LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 – ACCESS TO INFORMATION:</p> <p>CONTACT OFFICERS: Fiona Dean – Assistant Director Culture and Sport Tel: 020 7974 4172 Email: fiona.dean@camden.gov.uk</p> Mike Clarke – Head of Libraries and Information Services Tel: 020 7974 4058 Email: mike.clarke@camden.gov.uk | |
| <p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p>1. That Culture and Environment note and comment on this report.</p> | |

SIGNED:



DATE: 08 July 2009

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report summarises progress of the Growing Your Library (GYL) programme and discusses the key stages that will be taken in the next few months to transform the service and make it more cost efficient and customer focused. A key element of the programme is the organisational service redesign, staff consultation and a planned Single Member decision on the new staffing structure for libraries to be brought before the Executive Member for Culture in October 2009.

2 Background

- 2.2 GYL represents a significant project for Camden, designed to refocus the current Library and Information services, address customer needs in a better and more efficient way and to maximise links with other council services through the Customer service Programme. The project is an *invest to save* project, the project budget is £1.5m with the budget split between revenue and capital with staff costs funded from the revenue element. The project will deliver efficiency savings and increase cost effectiveness, through reducing staff time spent on routine transactions, which currently accounts for approximately 11% of overall staffing resource, while providing an opportunity to refocus Libraries to deliver corporate priorities and meet changing customer expectation. In November 2008 a decision was taken to resource the programme based on a case for investment to address these issues, with a requirement to reduce Libraries' base budget accordingly from 2010/11.
- 2.3 A key issue to be addressed is that service costs for Libraries are high, both in relation to other Inner London boroughs, and nationally. The service delivers high levels of usage in comparison with other authorities, but despite this, 47% of residents have not used a library in the last year, according to the government's annual *Taking part* survey of sports and culture participation. GYL offers opportunities to deliver a broader service offer of particular relevance to target audiences such as children and young people, older people and those who need help at a basic level to access new skills and therefore jobs. Within this it is important to retain a core service for loyal customers and build on the current level of participation.
- 2.3 The main drivers for change are:
- providing a more efficient customer focused face to face service
 - offering customers a broader range of council services in community locations
 - reducing the cost per visit in Libraries
 - introduction of new technology, with roll out of self service for customers and more efficient back office processes
 - the need to review Libraries' staffing structure to ensure flexibility and responsiveness and a service that adapts to changing circumstances
- 2.4 There are five programme workstreams:
- Service design and customer access (visioning)
 - ICT procurement
 - Organisation design

- Spatial strategy
- Stakeholder engagement and communications

3 Progress to date

3.1 Work on the main programme began in January 2009. An internal steering group has been established, chaired by the Assistant Director Culture and Sport who acts as Project Sponsor and consisting of key stakeholders across the Council, including Libraries, Strategy & Resources, Corporate Property, Corporate ICT, Communications, HR, Customer Transformation Programme and Adult Learning.

3.2 To date, progress can be summarised as follows:

- Case for investment made and £1.5m agreed by Executive in November 2008
- 7% increase in opening hours as GYL 'first step' January 2009
- 15% increase in books and other items borrowed and 5.5% increase in visitors in 4th Quarter 2008/09
- Programme workstreams identified
- High level programme plan and budget profiling undertaken
- Procurement process in hand
- Staff consultation initiated
- High level vision defined

4. Current Library Performance

4.1 There is a need for a changed focus in public library provision in Camden. Whilst Camden's libraries are on the whole popular, well-used and well-liked, improvements can be made such as the rising cost per visit.

4.2 Customer satisfaction

Overall customer satisfaction in 2009 was good at 70%, an increase of 4% on the previous year (source: resident survey). The London average is 66% overall satisfaction with libraries. Among library users, 85% are satisfied in Camden compared with 80% for London as a whole. For all Camden young people (users and non-users), 74% were satisfied, compared with 71% in London.

Opening hours were extended at all libraries, at no extra cost, in January 2009, through the introduction of more flexible working practices. Swiss Cottage library is now open 62 hours per week, putting it in the top 5% of English public libraries for opening hours. Eight out of 12 inner London boroughs and 18 out of 32 London boroughs have at least one library open for 60 hours per week or longer: City, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea and Lambeth have no libraries open for this length of time. Kilburn's opening hours were extended from five to six days per week and Camden's five other 'large' libraries are now open until 7pm every weekday.

4.3 Cost of service

The GYL project was formed to meet some of the challenges facing the service. The net Library budget is approximately £8.2 million for 2009/10 and provides 13

libraries, mobile and home library service, Camden Schools Library Service, Camden Information Service and CINDEX , Camden Local Studies and Archives and bibliographical services (responsible for processing stock items). With high premises and staff costs it is not surprising that Camden spends the third highest amount per 1000 head of population in inner London, after Tower Hamlets the highest and then Westminster. Reflecting the fact that Camden has the second highest number of visits in inner London the overall cost per visit is the eighth highest in inner London and is drifting upwards despite increases in use, due to increasing overall costs.

Appendix 1 shows some key comparisons in tabular form.

4.4 Participation levels

A key challenge for the Council is the large proportion of residents that have not used a library in any way in the last year. Over three quarters are not 'active library members' i.e. they have not borrowed any items from our libraries within the last year. Maintaining and building on existing participation levels will require renewed focus as Camden's population increases. With two million customer visits per year, Libraries are the largest face to face contact channel the Council has (next nearest: Sport and Physical Activity, 1.5m visitors pa), and there is an opportunity to use them as a portal to a range of citizen and resident services both Council-provided and from other parts of the public sector.

53% of residents say they have used a library in the last year, well above the national average of 48%, but leaving a significant proportion of 47% not using the service in any way (source: NI19 – use of libraries). However only 24% of the population is an active library member (having borrowed at least one item from a Camden library within the preceding 12 months). Although this is better than our Inner London peers, which average 21%, it is well below the England average of 37%. Book loans and quality of book stock remains a key issue of concern for library user groups.

5. Vision and future model for Library services

5.1 Public Libraries have inherited a business model which originated in the 19th century. Officer analysis of the current model and possible changes are noted in the table below:

| Existing model | Future model |
|--|---|
| Traditional, unchanging delivery, can be slow and unresponsive | Dynamic, flexible services |
| Provider-led service model | Customer-focused service model |
| Supply driven, benchmarks from other library services | Demand driven, benchmarks and learns from other services that support similar customer need |
| Innovation/change in isolated pockets; change takes time | Innovation across service; regular change and flexible behaviours |
| Mostly mainstream stock and services | More responsive management of resources leading to ability to provide for a wider range of needs |

| | |
|---|---|
| Limited by time and space – use the library where and when we say | Access online, onsite or on the move, enabled by technology |
| Detached from other council and public services | Integrated delivery, supporting customer access to a wider range of council and public services |
| Staff skills: traditional gatekeeper role | Enabler and facilitator, mixing roles of librarian, trainer/tutor, youth worker, customer service/retail operative |
| Consumer of resources | Generator of income and partnership |

5.2 Many services provided by Libraries are valued and should continue in future. Initial research with customers focused on current provision and what users want to continue. At the same time, there is an opportunity to ‘stretch’ the vision, by challenging stakeholders, customers and non-users with new ideas about what Libraries could also do. This will enable maximising the Council’s investment in its 13 libraries and associated services.

5.3 Officers have been working on defining a vision for Libraries which will shape the changes to be made as part of GYL, including the staffing structure. The following draft will also form the basis of future consultation with customers.

This is Your Space, which links people together with access to services and opportunities for knowledge, learning, discovery and enjoyment.

Aim:

Libraries are local, accessible and trusted by our residents. They are open to all: a sustainable service that helps enable residents to achieve, enjoy and participate. We need to grow and develop libraries to respond to feedback and local needs, and the challenges that public libraries face, so that they are fit for purpose. This will ensure that they provide value for money and offer a broad range of customer services for Camden Council with a focus on reading, learning and knowledge.

5.4 The services that customers and staff have told us are valued and where there is scope to offer more will be built on. Services that will appeal to residents who do not currently use Libraries will also be developed, together with outreach to ensure that local communities know what Libraries offer.

This will include:

- Promoting digital inclusion for all, ensuring that everyone is connected to Council and public service and learning opportunities
- Enhanced information and advice services, supporting customer access to a range of public services, building on what Libraries already do to a limited extent, but focused more effectively on health and well-being, learning and training, and money advice offered by Libraries staff alone or in partnership with other services

- Expanded learning offer for adults – informal computer-based learning for English, maths and IT skills with clear progression routes for those who want it to more formal learning opportunities in other settings, supported by professional advice
- Improved library facilities – better signage and layout in a rolling programme connected to the introduction of self-service technology and a clear ‘branding’ for Camden’s libraries, in terms of spaces and service offer, linked to the Council’s corporate identity
- A quicker, better more efficient core service through enhanced technology, making use of emerging web technologies such as social networking and text message alerts to provide marketing and information to customers. Officers are currently exploring the possibility of joining a consortium for the provision of the library’s customer management and catalogue system. If the consortium route is pursued, access will be achieved to a much bigger range and quantity of books and other materials (5 million items compared to Camden’s 395,000) across consortium member libraries

5.5 Customer focus points for the re-provided service include :

- Enabling greater access to public services
- Community learning
- Children and families
- Championing and sustaining reading
- Engaging new users
- Supporting the Council’s priorities to tackle worklessness and promote social inclusion

Appendix 2 shows current service provision, with development areas mapped.

6. Organisation design

6.1 In order to deliver the culture and service change required to provide this service model the current staffing structure and organisation needs to change to a more flexible, responsive framework. There is a need to ensure that the framework is fit for purpose and supports the broader objectives of the Council’s customer service programme. This will enable better value for money and to maintain and build on the service strengths and address areas of weaker performance. The present Libraries staffing structure dates back over 10 years and has not been substantially changed since then, despite the role of Libraries staff changing with customer expectation and the introduction of new services such as community learning and computers.

6.2 The current structure employs 284 staff across 154 full time equivalent posts, and has over 25 separate job descriptions in operation. The revised structural model will be developed around the following core principals

- Broad spans of management responsibility and accountability
- Flexibility of staff deployment around the service
- Customer focussed job descriptions supported by more skilled staff managers able to offer a range of customer services

- Clear focus on enabling public access to a wider range of public services, learning opportunities and information
- Simplified structure with fewer layers and clear accountability for service delivery at local level

6.3 The cultural change required in some areas of the service is significant. However in order to deliver an efficient business model and achieve the financial savings required a complete review of the staffing structure is required. Work has already started on preparing a revised structure and job profiles, and staff are being consulted on job content. Any changes will be in accordance with Camden Council policies and procedures and fully comply with legal requirements.

6.4 The timetable for change is planned as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 2009/10 | |
| May-August | Organisation design process, staff workshops and engagement |
| Mid September | Consultation with staff and unions on proposals |
| Mid September to early October | Finalise report and recommendations incorporating results of consultations |
| October | Single Member decision |
| Dec-Mar | Implementation process |
| 1 April | New structure fully live |

7. Procurement strategy

7.1 Investment in technology is an essential enabler for the project as it will allow resources to be used more effectively and to improve customer access. In particular, the delivery of the efficiency savings are dependent on the introduction of self-service kiosks through Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology. This will allow customers to issue and return their own library items, freeing up staff resources currently associated with these activities. This technology has been successfully implemented in a number of libraries across the country and the Executive Member and officers have been on site visits to Essex and Westminster, among others.

7.2 The existing Library Management System (LMS) also needs to be replaced as the contract ends in November 2010. Work is underway to investigate the procurement options available to the Council of which one option being considered is a shared service solution for the provision of our LMS via a consortium examining any customer and cost benefits. Officers in strategic procurement, CICT commercial services and Legal services have been consulted about the proposed procurement and the process has successfully completed the first stage of Tollgate. Any solution will need to be suitable for the future and capable of integration with other Council systems and support Camden's overall strategic ambitions.

8. Consultation with customers

- 8.1 Officers have developed a communications and stakeholder engagement strategy. The Executive Member for Culture, supported by officers held a briefing meeting with the Camden Public Library User Group (CPLUG), an umbrella body for library user and friends' groups May 2009. The next steps are wider public consultation including recently held focus group sessions on the vision for Libraries. This aims to test out what might be offered beyond books and public computers that will be of benefit to customers.

9. Finance Comments

- 9.1 The Director of Finance supports the recommendations proposed by this report. The project budget is £1.5m with the budget split between revenue and capital with staff costs funded from the revenue element. The projected split is as below but can be varied according to the needs of the project:

| | | |
|---------|-------|---|
| Revenue | £200k | project staffing costs for programme and project management |
| Capital | £1.3m | ICT: estimated £1.1m Other: £300k to include: consultation, branding / look & feel; changing external signage; changes to physical space to accommodate RFID |

- 9.2 The core savings target built into the 2010/11 budget is £275,000 although the service will also need to provide a balanced budget to accommodate efficiencies and ongoing ICT revenue costs. Overall for a full year the service savings are estimated at £380,000 in 2010/11 rising to £480,000 in 2011/12. The savings will largely be met from the revised staff structure and a reduction in the overall establishment.

10. Legal Comments

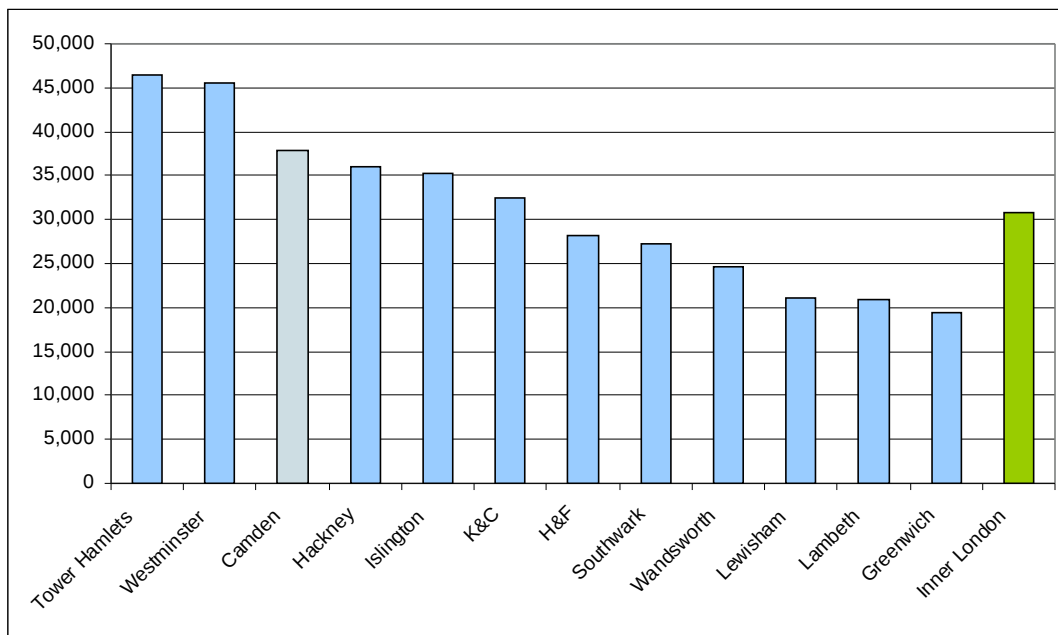
- 10.1 The Head of Legal Services has been consulted in the preparation of this report and comments that in preparing the options and recommendations for Members, legal advice will need to be taken on the employment and procurement aspects of the proposals.

11. Conclusion

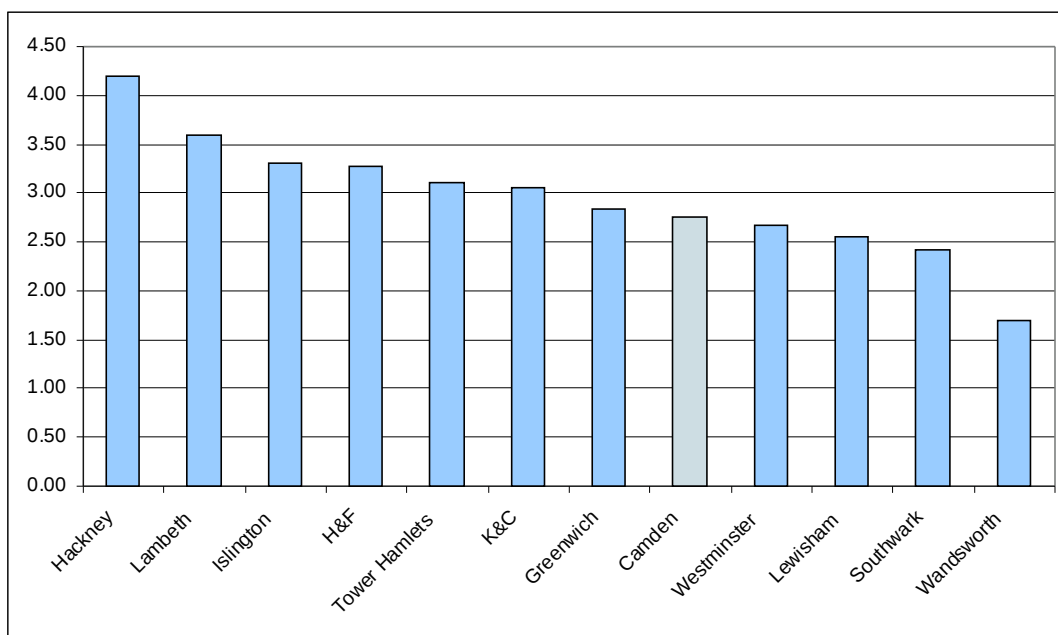
- 11.1 The aim of the project is to deliver a modern service that uses technology to drive efficiency and ensures resources are used where they can genuinely add value. Camden is well placed to be a leader in the field and to shape the service to provide better, more efficient services, effectively providing a one stop shop for face to face services centered around customer need. The current operating costs of the service must be contained and made sustainable at a time of decreasing public sector expenditure, making the current service more cost effective and efficient, driving down core costs and attracting a broader customer base. The change will provide a range of benefits to Camden's residents.

Appendix 1. Comparisons (source: MLA, 2006/07)

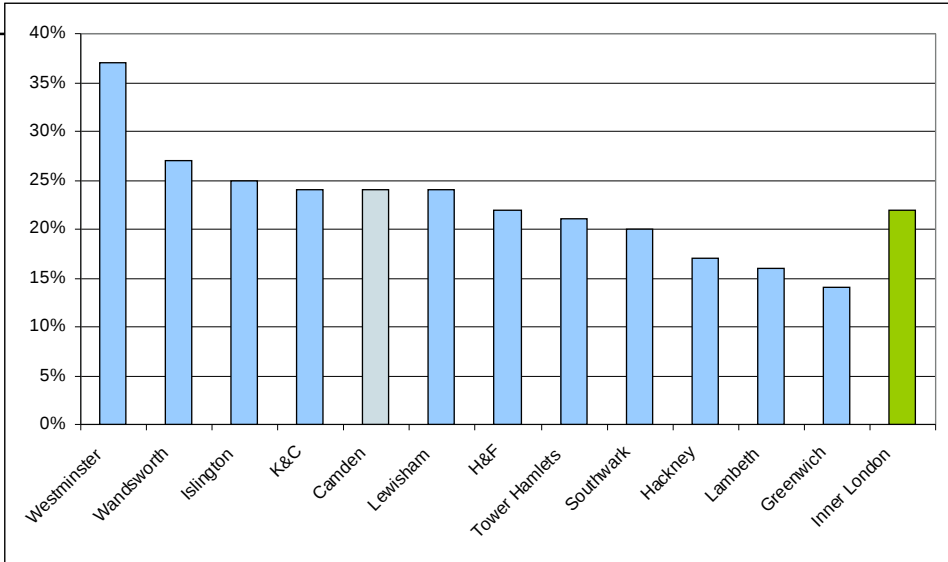
Expenditure per 1000 population – high



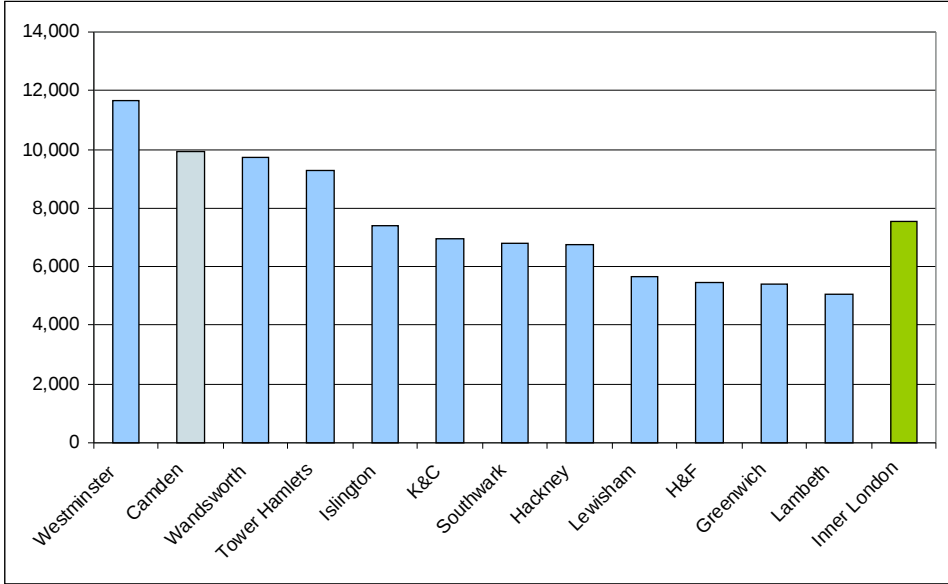
Cost per visit - medium



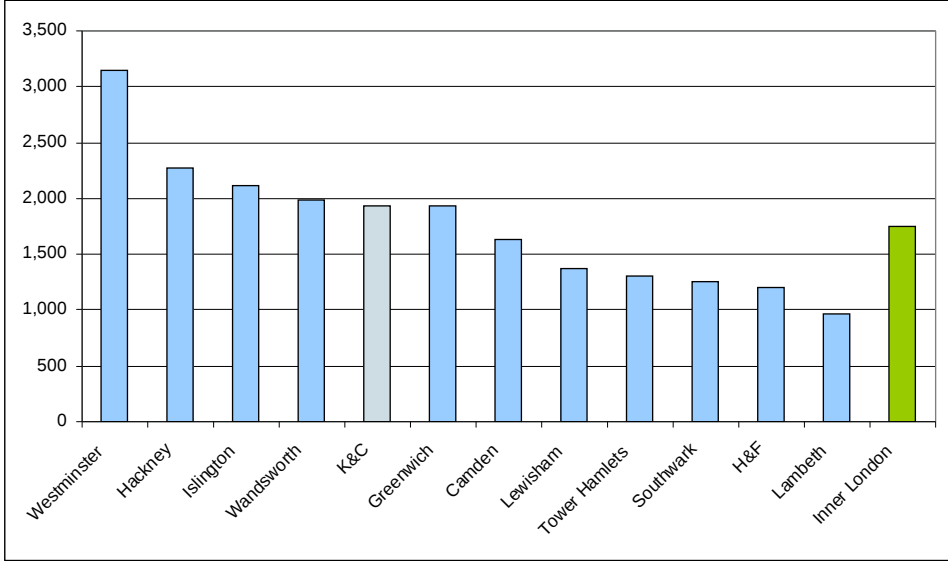
Active borrowers - medium



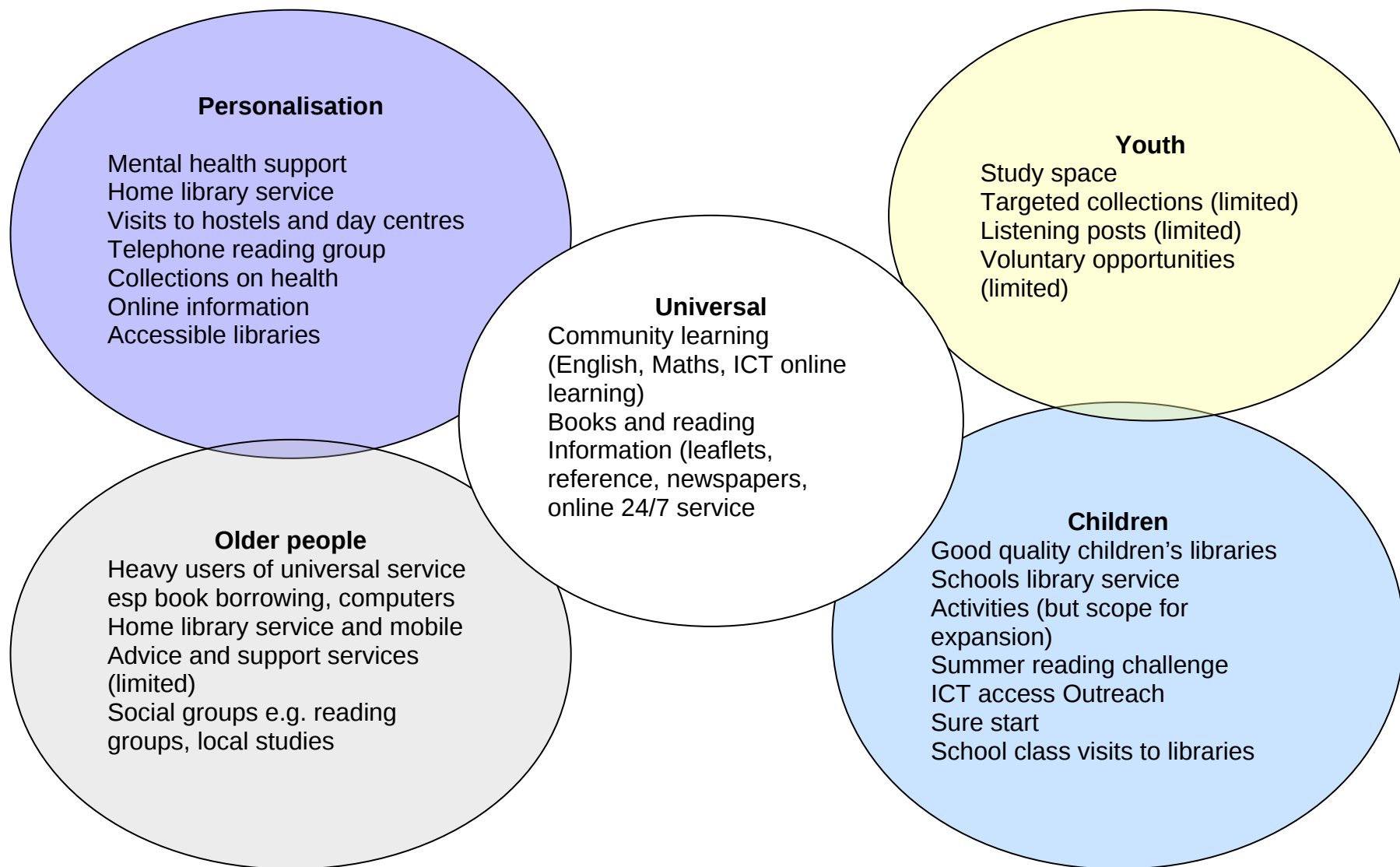
Visits per 1000 population - high



Expenditure on books per 1000 population - medium



Current Libraries service offer



Proposed service enhancements

