

Annex 2: Libraries and Heritage Strategy Action Plan: Covering report

Mark McCree, April 2022

Introduction

This brief report summarises the priorities and activities arising from the Libraries and Heritage Strategy 2022-2027 and sets out how the service is going to deliver the strategy over the next five years. The report links these priorities and activities across to the Council’s Strategic Plan 2022-2025 and the service’s annual Service Delivery Plan (Appendix 1), which were published in March 2022.

Strategy themes

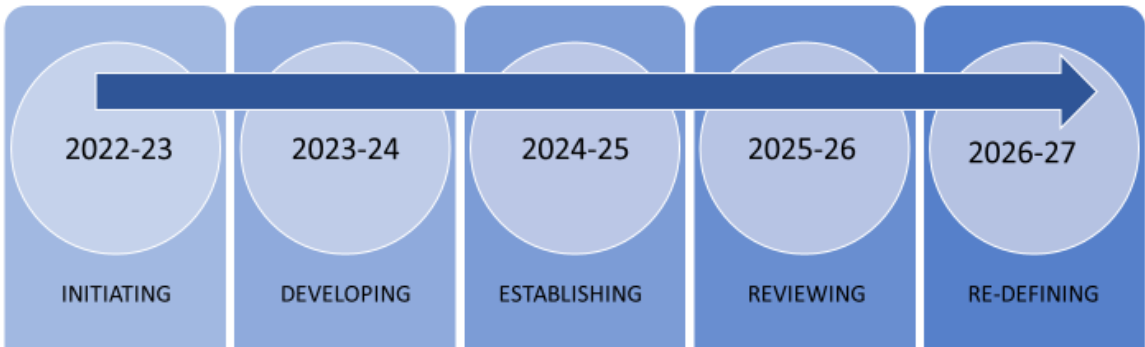
The Libraries and Heritage Strategy has 3 core themes: People, Place and Partnership, under which all activity is grouped.

The public-facing Libraries and Heritage Strategy does not focus, for understandable reasons, on the internal changes that will need to happen to achieve the aims of the strategy. A fourth theme ‘*Delivering the Strategy*’ has therefore been established to cover this dimension. For example, the Strategy’s Priority 1.4: ‘*Equip libraries and heritage staff with skills to deliver on innovative services*’ (previously aligned to ‘People’), now falls under this theme, alongside other additional critical actions.

Action Plan

The Strategy is due to be delivered over a five-year period and the activities will be phased as such. The annual Service Delivery Plan (SDP) will be the framework for the delivery and reporting on all priority activities, rather than creating an extra layer and duplication via a separate ‘Strategy Action Plan’.

As the years progress, the detail of each year’s Delivery Plan will be drawn up and targets set in accordance. At this stage, it is possible to describe each phase as follows:



2022-23, is clearly a ‘reset’ point for Libraries and Heritage, and a year of transition, as the new Strategy is introduced and foundations are laid for future years. As the Strategy marks a significant shift in direction for the service, not all structural changes will be achievable within Year 1 and policies, operational models and methods of delivery will still be emerging during Year 2. By Year 3, the service should be hitting its stride, at the point at which OCC’s Strategic Plan will be in the process of being reviewed and the political landscape may shift. Hence, towards the end of the

Strategy's projected timeline, as outlined above, there will need to be a focus on reviewing progress and priorities, and re-defining future strategic goals.

As the 2022/23 SDP and embedded Key Performance Indicators were signed off ahead of the finalisation of the Strategy, some additional activities and rephrasing of the current Delivery Plan has taken place (see Appendix 1).

Strategic alignment and priorities

Appendix 2 outlines how the Libraries and Heritage Strategy's Promises and Priority activities, and the agreed Service Delivery Plan 2022/23 actions, map across onto the nine current OCC strategic priorities.

As there is a fair degree of detail embedded within Appendix 2 and the Service Delivery Plan itself, the following diagram (see overleaf) sets out the core priorities for each year of the Action Plan.

Progress and performance reporting

A quarterly review of progress and performance will be undertaken by the Leadership teams in both the Libraries and Heritage services, and a report will be produced for each service summarising the key achievements across the four themes and reflecting on performance to date (i.e. against agreed targets).

It is recognised that a more outcomes-based/impact-focused planning and performance framework needs to be developed and this has been set as a priority for 2022/23. Once this is in place and embedded within service practice, it will be possible for Libraries and Heritage to better demonstrate the difference they make across a variety of shared corporate priorities.

In the meantime, Appendix 3 covers all the Priorities activity highlighted within the Strategy and goes into further detail around the linked detailed actions, indicative performance measures/targets, and the planned timeline for delivery.

Libraries and Heritage Strategic Priorities 2022-2027

