

3. LIFELONG LEARNING STRATEGY

Officer responsible
Libraries Manager

Author
Sue Sutherland, Libraries Manager, DDI 941-7851

The purpose of this report is to present the Lifelong Learning Strategy for Christchurch City Libraries for adoption by the Committee. This report should be read in conjunction with the full strategy which has been separately circulated.

The strategy has been developed to provide a framework for the implementation of the Library's strategic goal as outlined in 'The Plan' which was adopted by the Council in July 2002. That goal is:

Learning and Literacy

Supporting your learning...

- Encouraging and promoting reading
- Computers for use and learning
- Working with and supporting educators

... to grow knowledge together

METHODOLOGY

The process used to develop the strategy included research into the role of libraries in supporting education in the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand.

Consultation took place with a range of stakeholders, including schools, tertiary providers other libraries and library staff. Council colleagues working in the educational field were also consulted. A thorough audit of the activities already undertaken by the library was completed and is attached as an appendix to the strategy.

A library project team worked with the researcher to review the findings and develop the strategy.

THE FRAMEWORK

Three principals underpin the strategy and are the foundation on which the four strategies are built:

- **Social inclusion** - The library is a repository of resources that can assist at risk and excluded groups to gain access to social and economic goals. It may be the only means for those who are not in formal education to gain access to knowledge. It also drives the development of programmes that may be delivered in the community in order to take services and lifelong learning opportunities to those who do not access libraries.
- **Access to digital opportunities** - The internet provides opportunities for getting information, communicating and working collaboratively with others. We recognise that while Internet use continues to grow, there are many people who still have no access. In order to uphold the principle of access to digital opportunities, the library must also provide opportunities to learn the skills needed to use our digital services.
- **Collaboration** - Working in partnership avoids duplicating the efforts of other public and private providers and complements and supports their goals. It combines the strengths of organisations involved in education and learning, with the skills and resources offered by the library.

Four strategies comprise the overall strategy for Lifelong Learning. They are:

- **Literacy for Life** - This strategy emphasises the importance of reading as an essential skill for education, work and full participation in society. The library's programmes, resources and staff support literacy development from early learning through to adult, including those from whom English is not a first language. In addition this strategy embraces the concept of reader development which helps emerging readers broaden and extend their reading and experience the pleasure of reading as a leisure activity. The practice of reading creates readers. The ability to comprehend complex ideas contained in text only happens with practice and sustained effort.

- Supporting people to learn - In today's knowledge society, information is increasingly being conveyed digitally which creates the need for people to develop digital information literacy skills. Finding the right information requires skills that librarians are able to teach others so they can find things for themselves. This strategy emphasises the role that libraries and librarians play in helping people find quality information for their learning needs, and the supply of that information either in hard copy or electronically.
- Learning environments - At certain times in a person's life he or she will attend formal learning programmes in recognised educational organisations. But for most people the opportunity to learn happens in informal settings in self- directed ways over their lifetime. Public libraries have supported this activity by providing resources and places for learning. This strategy is about continuing to develop the virtual and physical environments to support learning, both in the libraries and in the community. Study spaces, I-zones and targeted learning environments such as South Learning Centre are part of this strategy.
- Learning Partners - The final strategy recognises that it is crucial to work collaboratively with other groups and organisations to support them in achieving mutual goals for learning. Key groups are schools, other libraries, Maori and community-based and tertiary learning organisations. We already work collaboratively with organisations such as the Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology and support community learning organisations such as Addington.Net. Future partnerships will be assessed against the following principles:
 - There is a match between what our libraries can offer and what other organisations want to achieve.
 - The agreed partnership outcomes align with our strategic goals and priorities.
 - There are potential benefits for both parties and those benefits outweigh the identified risks.
 - The partnership provides a means of reaching an agreed outcome in a more effective way than through other means.

OUTCOMES

The Council has identified the following as one of its key strategic outcomes for Christchurch:

A Learning City

- *Our people have the knowledge and skills needed to participate in society and value lifelong learning*
- *Our city provides diverse opportunities for learning and innovation*
- *Our economy thrives on skills, knowledge and innovation*

Libraries are one of the key Council organisations for delivering on these outcomes for the City. This strategy provides the framework for the initiatives to deliver on these outcomes.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the Lifelong Learning strategy for Christchurch City Libraries be adopted.