



## **Leitrim County Council**

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*Leitrim County Library*

*Development Plan 2009-13*

**Final Draft**

15 January 2009

This document is a summary text. Further detail on any aspect of this plan and / or the complete plan is available from Leitrim County Library. If you wish to obtain further detail or the complete plan please contact either Sean O Suilleabhain or Gabrielle Flynn at Leitrim County Library, Main Street, Ballinamore, County Leitrim: Telephone 071 9645582 or email [leitrimlibrary@leitrimcoco.ie](mailto:leitrimlibrary@leitrimcoco.ie)



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## **Background & Brief**

### **Introduction (2.1)**

Aidan Walsh Consultancy was commissioned by Leitrim County Council in June 2009 to work with Leitrim County Library on the development of a Development Plan for 2009-2013. In particular, the commission was expected to provide an external perspective and to suggest priorities for development.

### **Work programme (2.2 - 2.9)**

The Consultancy was briefed to involve Library staff as much as possible. All nine branches were visited and workshops held with all staff and with the Plan Steering Group. The programme also called for consultation with senior Council officers and with external stakeholders such as An Chomhairle Leabharlanna and County Leitrim Partnership.

Dedicated focus group meetings were also held with special interest stakeholders. Following the preparation of an Issues Paper for consideration by the Steering Group, a presentation was made to a joint meeting of the Community Cultural & Enterprise SPC and the Library Advisory Committee. Drafts of the Plan were subsequently prepared.

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## **The Library Service today**

### **Growth and potential (3.1 - 3.2)**

Leitrim County Library has experienced significant growth in recent years including the opening of its new Library Headquarters and branch at Ballinamore and new branches at Manorhamilton, Kiltyclogher and Carrigallen. The Library is also increasingly attracting note in national library media. This five-year Plan will build on recent growth and position the Library for further service development when better economic times return.

### **Local policy context (3.3)**

County Leitrim is distinguished by robust physical terrain and considerable length which are barriers to easy service provision. Although the population levels are now stable, the County has a widely scattered population that is largely rurally-based. It also has higher than national average numbers from the over-60 age group and lower than national numbers from the 15-39 year age group. All of these factors present challenges to a service provider.

Leitrim County Development Board charts these factors in its 2002-2012 strategy and implicitly recognises the role of the Library in addressing issues. This Plan seeks to make the Library's role and profile more explicit and defines specific actions which support the broader cultural and social priorities of the Council.

### **75 years and more (3.4 – 3.7)**

The Library service is funded and operated by Leitrim County Council through its Community, Culture and Enterprise department. Council provided €1,472,118 in its 2008 estimates of expenditure. It employs 29 staff, 7 of which are either temporary or part-time.

In 2005, Leitrim County Library celebrated 75 years of service which started modestly with one staff member in one small room in 1931. Today the Library has 9 branches which are fully automated and members can access their accounts online.

Membership of the Library is free and stood at 5,727 in December 2007. Borrowing books and reader services still form the core of the Library's work although internet usage increased dramatically, by 100%, in 2005 and 2006.

In Leitrim in 2006, borrowing of books and other items dropped by 6.6%, although this needs to be seen in context. Since opening its new branches and buildings between 2002 and 2005, Leitrim County Library experienced record growth in borrowing with growth levels of 10-23% over different years.

The key to increasing and maintaining borrowing lies in the Library's investment in purchasing new stock and it will be of continuing importance therefore for the Library to maintain and increase its Book Fund as the Plan progresses.

Users of public libraries throughout the country are not confined to those borrowing books. Leitrim County Library also reflects this national visitor pattern, with 197,700 visits made in 2007 to its five main branches, undoubtedly supported by the impressive and broad annual programme of activities at each branch, ranging through exhibitions, lectures, workshops, displays and children's activities.

Leitrim County Library holds an important and well regarded collection of local history material, which is accessible at Ballinamore Library. The number of enquiries increased greatly in 2007, by 61% and personal caller enquiries increased by 100%.

Overall, The Council's investment in the Library is bearing fruit. Nevertheless, it's important that any public institution reviews its work and challenges comfort zones. Reaching younger people, for example, is critical to the development of future adult readers and serving a dispersed rural population is a key consideration for Leitrim. This Plan provides an opportunity to address these matters.

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## **A Situation Review**

### **The national policy context (4.1 – 4.3)**

The 1998 Government review of public library policy in the report "Branching Out" identifies key issues for Irish public libraries, including the following;

- Delivering better service through enhanced opening hours

- Improved ICT and information services,
- A target spend on book stock of €3.27 per head of population
- Provision of adequate infrastructure
- Improvement in marketing of library services

In June 2008, a revised strategy "Branching Out –Future Directions" recommended

- More capital investment
- Extending grant to book stock and ICT and more ICT investment
- Increasing book-stock target to €3.77 per head of population
- Development of cultural programmes and cultural resources
- Becoming gateways for government and cultural information

Leitrim County Library has worked in recent years to achieve the national standards of library service which were defined in "Branching Out". In particular, the Library has delivered on the recommended extended hours and also met the target spend on book stock.

It may well be, at least in the short term, that Government funding may not be forthcoming for "Branching Out - Future Directions". Nevertheless, it is quite likely that its foundation principles of social inclusion, better public service and greater access, will actually increase as drivers of change as the government strives to get an even greater return from current investment. In that context, the Leitrim Library Plan must continue to take account of government strategy and policy.

#### **Public attitudes to the Library (4.4 -4.6)**

PLUS (Public Library User Survey) was a two-week survey of all visitors to each library branch or service point and was undertaken in September 2007 at most public library authorities. PLUS was developed nationally by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna to gather attitudes on the current state of libraries, as users saw them.

The results for Leitrim show that in many areas Leitrim County Library exceeds the national average levels of satisfaction with

- current levels of opening hours
- the range of material on offer in your own language
- users coming to seek information
- finding the information that users came for
- levels of computer service
- numbers coming to use computers

Reference library use was also higher in Leitrim than the national average usage.

In other areas, the PLUS results show some underperformance by Leitrim County Library when compared to the national average results.

Compared to the national average results, smaller numbers of users surveyed came to their local library in Leitrim

- to borrow books
- to borrow CDs
- to borrow DVD and Videos
- to borrow Talking Books
- to borrow Large Print Books

When users were asked how often they visited the libraries in Leitrim, answers showed some consistent differences between national averages, suggesting more first time visits than the national average. Higher numbers of users also lived further from branches in Leitrim than on average nationally.

#### **Leitrim County Library User Profile (4.7)**

Leitrim attracts higher numbers of female users, 68.3% as against 63.2% nationally. Its age group user profile is very similar to the national average, with 17.1% drawn from 25-34 year bracket, 23.8% from the 35-44 and 17.7% drawn from the 45-54 year bracket. These are the largest age group users. In the 15-19 age group, Leitrim departs from the national averages, attracting 9% of this group, compared to 4.5% nationally. Leitrim also attracts smaller numbers of retired people, 16% against 19.3% nationally.

#### **Analysis of the Leitrim PLUS results (4.8)**

It is clear from the results that the investment of recent years in new branch buildings has delivered positive user opinion across many areas of the library service, exceeding national averages of satisfaction in many instances. Some problem areas for the Library also emerged and the Plan includes some objectives which will address these matters.

- The drop in borrowing is almost certainly a snapshot of the time of the survey, rather than a trend. In broad terms, the Library has hugely increased its borrowing since 2002.
- DVDs, Videos, Talking Books and Large Print Books were borrowed less often in Leitrim than was the case nationally.

Historically, the Library has had fewer resources to invest in newer media which are especially popular with both the younger user (DVDs and Videos) and the older (Talking Books and Large Print Books).

Maintaining the Book Fund is the key to retaining and increasing borrowing and the Plan proposes that this be done.

The possible introduction of a Mobile Library Service would also provide a significant increase in services to retired people living in rural Leitrim.

#### **Stakeholder feedback about the Library service (4.9)**

Primary School Teachers were unanimous and spontaneous in vouching their appreciation for the staff of the Library service who they described as helpful, professional and knowledgeable.

Teachers from the Manorhamilton and Ballinamore areas expressed satisfaction with the range of books available and elsewhere, teachers asked for a greater range of books.

Teachers asked when other branches would be modernised since some smaller ones could not currently handle groups or events. They also suggested that there was a general lack of awareness within the community of the Library's services.

The Active Aged focus group warmly praised the staff of all branches for their helpfulness. They asked for more fiction & history at Carrick-on-Shannon and a microfilm reader for local history resources at Carrick-on-

Shannon, a reflection of the inadequate size of this branch for the counties' largest town. They also sought more talking books in Irish. The Group also stated that

- The Library service as a whole needs better promotion
- There is a general lack of awareness of the services the Library provides

The expressed opposition to the further development of fixed branches, which they saw as unsustainable.

The residents of the Ballinamore Asylum Seekers hostel voiced positive views, saying that they felt included and welcomed. They also had some requests which again focus attention on book stock and its importance to the Library. They asked for

- Irish history & African history books
- Newer editions of children's books
- More teaching books for children
- Multiple copies of books

Staff of County Leitrim Partnership in Drumshanbo confirmed other comments about the unsuitability of some branches to hold events because of size restrictions and they welcomed proposals to improve branches.

The group further commented that the profile of the Library was poor in many areas and that people are unaware of the services it offers.

In broad terms, the group asked for fresh book stock as they find children very selective; children will not be retained as readers if the book stock is uninteresting or remains unchanged.

The Adult Education section of Leitrim VEC stressed the key importance of getting young people to read as this skill is fundamental to their later progression. It therefore suggested that a mobile service, if introduced, should target primary schoolchildren as a priority.

A consultation was held with a Council officer whose work supports Leitrim Community Forum. The Forum itself found difficulty in engaging 18-25 year olds with its work and it was suggested that the Library should target this age group with special activities and with book selection.

The Forum has never formally considered a relationship with the Library service but would be open to do so, especially regarding distribution of information through the branch network and through the possible mobile library service.

Library staff input and the stakeholder input all formed part of the plan development process. The proposals in the Plan grew from these ideas and concerns while also meeting government and library policy priorities, especially in the area of social inclusion.

## **An inclusive service**

### **Introduction (5.1 -5.2)**

Social inclusion policies seek to develop strategies and schemes which reach out to marginalised groups and serve people who cannot access normal services, for economic or social reasons. County Leitrim has a relatively ageing population and it remains a county dominated by a dispersed rural population; both factors restrict easy access to library services. The Plan looked especially closely therefore at the opportunity to develop a Mobile Library Service for Leitrim

### **Mobile Library Development (5.3)**

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna reports a growth of Mobile Library Services in recent years in Ireland. In 2005, Donegal County Council and the Western Education & Library Board established a joint mobile service for the border areas. Roscommon has recently re-introduced a Mobile Service and County Sligo is actively considering the introduction of a Mobile Service. Cork County Library operates six mobile library vehicles, serving five separate routes.

Mobiles can reach areas and people that regular library services cannot always reach. Nationally, the 2002 PLUS surveys demonstrated that mobiles were 75% used by women, as against a 66% usage of fixed branches and that mobiles attract a proportionately higher number of users in the middle and upper age ranges.

### **Branches and Mobiles (5.4)**

Leitrim County Library has had much success in developing branches and buildings in recent years. It has nine branches, serving 28,950 people, a high number by comparison with some neighbouring counties. Yet, there is continued pressure from some small village communities to establish branches in their areas.

There is clear evidence of the need to confirm and continue the branch development proposals that the previous Library Development Plan identified at Carrick, Mohill and Dromahair. The stakeholder feedback quoted was also quite consistent and strong in seeking better branches, especially for Carrick-on-Shannon.

The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government normally provides 100% funding for the purchase of mobile library vehicles. Small branch developments, on the other hand, do not attract government support. The spread of existing branches is also taken into account when applications are assessed. With 9 branches in Leitrim, it is quite likely that new branch development funding applications from Leitrim County Library would not be successful.

It is therefore recommended that the Council prioritises the development of a Mobile Library Service, over and above the development of further small branches. The growth of a larger network of small branches would not be financially sustainable, even in the short term.

- Each new fixed branch is likely to cost approx. €250,000 - €300,000
- The single mobile vehicle will cost €250,000
- The mobile vehicle purchase is fully funded by government

### **Operating costs (5.5)**

A fixed branch will attract annual running costs. One or two part-time appointments are needed per branch, together with rental and maintenance costs. A mobile service, on the other hand, will require the appointment of one driver.

The table below provides an estimate of costs associated with operating a mobile, based on information supplied by other counties.

| <b>Item</b>                  | <b>Annual estimated costs</b> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Insurance, fuel, subsistence | €20,000                       |
| Staffing                     | €45,000 gross cost            |
| Re-stocking books            | €15,000                       |
| <b>Total each year</b>       | <b>€80,000</b>                |

*Cost of operating a mobile library vehicle*

In Year One, €30,000 would also be needed as a once-off investment in purchasing stock for the Mobile. Year One costs would therefore total €100,000 while annual recurring costs will total €80,000 thereafter. The estimate of staffing is based on the cost of a full-time Driver Assistant and a part-time Library Assistant to provide administrative support.

### **Other reasons for establishing a mobile service (5.6)**

Cost is but one factor in considering the introduction of a Mobile Library Service for Leitrim. The following positive and negative factors are also relevant.

#### **Negative**

- Cannot serve housebound people
- Onboard IT cannot be used for sufficient length of time
- Stopping rota can be unsuitable for some users

#### **Positive**

- Serves smaller villages, not currently served
- Provides a flexible response to demand for village branches
- Mobile libraries reach remote communities and users
- A Mobile can also serve the rural schools network that do not have locally accessible branches
- A Mobile can serve pre-schools, after-schools, residential and nursing homes and active-aged groups
- A Mobile can serve 25 stops per week
- Judging on the experience of other counties, larger numbers of books would be issued by mobiles, relative to small branch issue numbers

Perhaps the biggest message the Library can send, though introducing a Mobile, is its willingness to reach out to its community and meet its users where they live. A mobile is a sign of a responsive and flexible service that genuinely wants to expand its user base and meet changing needs, lifestyles and working patterns.

### **The mobile service and schools (5.7)**

Currently, Leitrim provides an extremely limited service to schools. It has no dedicated full-time service for schools. A Mobile Library Service in Leitrim must therefore see schools as one of its principal targets,

effectively replacing the schools van and driver that the Library operated until 1988, but now widening out to the community at large.

- There are 42 primary schools in the county, a manageable number
- 25 schools are rural and would need priority servicing

#### **Stakeholder feedback on Mobile Libraries (5.8)**

The primary teachers consulted for the Plan warmly welcomed the possibility of a mobile or schools service. Their main reasons were

- Renewed book stock is essential to engage students
- Teachers are very restricted in getting students out of classroom through time restrictions and cost considerations
- Mobiles bring the library to users

The Active-Aged groups commented on the cost of a mobile service and said that it would need to be cost-effective by serving a broad range of stakeholders

- Schools should be included to maximise benefits of the mobile service
- Hospitals were specifically mentioned as target users
- Partnerships with carers could reach housebound people
- The Active-Aged groups suggested forming partnerships with Post Offices to act as book drop-off points or depots, where stopping times were limited
- Frequency of stopping was seen as less important than the opportunity to get new books into the hands of borrowers

Leitrim VEC Adult Education strongly supported the idea and suggested targeting leisure readers to catch and retain interest in reading at a young age. The primary schools would form the most important single target group for the mobile, it believes. It emphasised the importance of stimulating reading and the development of critical faculties through book clubs etc. The VEC also welcomed the mobile as demonstrating the Library's willingness to reach out to its community.

County Leitrim Partnership welcomed the possibility of a mobile service and asked that it include Traveller sites in its stopping rota. Officers also suggested that book stock for schools needed renewal and expansion as modern schoolchildren are discriminating and selective readers. A mobile could help address this matter.

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna acknowledged the cost of operating mobiles but suggested that they had some key advantages, including reaching isolated communities.

The PLUS survey results also reported on travel distances of users. In Leitrim, perhaps unsurprisingly, higher numbers of users lived further from branches than on average nationally. A mobile service can help address this distance problem.

#### **Social Inclusion and a mobile service (5.9)**

Despite funding cutbacks, support for social inclusion strategies is likely to remain a priority, especially as mobiles reach isolated communities & the elderly in rural areas especially. Given Leitrim's higher than average older age profile and given the Leitrim County Development Board's commitment to older people, to rural communities and to combating

social exclusion, the development of a Mobile Library Service is strongly recommended.

## Objectives and Strategies 2009-13

### Introduction (6.1)

This Plan is designed to cover a medium to long-term period of 5 years. The Strategic Aims set out below, define the future direction of the Library. The Strategic Aims relate to the primary work areas of the Library including core functions.

### Mission Statement and Values (6.2 – 6.3)

Library staff considered a new statement of vision or mission and suggested the following for Leitrim County Library.

*To provide a high-quality welcoming, modern, responsive and inclusive library service for all which fosters reading, provides information and supports learning, culture and recreation*

Staff also agreed that they attach importance to the following values to the Library and its work;-

- A welcoming place
- Inclusive of all
- Accessible to all
- A provider of information and knowledge
- Enjoyable
- Responsive
- A focal point for the community

### Strategic Aims for the next five years (6.4)

Seven principal strategic aims were defined which grew from the analysis and consultation presented earlier. It is proposed that the work of the Library for the next five years be re-organised from its present<sup>1</sup>, infrastructure-led approach to a user-focussed approach.

| Aims   |
|--|
| <b>Strategic Aim 1</b><br>Continue branch development and develop a mobile library service |
| <b>Strategic Aim 2</b><br>Promote and foster reading throughout the branch network         |
| <b>Strategic Aim 3</b><br>Develop the Library as an information and cultural resource      |
| <b>Strategic Aim 4</b><br>Promote the Irish language and culture                           |
| <b>Strategic Aim 5</b>   |

<sup>1</sup> "Leabharlanna Chontae Liatroma, Library Development Programme 2003-2006", October 2002.

Modernise the marketing and promotion of the Service

**Strategic Aim 6**

Promote, develop and make local studies resources available

**Strategic Aim 7**

Develop the managerial framework of the service

The tables at page 49 onwards provide detail and timing proposals.

**Capital costs (6.5)**

The Plan proposes that the three building and renovation projects from the previous 2003-2006 Development Programme be rolled forward. Estimates of the capital funding needed have been prepared.

**Staff costs (6.6)**

Within this Plan, an assumption is made of continued funding from Leitrim County Council. An additional post will be needed to operate a new mobile library vehicle. A post at Driver Assistant grade is proposed which would cost €45,000 annually, gross cost, inclusive of part-time administrative support from a Library Assistant.

**Staff structure and teams (6.7)**

The completion of the proposed new staffing proposals is a key element in the implementation of this Plan. To take proposals and projects forward, the Library needs to assign specific responsibilities to senior personnel and the Plan makes some specific recommendations within the tables below.

## Strategic Aim 1

### Continue branch development and develop a Mobile Library Service

| Objectives   | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. Continue planning for development of a new Branch Library in Carrick-on-Shannon   | √    | √    | √    |      |      |
| 2. Continue proposal to develop a new library branch at Dromahair.   | √    | √    |      |      |      |
| 3. Progress the re-development of Mohill Branch Library and implement the sensory project findings at Mohill Branch  | √    | √    |      |      |      |
| 4. Prepare and submit an application for funding to introduce a Mobile Library Service for County Leitrim and associated stocking, housing and loading bay |      | √    | √    |      |      |
| 5. Initiate discussion with Council regarding a post to operate the proposed Mobile Library Service  |      | √    |      |      |      |
| 6. Investigate opportunities for additional book storage and archives space  | √    |      |      |      |      |
| 7. Implement the Council Disability Plan throughout the Library Service  | √    |      |      |      |      |

## Strategic Aim 2

### Promote and foster reading throughout the branch network

| Objectives  | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. Designate a senior officer to lead on reader development initiatives   | √    |      |      |      |      |
| 2. Seek to maintain the annual book and stock purchase fund at the nationally recommended level   | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 3. Implement "Frontline" reader development training for all staff  | √    |      |      |      |      |
| 4. Purchase and add new audio, large print books and new video and DVD format resources aimed at older and younger age groups, respectively | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 5. Continue to publicise the access software and hardware already installed in branches   | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 6. Continue annual involvement in national initiatives such as Children's Book Festival, Library Week and Bealtaine active-aged festival    | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 7. Review and agree a support policy for the current reading groups throughout the network of branches.                                     | √    |      |      |      |      |
| 8. Provide further access for users to online research resources such as encyclopaedia and newspapers                                       | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 9. Forge links with relevant agencies to assist, promote and foster reading   | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |

### Strategic Aim 3

#### Develop the Library as an information and cultural resource

| Objectives  | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. Designate a senior officer to lead on event co-ordination and planning throughout network  | √    |      |      |      |      |
| 2. Maintain Library involvement with annual National Science Week   | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 3. Develop an annual Winter Lecture Programme on varying themes   | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 4. Continue to organise events in branches in support of local festivals and events   | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 5. Continue to encourage and facilitate approximately six annual exhibitions in libraries and develop local exhibitions such as the 2009 Sean Mac Diarmada exhibition | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 6. Provide a range of public sector and tourism information at all branches   | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 7. Ensure expansion of computer access within new or re-developed branches  | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 8. Ensure that the proposed new Mobile Library Service vehicle has full internet access for users   |      | √    |      |      |      |
| 9. Work with new migrant communities to showcase their culture through exhibitions at Library branches  | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |

## Strategic Aim 4 Promote the Irish language and culture

| Objectives   | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. Maintain Seachtain na Gaeilge activities annually   | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 2. Contribute to the implementation of the Council's Irish language scheme                                     | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 3. Promote opportunities for the public to conduct business with the Library through the Irish language medium | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 4. Provide opportunities for interested staff to improve their knowledge of Irish                              | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 5. Ensure that all new directional and building signage includes both Irish and English text                   | √    | √    |      |      |      |
| 6. Continue the Comhrá classes in branches throughout the network  | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 7. Promote the availability of Irish language children's books   | √    |      | √    |      | √    |

## Strategic Aim 5

### Modernise the marketing and promotion of the Service

| Objectives   | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. Designate a senior officer with responsibility for coordinating publicity and promotion for the Library   | √    |      |      |      |      |
| 2. Design, translate and print new Library information leaflets about Library resources and services for placement in homes, business, shops and other outlets | √    | √    |      |      |      |
| 3. Review current library web pages and consider the addition of a dedicated children's page   |      | √    |      |      |      |
| 4. Consider the establishment of a blog or alternative electronic communication medium, attached to the website  | √    |      |      |      |      |
| 5. Build a structured relationship with the Council's arts section and seek opportunities to integrate library information into arts promotion and marketing   | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 6. Use "overdue notices" mailing to distribute information and event literature  | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 7. Modernise the building and directional signage to take account of disabled users  | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 8. Forge links with relevant agencies to market and promote the Library and its services   | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |

## **Strategic Aim 6**

### **Promote, develop and make local studies resources available**

| <b>Objectives</b>   | <b>2009</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>2011</b> | <b>2012</b> | <b>2013</b> |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. Initiate a programme of cataloguing and digitisation of photographic images  |             | √           | √           | √           | √           |
| 2. Develop digital virtual exhibitions and place online                         | √           | √           | √           | √           | √           |
| 3. Scan school register and roll books, in conjunction with the County Archives |             | √           | √           | √           | √           |
| 4. Maintain and add to the existing oral history resource at Ballinamore HQ     | √           | √           | √           | √           | √           |
| 5. Continue to service enquires and researchers, as required                    | √           | √           | √           | √           | √           |

## Strategic Objective 7

### Develop the managerial framework of the service

| Objectives   | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. Continue implementation of agreed staff re-structure  | √    |      |      |      |      |
| 2. Maintain the regular branch review system and follow up on issues raised                        | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 3. Develop a regular and more frequent branch visit rota   | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 4. Review ICT hardware and software on an annual basis   | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 5. Ensure a regular, possibly electronic flow of appropriate management information to each branch | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 6. Hold two library-dedicated annual meetings with all staff                                       | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 7. Review this Development Plan and use as template for review at annual staff meetings            | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 8. Continue bi-monthly staff meeting of HQ staff, local studies staff and of branch librarians     | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 9. Prepare a written Staff Training Policy and continue to provide work-related training for staff | √    | √    | √    | √    | √    |
| 10. Draft a written Child Protection Policy  | √    |      |      |      |      |

## Appendix 1 The Brief for the review

Leitrim County Council through Leitrim County Library Service is in the process of developing a new Library Development Plan for the period 2008-2013.

### Terms of Reference

Leitrim County Council intends to prepare a new Library Development Plan for the next five years. This Library Development Plan is being prepared following a number of years of unprecedented development in Leitrim's Library service, which has included the following: establishment of a new Library Headquarters and branch at Ballinamore, establishment of a new branch at Manorhamilton, opening of a new branch in Kiltyclogher, opening of a new branch in Carrigallen, significant advances in the computerisation within the Library service, significant expansion of on-line facilities and the expansion of a local studies service.

In addition the development of this new plan is timely given the expected publication of the second "Branching Out" report on the future of the library service in Ireland in the coming months.

The Council intend to recruit the services of a consultant to assist in the development of the library plan and to provide the following services as part of the process of developing the new plan:

### Preliminary:

1. Review of existing services provided by Leitrim County Library Service
2. Documentation of the level of service provided (much of which will be available through the Library Management systems).
3. Review and Mapping of the current Library service points given the geographic and demographic profile of the County

### Infrastructure:

1. Evaluation of the provision of a Mobile Library Service and / or additional branch services in order to deal with identified omissions from the current spread of library service points in the County
2. Assist in the determination of key capital investment requirements needed for the delivery of the service in a more comprehensive way, such as the County town of Carrick-on-Shannon.

### Customer Service:

1. Review and development of recommendations in regard to Library opening hours based on usage patterns
2. Review and determination of recommendations in relation to range of activities to be carried through the Library service.
3. Review of the usage and development of recommendations in relation to the further development of on-line services both within the branch and through the library/Council's web sites.
4. Review and development of recommendations in relation to the promotion of the Library service in the County
5. The identification of new services/development opportunities presented through the existing branching out programme and the new "Branching Out" programme to be launched.

**Outreach Services:**

1. Review of and the development of recommendations in relation to the School Library service.
2. Review of and recommendations in relation to the provision of Library service to the housebound and residential homes within the County
3. Review of and recommendations in relation to the provision of services to the National Anti Poverty Strategy identified target groups within the County
4. Review of and recommendations in relation to the role of the Library service for the purpose of the recreation among young people.

## **Appendix 3 Acknowledgements**

I am very grateful to everybody listed here for their knowledge and courtesy during this planning process, especially to those I met or consulted on a number of occasions. I am also especially grateful to staff that attended and participated in the consultative workshops.

The following were consulted, interviewed or met ;-

### **Council**

Members is Leitrim County Council, monthly meeting January 2009  
Members of Leitrim County Council Community & Enterprise SPC  
Chair and members of Leitrim County Library Advisory Committee

### **Council Staff**

Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, Community & Enterprise, Leitrim County Council

### **Library steering group**

Sean Ó Suilleabháin, County Librarian, Leabharlann Chontae Liatroma,  
Gabrielle Flynn, Executive Librarian, Leitrim County Library  
Hilda King - Ballinamore Branch  
Mary Conefrey - Local Studies  
Teresa Kelly - Manorhamilton Branch  
Marian Mulvey - Drumshanbo Branch  
Breda Sweeney - Dromahair Branch

### **Library staff**

Mary Bohan  
Theckla Carleton  
Mary Corby  
Helen Corcoran  
Caroline Farrell  
Martina Feeney  
Mary Gannon  
Fiona Gilroy  
Deirdre Hall  
Evelyn Kelly

Karen Lonican  
Mary McGowan  
Margaret McCabe  
Anna McKiernan  
Veronica McKeon  
Damien McHugh  
Caroline McCartin  
Caroline Martin  
Orla Parkinson

**Stakeholders**

Eithne Banks, Ballinamore Post-primary School,  
Paul Kirkpatrick, Community Forum support, Leitrim County Council  
Tom Lavin, Manager, County Leitrim Partnership and his staff  
Norma McDermott, Director, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, Dublin  
Alun Bevan, Research Officer, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, Dublin  
Donal Ó Scollai, Adult Education Officer, Leitrim VEC  
Participants in the Primary School Teachers Focus Group  
Participants in the Active-Aged Focus Group  
Participants in the Asylum Seekers Focus Group  
Transition Year Class, St. Claire's Comprehensive School, Manorhamilton