Community Survey Feedback

Executive summary

This section presents an overview of the communication and consultation undertaken regarding the changes to library service delivery methods and the retirement of the South Coast Mobile Library since the public announcement on Tuesday 23rd October 2018.

A survey was made available for patrons to complete both online and via hard copy received in the mail.

Background

West Gippsland Libraries announced changes to how it will deliver library services currently provided by the South Coast Mobile Library on Tuesday 23rd October 2018 by 30 June 2019 as the truck and trailer are over 20 years old, break down frequently (most recent brake down was Friday 16th November) resulting in costly repairs and most importantly patronage has declined over the past few years. A combination of new methods designed to make library services accessible to more people will be implemented over the next eight months.

Direct communication with active patrons

Letters were sent to 519 patrons that included a letter explaining the changes, answers to the initial list of frequently asked questions (FAQ’s) and a survey to hear from patrons about how they would like to access the library services. Letters were sent to patrons who had used the South Coast Mobile Library service even if they resided in a town where there was a static library.

An email newsletter was also sent to 457 patrons (included in the 519 above, who also received the hard copy) and the survey was made available via Survey Monkey.

Survey

A survey asked for input from active members on how they would like to access library services in the future was open from 23rd October till 30 November 2018. There were 158 respondents during that time. An overview of the survey results are provided below.

![Survey Results Pie Chart]

- **Surveys returned**: 156
- **South Gippsland**: 53%
- **Bass Coast**: 47%
The graph below shows the survey results for first preference service type based on the town the respondent resides.

One on one discussions and meeting attendances

In addition to the survey, the Board Chair, Chief Executive Officer and Manager Strategy and Communications have over the past four months spoken with many patrons and community members both face to face and over the phone in regard to the changes. The Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer also met with the Cornella Community Centre Committee of Management and the Coronet Bay Rate Payers Association to explain the changes in more detail and explore opportunities to collaborate. The Chief Executive Officer has spoken with representatives from the Coronet Bay Ratepayers Association, and the Bass Coast Residents and Ratepayers Association on separate occasions.

Generally speaking patrons were initially upset to hear of the changes to the service delivery method. However when a representative from West Gippsland Libraries has explained the reason for the changes and how an enhanced service can be provided, they are understanding and curious to learn more.

Media

To assist with communicating the changes, West Gippsland Libraries provided media releases to local newspapers. Over the past four months there has been significant media coverage including articles and letters to the editor. The Chief Executive also conducted an interview with the ABC radio interview on Friday 9th November and an interview with Nine news on Thursday, 15th November.

In summary the media over the past four months has included:

- A press release was distributed to all local media announcing the change late September, 2018.
- Local media have also been very supportive in communicating the change and any public interest stemming from the announcements.
• At last count, there have been at least 14 news stories across TV, radio and print, not including letters to the editor which discuss the change nearly every week, ensuring consistent public discourse and exposure to the change;

• This is a significant amount of coverage that would no doubt have reached many thousands of people living in these communities.

• It has also served to prove that targeted marketing and promotion of this service is not a cause of underutilisation: despite the significant amount of coverage, very few people have signed up (only 46) as members to the mobile service since the announcement.

Social media and website
An advertisement on Facebook was also run from the 8th November and has been viewed over 13,000 times in the areas where the SCM travels. There have been over 700 visits to the West Gippsland Libraries web page that outlines the changes to the service.

The survey respondents have provided excellent feedback to West Gippsland Libraries on how they would like to access and use the library service. The graphs below highlight the first preference from respondents based on their shire.

Conclusion
West Gippsland Libraries recognises that how people access the library services across the region is very different in each community as outlined in the survey results and graphs. It is also recognised that the existing SCM library service continues to not be accessible to more than 90% of the communities that it visits based on the number of active members compared to the population of these communities. To ensure that West Gippsland Libraries continues to provide a library service that recognises the diversity and changing needs of its communities, a range of options will be presented to the Board for consideration.
Corinella and Coronet Bay – Library Service Options for Consideration

Executive summary

This section presents for consideration the proposal to:

- Provide an agency library in the Corinella or Coronet Bay area that can support library member access to:
  - Housing a collection in a comfortable environment;
  - Computers;
  - Wifi;
  - Visiting librarian during allocated times; and
  - Easy access to the library collection via a self-checkout terminal at times when the librarian is not in attendance.

- Provide a book drop off and collection point in the Corinella and Coronet Bay area (alternate location to the agency) to compliment the agency and cater to the requests of members;

- Invest in a new collection for the agency totalling $10,000 or approximately 400 items and supported by existing collection items of up to 600, equating to approximately five bays of shelving (dependent on space availability for shelving);

- Provide outreach visits weekly to the local early learning centre and primary school; and

- Consideration to utilise the local community bus to address accessibility concerns for patrons to get to the agency.

This is supported by Corinella and Coronet Bay representing 28% of total loans on the South Coast Mobile (SCM) and 25% of total users on the SCM. It is also further supported by the respondents to the survey representing 38% in Corinella and Coronet Bay from the responses received in the Bass Coast Shire area and since the announcement about the changes to the mobile library service on 23rd October 2018, there has been more than 22 new members join the library in the area.

Background

The Corinella and Coronet Bay area have actively participated in the survey that was available to active library patrons during October and November and represented 38% of the responses received in the Bass Coast Shire area. Since the announcement on 23rd October 2018, there has been more than 22 new members join the library in the Corinella and Coronet Bay area. The first and second preference results from the 32 respondents to the survey in the Corinella and Coronet Bay are summarised in the following graph:
Further to the survey results summarised in the graph the Corinella and Coronet Bay area represents 28% of total loans on the SCM and 25% of total users. It is for these reasons that the recommendation of implementing an agency library and supported by a book drop off and collection point and additional outreach services is put forward.

During October and November, considerable consultation has been undertaken by West Gippsland Libraries to continue to work with the Corinella and Coronet Bay communities to ensure enhanced library services are provided upon retirement of the truck and trailer by June 2019.

Benefits to the library service by providing a range of services outlined in the report include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Current service</th>
<th>Proposed Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hours the librarian is in attendance.</td>
<td>Coronet Bay – 2 hours per week</td>
<td>2 x 3 hour shifts at the agency per week (an additional 1.5 hours per week).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corinella – 2.5 hours per week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach Early Years</td>
<td>One outreach session has been undertaken at the new Bass Valley Children’s Centre since it opened.</td>
<td>Bass Valley Children’s Centre – one session per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bass Valley Primary School – one session per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Various groups such as Play Groups, Maternal Child Health new mums groups etc. One session every 4 to 6 weeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book drop off</td>
<td>Formally nil however ad hoc drop offs at the Coronet Bay General Store occur from time to time.</td>
<td>Book drop off twice per week at appropriately suitable location to be determined.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-checkout access to the collection</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Potential partnership with the Corinella Community Centre would allow for self-checkout access during its opening hours of 10 am – 4 pm Monday to Friday. This increases access to the collection from 4.5 hours to 7.5 hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Details</td>
<td>Current service</td>
<td>Proposed Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced collection</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>• Purchase of approximately 400 new collection items supported by an additional possible 600 items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• New procedure developed to support curating the collection to ensure it remains fresh and caters to the demands of the local community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Monthly email newsletter that promotes new collection items and personalised interests of members and programs on offer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilisation of community bus</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>• Support the use of the local community bus and volunteers to greatly improve accessibility for local residents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• An agency option provides greater accessibility to library resources in a more dignified manner than the large lift at the back of the truck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>• Program to show patrons how to access e-resources on BorrowBox and the new WGL app.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Author talks as requested.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Community Consultation**

West Gippsland Libraries would like to undertake further community consultation with the Corinella and Coronet Bay community to determine the best location for the agency location, book drop off and collection point and days and times the librarian can be available. It is noted that West Gippsland Libraries has met with the Corinella Community Centre Committee of Management to ascertain if the Corinella Community Centre is open to collaboration to help support increased access to library services, to which the committee has provided the following written response:

“In the event that a decision is made to discontinue the Mobile Library Service, the Committee of Management and the Manager of the Corinella & District Community Centre would look favourably on a proposal being drawn up to house a library at the Community Centre”.

There have been other locations suggested during the November 2018 consultation phase such as the Coronet Bay Community Hall. The Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer are scheduled to attend and present at the Coronet Bay Ratepayers Association on Saturday 12th January 2019.
Financial implications

To implement an agency solution for the Corinella and Coronet Bay area, an investment in resources and equipment is required. The financial implications of this report are summarised below:

Initial investment approximation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of new collection</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of self-checkout unit</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelving (if existing shelving can’t be repurposed)</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional furniture and equipment (if required)</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total initial investment</strong></td>
<td><strong>$30,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The initial investment in the agency option would be funded from the Bass Coast facilities reserve allocated in the balance sheet. This reserve currently has a balance of $167,355.

Recurring expenditure that may be incurred as part of providing an agency service is dependent on where the agency is located. The aim will be to remain within the existing annual recurring budget allocation for the SCM facility.

Staff costs will be continued within the existing service provided on the SCM. It is recognised that additional staffing resources may be required as part of the transition to ensure the quality service delivery is maintained.

Conclusion

West Gippsland Libraries sees an opportunity to provide an enhanced library service to the Corinella and Coronet Bay community. Providing greater access to a new collection, longer opening hours, continued ongoing support from a librarian and a self-checkout unit that increases the convenience for patrons reflects the changing needs of library users. This proposed delivery of library services also allows for growth to the service with an increase in population expected in the area in coming years.
Book drop off and collection points

Executive summary
This section provides an overview of where survey respondents reside that preferred book drop off and collection points as their first preference and the opportunity to pilot the service option in Welshpool which had the highest request for the service in the South Gippsland Shire.

Background
Book drop off and collection points have been recognised as a sought-after method to access library services. This is supported by 28% of survey respondents selecting book drop off and collection points as their first preference and more than 15% of holds being placed via the West Gippsland Libraries website each year.

Surveys returned

- # of responses: 156
- # of book drop off 1st pref: 43
Welshpool is a town in South Gippsland Shire that is 23 kilometres east of Foster. The South Coast Mobile Library currently visits the town every second Monday from 9.15 am for an hour and 15 minutes. In the past year there were 23 active members who collectively loaned over 900 items (or an average of 45 loans per active member per year).

Welshpool had the second highest response rate in the survey to preference first a book drop off and collection point.

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**Book drop off & collection point requests**

**Book drop off 1st pref - SG**
Financial implications
There are a variety of delivery methods to provide a book drop off and collection point in Welshpool including Australia Post, courier and connecting with other community services provided to the area. Further investigation will be undertaken to adopt a sustainable delivery method.

Conclusion
It is recommended that Welshpool be piloted for a book drop off and collection point based on the high survey responses from the area, the number of active members and the quantity of loans in the past 12 months.
Grantville – Library Service Options for Consideration

Executive summary

This section presents the option to pilot a book drop off and collection point at the Grantville Transaction and Technology Centre with the option to expand into an agency if the library service usage increases by August 2019.

Background

Bass Coast Shire Council provides a Transaction and Technology Centre in Grantville with opening hours from 8.30 am to 1.00 pm and 1.30 pm to 4.30 pm Monday to Friday. The centre provides computer and internet use and printing services.

In the past 12 months, there were 12 active patrons in Grantville who loaned 465 items. Seven people responded to the survey with two preferencing first a book drop off and collection point and two preferencing first a micro/agency library. One respondent preferred first to learn more about the e-resources, one for more programs and one chose no option, requesting the mobile library remain.

West Gippsland Libraries would like to expand its services in the Grantville area and in particular link in with the Technology Centre to provide more access to more people. As a first step in doing so, providing a book drop off and collection point is a good way to gauge the level on interest in the library service and determine if there is opportunity to increase the number of members and active users.

Conclusion

It is recommended that a book drop off and collection point be piloted at the Grantville Transaction and Technology Centre as a first step to increasing access and members to use the library service in the area and connect with the already provided services in the centre.
San Remo – Library Service Options for Consideration

Executive summary

This section presents the proposal to:

- Provide an agency library in San Remo area that can support library member access to:
  - Housing a collection in a comfortable environment;
  - Computers;
  - Wifi;
  - Visiting librarian during allocated times; and
  - Easy access to the library collection via a self-checkout terminal at times when the librarian is not in attendance.

- Invest in a new collection for the agency totalling $10,000 or approximately 400 items and supported by existing collection items of up to 600, equating to approximately five bays of shelving (dependent on space availability for shelving); and

- Provide outreach visits weekly to local aged care, early learning and primary school facilities.

This is supported by San Remo representing 27% of total loans on the South Coast Mobile (SCM) and 23% of total users on the SCM. It is also further supported by the respondents to the survey representing 35% in San Remo, Kilcunda and Newhaven areas from the responses received in the Bass Coast Shire area.

Background

The San Remo area has actively participated in the survey that was available to active library patrons during October and November 2018 and represented 35% of the responses received in the Bass Coast Shire area. The first and second preference results from the 30 respondents to the survey in the San Remo, Kilcunda and Newhaven areas are summarised in the following graph:

Further to the survey results summarised in the graph the San Remo represents 27% of total loans on the SCM and 23% of total users. It is for these reasons that the recommendation of implementing an agency library is put forward.

During October and November, considerable consultation has been undertaken by West Gippsland Libraries to continue to work with the San Remo communities to ensure enhanced library services are provided upon retirement of the truck and trailer by June 2019.
Benefits to the library service by providing a range of services outlined in the report include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Current service</th>
<th>Proposed Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hours the librarian is in attendance.</td>
<td>San Remo – 7.25 hours per week</td>
<td>2 x 4 hour shifts at the agency per week (an additional 0.75 hours per week).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Opportunities to connect with existing groups including planned activity groups, maternal child health and aged care facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-checkout access to the collection</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Seeking partnership opportunities in the San Remo Community to provide greater access to library services within existing facilities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Enhanced collection                          | N/A                                                  | • Purchase of approximately 400 new collection items supported by an additional possible 600 items.  
|                                              |                                                      | • New procedure developed to support curating the collection to ensure it remains fresh and caters to the demands of the local community.  
|                                              |                                                      | • Monthly email newsletter that promotes new collection items and personalised interests of members and programs on offer. |
| Programs                                     | Nil                                                  | • Program to show patrons how to access e-resources on BorrowBox and the new WGL app.  
|                                              |                                                      | • Author talks as requested. |

**Community Consultation**

West Gippsland Libraries would like to undertake further community consultation with the San Remo community to determine the best location for the agency location and the days and times that best suit the community for the librarian to be available.
Financial implications
To implement an agency solution for San Remo, an investment in resources and equipment is required. The financial implications of this report are summarised below:

Initial investment approximation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

The initial investment in the agency option would be funded from the Bass Coast facilities reserve allocated in the balance sheet. This reserve currently has a balance of $167,355.

Recurring expenditure that may be incurred as part of providing an agency service is dependent on where the agency is located. The aim will be to remain within the existing annual recurring budget allocation for the SCM facility.

Staff costs will be continued within the existing service provided on the SCM. It is recognised that additional staffing resources may be required as part of the transition to ensure the quality service delivery is maintained.

Conclusion
West Gippsland Libraries sees an opportunity to provide an enhanced library service to the San Remo community. Providing greater access to a new collection, longer opening hours, continued ongoing support from a librarian and a self-checkout unit that increases the convenience for patrons reflects the changing needs of library users. This proposed delivery of library services also allows for growth to the service with an increase in population expected in the area in coming years.
Members not already using a static library
Members directed to static or community library
Click and collect available in addition at Coronet Bay and Grantville
Statement for South Coast Mobile Library questions

- We understand that people who use the library service experience a number of benefits in doing so.
- Council also highly value the services and experiences that libraries provide within our community.
- The data provided and quoted in some of the questions is only one part of future considerations.
- The petition requesting funding for the purchase of a new South Coast Mobile Library Truck is being presented to Council this evening to be received.
- The petition will lie on the table until the next Ordinary meeting of Council to be held on 20 March 2019 to which a report in response will be presented.
- Part of the West Gippsland Regional Library Corporation’s consultation process was to consider the impacts of any service change for members of our community; we appreciate people’s efforts in providing feedback.
- Council is awaiting the report from the West Gippsland Regional Library Corporation, outlining the outcomes of recent engagement activities.
- It is therefore more appropriate to respond to questions once Council has all the information and has considered the report.
- There may be a number of options to consider going forward.

D.10 Allie Reilly - South Coast Mobile Library
How will the proposed static library invoke the same feeling as being able to interact with the community and browse a bus full of books?

D.11 Dianne Goeman - South Coast Mobile Library
1. Does the Bass Coast Mayor realise that replacing the South Coast Mobile Library service with a small agency library in Corinella and click and collect depots in the other Waterline towns will increase the difficulty of older residents and vulnerable community members accessing library services?
2. Do Councillors realise any reduction in accessibility of library services will increase social isolation in a community where 12 in every 100 residents are classified as disadvantaged?
**D.12 Joy Button - South Coast Mobile Library**

1. Could you please explain to me why the decision to cease the South Coast Mobile Library was made in camera without any consultation to residents in the Waterline townships?

2. Could you please explain why the decision has been made to instead replace this service with a ‘micro library service’- a term used by West Gippsland Library Services – without any consultation to the Waterline townships and displays a lack of communication by our three Waterline Councillors in particular, and shows complete disregard to the communities?

3. Can the Bass Coast Councillors please explain why the residents of the Waterline are being offered a substantially inferior library service than the current mobile library service? Growth of population is fact in the Waterline and yet the Council seems to have decided that the library service should be reduced not enhanced. Why?

**D.13 Levinus Van Der Neut - South Coast Mobile Library**

1. How will a click and collect depot or a small library co-located in a community centre many kilometres away, provide a safe and non-threatening environment for these vulnerable groups?

2. Given the cost to Bass Coast Council is about half that of South Gippsland and about one third less than Baw Baw, is it reasonable to further squeeze service provision?

**D.14 Peter Granger - South Coast Mobile Library**

1. It appears (a) patronage figures have been understated and then measured unfavourably against invented performance benchmarks (b) council has been misled. Will council undertake an independent and transparent audit of these allegations?

2. Will council agree to an independent audit of these anomalies?

**D.15 Veronica Dowman - South Coast Mobile Library**

1. Given South Gippsland Council has rejected our petition, will Bass Coast Councillors consider our proposal, emailed to Councillors on 13 February?
   - establish its own Bass Coast mobile library service
   - to extend the library stops
2. Are Councillors aware that the following two assertions are flawed?
   • “More than 90 percent of people living in the towns the mobile library services, either
cannot or do not access it.”
   • “Library agencies in Corinella and San Remo will be open up to 30 hours and will
increase access and inclusion.”

D.16 Anne Caulfield - South Coast Mobile Library
1. Will Bass Coast Shire request WGL apply for a grant to help fund a Bass Coast Mobile
vehicle before applying for the Baw Baw grant?
2. Will Bass Coast Shire take the advice from one who knows, and maintain its mobile
library service to all its eligible small towns?
   • one who knows reference - Jenny Mustey, Head Librarian, Campaspe Shire (library
depots for 45 years) and Victorian representative, Australasian Mobile Library &
Outreach Services Network (AMLOSN)

D.17 Des Burgess - South Coast Mobile Library
1. Given the area has a higher number of elderly than the State average, should not the
availability of a library be regarded by Council as an essential service?
2. Has the Council realised they are going against World trends by decreasing library
services not enlarging them?

D.18 Lisa Hurford - South Coast Mobile Library
   Would Council support a “Friends of Mobile Library Group”?  
   • to help promote and market the mobile Library in Bass Coast, and inform the
community of the important relevant news eg Cancellation of Service due to
unforeseen circumstances beyond control

D.19 Diana Lutz - South Coast Mobile Library
   Why are we in the waterline towns being ignored as surely this is a growth area?