

Our Libraries Our Futures:

Sligo Library Development Plan - 2019 - 2023



Foreword:

As Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council I welcome this Library Development Plan 2019 – 2023 entitled *Our Libraries Our Future*. The Library service for many decades has played a leading role in County Sligo in the delivery of cultural services and continues to be one of the most widely used services delivered by Sligo County Council. This five year Development Plan will provide the strategic basis for the continued development of the library services throughout the County and is based upon widespread consultations with stakeholders and the public.

The breadth of services and events provided by Sligo County Council's Library service continues to evolve with new services such as Right To Read, Work Matters and Summer Stars along with well over 1300 activities held in our network of four branch libraries and a mobile library service throughout the year. Events ranging from Oiche Nollaig na mBan , Seachtain na Gaeilge, Summer Reading Stars to the Childrens' Book Festival in the autumn have proven to be highly successful in engaging with new and established members. These events range from literary and musical events to cultural and historical exhibitions and community engagement. The role of the library service continues to grow in importance and no more so than in the area of the promotion and support of literacy in the County.

Innovation and constant change have been at the heart of the Library service in Sligo for many years with the first Open Library facility provided in Ireland established in Tubbercurry Community Library in 2014. This service continues to provide additional accessibility to library facilities to the Tubbercurry community.

In more recent times innovative events such as the highly successful literary event *The Word*, which is provided in partnership with IT Sligo, highlights the rich vein of literary talent to be found in County Sligo and also the strong bond between contemporary writers with Yeats Country and Sligo's literary scene. Both the Europe Direct and Work Matters services in partnership with locally based FabLabs have provided a very popular introduction for children to realise their creativity through the use of design facilities and 3D printing.

During the coming five years of the Library Plan I am confident that the library service will continue to develop and respond to the needs of the communities we serve.

Cathaoirleach
Cllr. Martin Baker

Message from the Chief Executive

Sligo County Council has delivered a Library service to the people of County Sligo for almost a century. During this time, Sligo County Council in response to the needs of communities, have continued to invest in library infrastructure, staff resources and to expand the range of library services. Our most recent library plan resulted in the provision of Ballymote Community Library in partnership with LGMA Library Development and the Department. This Plan will see further commitments in terms of improved programming and facilities and capital development over its lifetime.

Sligo County Council has as one of its main objectives in the Plan the development of a purpose built Central Library which will act as the main library for Sligo City and environs, while also fulfilling a supportive role in terms of local studies and archives to the County Council's countywide Branch Library network. In order to achieve this every opportunity will be explored to secure the necessary capital funding required. Secondly, Sligo County Council will continue to extend the Mobile Library services through the provision of a new Mobile Library vehicle with assistance from the Department of Rural and Community Development which will continue to primarily serve rural communities and targeted groups and organisations in the provision of library and literacy services.

In line with National Library Policy and Sligo County Council's policy of social inclusion the Council will continue to remove potential barriers to library membership. In 2019 the removal of fines for late return of juvenile book stock will be introduced.

Sligo County Library service has embraced many changes in terms of service delivery and this will continue with the roll out of the proposed partnership with Leitrim and Roscommon County Councils in the delivery of certain library services as outlined in the Alternative Collaborative Services model.

Sligo's Cultural community and the well being of our citizens will be enhanced by the implementation of this plan.

Mr. Ciarán Hayes
Chief Executive

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Executive Summary



Sligo Library Services, during 2019 – 2023 will continue be at the heart of our communities, providing a free library service for all, in neutral inclusive spaces. The successful delivery of the Sligo Libraries Development Plan 2019 – 2023 will more than double current membership figures and will see a significant increase in the number of programmes and activities. Sligo has one of the oldest library services in the state, with origins dating back to 1880. Services, needs and demands are much changed since

then. The last decade has seen huge changes in the landscape of Public Library Services in Ireland. The needs of our communities have evolved in many ways, and new technologies have provided additional opportunities to service these needs. At the same time, our core service values have remained the same. Reading, literacy and information provision in safe accessible places, are at the centre of what we do.

Over 7,000 individuals or 11% of the population of Sligo are currently members of Sligo Library Services. By 2023, Sligo Library Service intends to have met the Libraries Ireland national target of 30% membership in Sligo. Library users will enjoy this service in a set of welcoming and locally accessible spaces throughout County Sligo and online.

Five strategies are the key to the successful delivery of this plan five year development plan. These are:

1. Placing **Literacy and Reading** at the centre of our Service.
2. The Library as a **Centre of Learning and Information**.
3. **Creative Libraries** – The Library as an active space leading and facilitating culture and creativity in our communities.
4. **Collections Policy**: Update and development of our printed and digital collections.
5. Placing **Literature at the centre** of our Service.

Due to recession and non availability of National Grants Schemes for Library Developments a new Central Library for Sligo has not been realised.

A new workforce plan for Sligo Library Service will be finalised towards the end of 2018 as part of the National review of Library services and will deliver the necessary staffing structure to deliver the full range of Library services to the communities served. As part of the implementation of Sligo Libraries Plan 2019 – 2023 Sligo County Council will endeavour to deliver on new state of the art multi-functional flagship central public library in Sligo City.

In line with Local Government policy, collaboration is key to the success of this plan. Currently Sligo Library Service collaborates with a range of local, regional and national partners to deliver elements of

our service in a cost effective way. These include literacy (*Right to Read*), health and wellbeing (*Healthy Ireland at your Library*), business (*Work Matters*), along with arts and culture programmes and events.



This Plan will build on existing successful services and initiatives. We have 7,000 members spread over Sligo Central Library and services, Ballymote and Tubbercurry Community Libraries and Enniscrone part-time Library. With an average 500 visits a day the libraries have one of the highest levels of face to face engagement with the public in Sligo. Online services are accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week with access to eBooks and audio books, magazines, courses and research resources. Europe Direct Information

Centre is a contact point for all EU related queries, and the Local Studies and online Reference Library is used extensively. Ballymote Community Library has been completely refitted the new “MyOpenLibrary” was launched in Tubbercurry Community Library in November 2014 making it the first of its kind in Ireland. The new national Library Management System gives members access to stock in all Irish Public Libraries and self checkout facilities are available in all library branches.

The implementation of the Plan requires investment under the following areas:

- I. Capital Development
- II. Collaboration and Partnerships
- III. Communications and Promotion
- IV. Workforce Planning
- V. Extended Opening hours in Sligo Central Library
- VI. Continued increase in the book fund to achieve €4.00 per capita



As we look to the next five years, we are confident that with the appropriate resources we will further develop, expand and deliver an even more comprehensive, accessible public library service. This service will be delivered countywide and online to existing and new members, users and visitors.

Sligo Library Services – Strategic Objectives 2019 - 2023



Vision:

Sligo County Council Library Services will be at the heart of our communities, providing a free library service for all, in neutral inclusive spaces.

How will we deliver this vision?

Literacy and Reading at the centre of our service.

New 2,400 metre² Central Library in Sligo City – this is central to this Development Plan.

Sligo library services will **support, encourage and foster reading for everyone in the widest possible sense** – reading a printed book, looking at a picture book, listening to an audio book, reading on a screen, listening to someone telling their story.

All services will continue to be **free**.

Membership increase from 11% to 30% of our population.

More and up to date stock in a **range of formats**.

Improved collection of books and digital resources giving access to **all the reading material needed for pleasure, education and research in whatever format you require.**

Our libraries will **be invaluable sources of Learning and Information for people of all ages and abilities.**

Sligo Library services will use our library spaces to **lead and facilitate culture and creativity** in our communities.

Sligo has an abundance of **literary talent** – Sligo libraries will help support and foster these talents in our county.

The Library Service will continue to run **over 1,200 events and programmes every year.**

The Library service will aim to **increase from an average of 511 people visiting our service every day to over 1,000** face to face interactions.

Online, our figures will **go from 8,500 website and online users to over 20,000 website and online users.**

1. Sligo Library Service: Vision, Mission and Values



This plan sets out where we want to be in 2023 and how we plan to make it happen. **Our vision, mission and values will underpin all our work.**

VISION:

Sligo County Council Library Services will be at the heart of our communities, providing a free library service for all, in neutral inclusive spaces.



MISSION: Sligo County Council Library Services will deliver our vision by fostering reading, stimulating the imagination and contributing to life-long learning and cultural recreation. Our strategically developed library network will adapt and respond to community needs through and beyond the life of this five year Development Plan.



VALUES:

Underpinning our vision and mission are a clear set of **values** that guide all our work, interactions and collaborations. These are:

Reading and Literacy: Reading and literacy are at the core of what we do. Reading (through a range of mediums) for leisure, culture and learning is the heartbeat of Sligo Library Services and is central to all our work.

Collaboration: We collaborate at community, local authority, statutory, regional, national and international levels to provide the best and widest ranging service we can.

Inclusion: Our library service is for everyone: residents, visitors, worldwide online users. We provide open access to all in the most equitable, democratic way we can. Users living and visiting Sligo can access a range of services on offer regardless of their location or ability. At all times we ask, who else can use our services, but do not, and why? To remove barriers, we put in place supportive, inclusive and collaborative measures to ensure inclusion of all, working towards Universal Membership from birth.

Communication: Our internal and external communication is clear, effective and accessible. Communication with stakeholders is two way, allowing us listen to the needs of the communities we serve and to outline and promote our services to users.

Unique, free, safe, open and neutral spaces: Sligo Library Spaces are freely accessible to all. Our users and visitors are entitled to feel safe and comfortable in all our spaces, physical and virtual, and use them for their community needs.

Flexibility and Innovation: Dynamic changes are happening in the way Library Services are delivered and in the economic and social landscapes of Sligo. We are flexible and innovative in responding to these changes, both to maintain the integrity of our service and to embrace the opportunities these changes present.

Public Service: The highest standards of customer service will be observed.

2. Context of Plan

2.1 Context of Plan: Our Influencers



The Sligo County Library Service is one of the oldest in the state with origins dating back to 1880. It currently has 7,000 members spread throughout Sligo, representing 11% of the population. There have been many social, economic and budgetary fluctuations since our last Library Development Plan 2005 – 2010. In some ways we have completely

changed the way we approach and deliver our services, in other ways it's the same. The core values of serving the needs of current and future users have been sustained and technology use has increased to reflect changing needs. The newer libraries in Ballymote and Tubbercurry along with our Open Library and our online services have revolutionised how local communities perceive their libraries. Sligo Central Library is in urgent need of renovation and expansion. Severe spatial physical constraints prevent it providing a service that fully meets national public library standards for a Central Library.

A range of publications inform the work of Sligo Library Services:



Opportunities for All (2014) set out a clear public library strategy nationally outlining social, cultural and economic roles and benchmarks for public libraries Ireland. It outlines the necessity for formal and informal collaborations and partnerships at local, regional and national levels for libraries to survive and flourish. **Managing the Delivery of Effective Library Services (2014)** sets out standards for

the delivery of public library services in Ireland. **Public Library Standards and Benchmarks** (April 2015) sets out national benchmark standards for Public Libraries in Ireland. The draft **Transforming Irish Public Libraries 2018 – 2022** outlines three programme strategies around Reading and Literacy, Learning and Information and Community and Culture, along with book budget and membership targets for 2023.

Documents outlining **An Alternative Approach, the Right to Read Campaign, Work Matters** and **Healthy Ireland at Your Library** provide the framework for further national level collaborations. The **Creative Ireland 2018 – 2022** plan provides the framework for enabling the creative potential of all our citizens. Sligo Library Services plays a significant role in the collaborative delivery of this framework under the **Creative Sligo Plan 2018 – 2022**.

The **Sligo Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021** provides a six year framework for economic and community development in Sligo underpinned by collaborative and co-ordinated effort by all public sector bodies in Sligo. It stipulates economic, employment and enterprise goals that have a range of collaboration opportunities for our Libraries in the community and economic life of Sligo deriving maximum benefit from local, national and EU resources targeting social inclusion, community and rural development. Additionally, in line with **Sligo County Council Corporate and County Plans**, the Sligo Local Authority plans for **Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Diaspora, Creative Sligo and Sligo Museum** all link to the work of Sligo Libraries. Festivals, information events, exhibitions, workshops and reference services are some examples of these collaborations.

Sligo is a working towards designation as a **Smart City** using information and communication technology to improve the quality and efficiency of life in Sligo City. Successful designation will require engaging with local communities and groups. It will require a strategy that is inclusive, with an emphasis on co-creation of services and on digital inclusion for residents and businesses which will also require the modernisation of Sligo Central Library.

The **Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework** notes Sligo's significance as a centre of employment and services as being much greater than its scale in terms of population. Sligo City is nominated as Centre for Regional Development, making the case for a new Central Library even more pressing.

2.2 Context of Plan – National Programmes the Library Services deliver

Sligo Library Services leads the collaborative delivery of the following National programmes and services. These include:



Right to Read: Sligo Library Services delivers *Right to Read* on behalf of Sligo County Council. This programme provides effective and coordinated literacy and reading development supports aimed at all members of the

community and across the range of literacy types. The Right to Read Programme helps people to acquire literacy skills, develop reading practices and support their formal and informal learning. The programme supports existing national programmes and initiatives in communities. In delivering on this, Sligo Library services collaborates with the Sligo County Childcare Committee, Mayo Sligo Leitrim Education and Training Board, Cranmore Regeneration Project, Sligo Education Centre and Sligo County Council's Community and Economic Development Unit delivering in and out of branch literacy supports for all age groups and backgrounds.



Work Matters: Sligo Library Services delivers the national *Work Matters* programme throughout Sligo, highlighting the key role of libraries in supporting users in the transition into jobs and careers, in seeking work, undertaking their own endeavours and/or becoming entrepreneurs. The services include business information, research resources, working and meeting space,

providing IT facilities, events, and job skills support. The information and expertise is delivered in branch and online, with our partners Sligo Local Enterprise Office, Mayo Sligo Leitrim Education and Training Board, Citizens Information Office and Intreo.



Europe Direct Information Centre: The Europe Direct Information Centre is located in Sligo Central Library. Serving Sligo, Mayo and Leitrim, this is a contact point for all queries on the EU, with direct free Freephone access to central EU offices. It encourages citizens to become more aware and responsive to information about the

European Union, stimulating debate, discussion and feedback at a grassroots level. Managed with a staff allocation of 20 hours per week, the Europe Direct Centre collaborates closely with the wider Sligo Library Services programming related to EU information, education, employment and entrepreneurship, providing space for Europe Direct events and organising regional Europe Direct events.

Healthy Ireland at your Library Services: Sligo Library Services delivers the national *Healthy Ireland at your Library Service* in Sligo.

A range of printed and online resources, services and supports are available to users and communities. These include specialist book stock, special digital resources (e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines), health information programmes. The programme also involves discussions and workshops with a focus on physical health, mental health and health literacy. This programme is overseen by professionally trained library staff.

2.3 Context of Plan – Collaborations

Sligo Library Services recognise that to meet the current and evolving needs of our users we need to continue our collaborative approach, as outlined in the programme for Local Government. Delivering our modern vibrant library services requires consistent and extensive resources particularly from Sligo County Council, Local Government Management Agency and Department of Rural and Community Development. While larger local authorities have the advantage of economies of scale in delivering their brief, Sligo Library Services collaborate and partners with many stakeholders to deliver our services. By working collaboratively, we can create more opportunities and initiatives that further our Services. See Appendix 1.

3. Sligo Library Services Locally, Nationally and Online

3.1 Overview



Sligo County Library Service serves Sligo City and County along with our Diaspora. The central headquarters is in Sligo City and houses Sligo Central Library, the Local Studies Reading Room, Reference Information Point, and the Europe Direct Centre (all in need of extension and refurbishment). There are community libraries in

Tubbercurry and Ballymote, and a branch library in Enniscrone. A mobile library visits fifteen destinations throughout Sligo. While each library provides the same set of core services, each has a unique programme related to its resources, space and local community and is supported by online services.

Sligo County Library Services forms part of the public services provided by Sligo County Council and is acknowledged as an important cultural resource and a focal point in the community of Sligo.

Sligo has a thriving arts and cultural community, gaining international recognition annually for arts and cultural events. Sligo City is the location for The Model, Hawk's Well Theatre, Blue Raincoat Theatre Company, Yeats Society, all of whom have links in some way with Sligo Library Services. A number of nationally renowned artists, musicians and writers live in County Sligo, and are a key part of our creative landscape. Providing a strong foundation for arts and culture, Sligo Library Services was a founding partner of the Yeats Society, the internationally renowned Niland Irish Art Collection and the Yeats Museum. The service has been supporting arts festivals, artists, writers and literature in Sligo since the 1940s and is a key member of Sligo Culture Team delivering Creative Sligo 2018 – 2022. Communities are ever – evolving, and this is



reflected in Sligo Library Services. The social, economic, political and technological environment, in which Sligo Library Services operates, has undergone a range of changes and developments in the last ten years. In line with Local Government Policy, collaborations and partnerships are seen as key to the preservation and development of services. Responding to this, Sligo Library Services has many service and programme collaborations. However, the scope of these collaborations can sometimes be limited to due to physical restrictions in Sligo Central Library.

See Appendix 2

3.2 What We Do



Libraries undertake core services of lending, reading, online services, information, and guidance to accessing information. Sligo Library Services has three fulltime libraries, one part-time branch library and a mobile library, a reading /reference library, an Open Library and a 24 hour online services. Sligo is connected to, and share stock with, all public libraries in the Republic of Ireland using the national Library Management System. Each library also has a unique programme of events and clubs as part of their annual programme. These events and programmes cater to the needs of the communities served, with each of our libraries delivering a tailored set of programmes and events reflecting local needs and national collaborations.

An average of 511 people visit our service every day, checking out/renewing 800 items

Frequency and Use of Sligo Library Services in 2017

Members:	7,000 (11 % of the population)
Total stock:	209,678 items
Total issues/renewals:	200,025
Monthly issues in summer period	20,000
Total number of visits:	127,816

Core Services:

Free Internet Access

Children's Library

Online Services

School Library Service

Information Service

Shared Catalogue (borrow from any library in the country)

Multicultural Services

Internet and computers

Literacy

European Direct Information Centre

Audio books

Research resources

Business resources

Books

DVDs

E books

Right to Read

Schools Library Service

Public Awareness Events

Reference and Local Studies

Large print books

E-government services e.g. forms for motor tax, passport, local property tax etc

Adult Literacy material

World Book Day

Summer Reading Programme

Printing Services



Diverse Range of Programmes and Events

Education/training Events

Music Projects

Seasonal storytelling and Activities

Exhibitions

The Word – new and established writers

Age Friendly Events

Healthy Living

Community based Clubs/workshops/

discussion groups

Writing Groups

Bookclubs

Knitting Groups

Craft Groups

Library tours and inductions

Computer classes

Film clubs

Documentary Club

Festivals

Public Consultation Events

National Recreation Week & National Playday

3D printing

Author readings

Open days and promotion events (internal,
local, national)

Creative Ireland Events

Decade of Commemoration Events



4. Library Network - how Sligo Libraries deliver these services:

4.1 Overview:

With Sligo Central Library, Tubbercurry and Ballymote community libraries, Enniscrone branch and the mobile library, Sligo Library services open for over 132 staffed hours per week. In addition a 24 hour online service is made available to members. MyOpenLibrary provides an additional 64 hours of opening hours each week. See Appendix 3.

Number of items in stock 2018	Number of items checked out/renewed in 2017	Number of visits to our libraries in 2017	Number of Members in 2017
209,678	200,025	127,816	7,000

Online activity is increasing every year, as we provide more services and more people are aware of what we provide. The number of people using our website since 2014 increased by 45%:

Online activity 2017	
Website : Users	8,542
Website : Returning users:	47%
Website : New users:	53%
Website : Page views:	40,053
Twitter Followers	1,915
Facebook Likes (Ballymote & Tubbercurry)	744



4.2 Sligo Libraries



Sligo Central Library: Located in a converted Church in Sligo City Centre, Sligo Central Library is the busiest of all of fulltime libraries, serving Sligo City and surrounding commuter belt with a population of up to 45,000. A wide range of core services and activities are offered, the scale of these is significantly curtailed due to building

limitations. Sligo Central Library also houses the reference and local study libraries and Europe Direct Information Centre and is the administrative headquarters of Sligo Libraries Services.

Size of Library: 240m²

Population of area it serves: 20,000 (Sligo City and environs) Hinterland: 25,000 Total: 45,000



Ballymote Community Library was relocated to a renovated central location in Ballymote Town which opened in May 2011. Bright, accessible and spacious, the branch contains a range of versatile spaces for meetings and activities and is seen as a focal point for the local community.

Size of Library: 450 m²

Population of area it serves: Local: 1,500 Hinterland: 6,000 Total: 7,500



Award winning **Tubbercurry Community Library** opened in August 2003 as a flagship library in the county, the first purpose built library in the County with a range of multi-use spaces. It is part of a Sligo County Council one stop shop that includes other council functions and a courthouse space. **Tubbercurry My OpenLibrary** provides for the public library to be open to the public seven days per week

from 08.00 to 22.00 outside of staffed opening hours. This provides access to the public for an extra 64 hours per week. Existing library staff continue to provide expert and additional services, support users and develop community engagement and programming during their existing opening hours.

Size of Library: 370m2

Population of area it serves: Local: 1,500 Hinterland: 6,000 Total: 7,500



Enniscrone Branch Library is the smallest in the county and operates on a part time basis. This area west of Sligo is served 20 hours per week by Enniscrone library, supplemented by the mobile library. The success of the national Library Management Service in providing more direct access for users to library books nationally,

has put further demands on this resource already limited part-time service. In addition, up to 300 extra members of other public libraries use the service during the summer period. The nearest full time Sligo Library Services is Sligo Central Library, 55km from Enniscrone.

Size of Library: 60m2

Population of area it serves: 1,156



The **Europe Direct Information Centre (EDIC)** is located in Sligo Central Library. Serving Sligo, Mayo and Leitrim, is a contact point for all European Union related queries. It encourages citizens to become more aware and responsive to information about the European Union, stimulating debate, discussion and feedback at a grassroots level. Managed with a staff allocation of 20 hours per week, the Europe Direct Information Centre collaborates closely with the wider Sligo Library Services programming related to EU information, education, employment and entrepreneurship and providing space for Europe Direct Information Centre events.



The **Local Studies and Reference Library** is a core service of Sligo Central Library. It is also the Local Authority e-Government Contact point (contact point for citizens and businesses interacting with and seeking information on Government services, e.g. Local property tax, passports etc.). The service provides access to general reference material, an extensive collection of local studies /heritage resources including maps, civil records; and newspapers. Formats include hard copy, microfiche and digital. In addition to use by the local members, the service is used by our Diaspora, tourists including Yeats tourists. The online reference library also provides academic archival supports for scholarship and teaching.



The **Sligo County Libraries Mobile Library** visits fifteen locations (currently under review) in County Sligo on a three week rotating basis, with a stock of adult and juvenile fiction and non-fiction, and audio and large print books. It visits pre-schools, after-schools and nursing homes by arrangement. We also bring reading and literacy programmes to urban and rural communities.

Our **School services** are an essential core service and encourage teacher and class visits to Sligo Library Services. Regular schools' visits take place by schools that can easily access their local

branch. We are visited by pre-schools, primary schools and secondary schools, as outlined in Department of Education guidelines for schools and libraries. Sligo Libraries staff visit over 60 schools in Sligo, to create awareness of library services, specifically literacy and reading development programmes.



Sligo Library Online services are available 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year from your Smartphone, Tablet, Laptop or PC. Free downloadable Apps are available for a number of the services. Our revamped website provides information on all Sligo Library services. Online services include:

Borrow Box - hundreds of popular titles ready to download and enjoy from eBooks and eAudiobooks service.

RB Digital – Full content digital magazines available to read online from over 400 titles across 344 genres or download and read offline.

Mango Languages: Free online language resource to over 70 languages.

Universal Class – Access to over 400 self-learning and hobby courses with tutor support.

ProQuest Newstand – Access articles of International Newspaper titles, including Irish national and regional titles.

5. Achievements

5.1 Achievements since last plan



The story of Sligo Library Services in the last decade is one of remarkable achievement. While operating under a constrained Local Authority Financial Plan and enduring the pressures of economic downturn, dealing with rolling closures and staff shortages, Sligo Library

Service has managed to constantly inform, inspire and challenge. These are some of Sligo Library Services achievements:

Achievements: Physical

- New Community Library in Ballymote
- New Open Library Service in Tubbercurry – this has activated a new cohort of library user
- New Library Management System (LMS) in place allowing us to access stock in all Irish public libraries
- Self-checkout available in all libraries (2018)
- Wi-Fi available in all libraries
- Digitisation /archiving of local records
- Range of new service delivery collaborations in place locally, regionally and nationally
- Range of new online services available 24/7
- SMS and email reminder service
- Creation of social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter)

Achievements: Reading and Literacy

- *Right to Read* programme launched, partners identified and actions outlined
- *Right to Read* commitment to running three core programmes: 'Spring Into Story time', 'Summer Stars' and 'Children's Book Festival', in all libraries in the county, with some activities also taking place on the Mobile Library

- *Right To Read* putting in place the supports and targets for delivery and support of programme



Achievements: Learning and Information

- Europe Direct Information Centre established
- *Work Matters* – Business, enterprise and employment programme launched and fully operational
- *Healthy Ireland* Programme introduced and operating in all branches
- Website upgraded
- A range of formal collaborations in place for Library Services at local, regional and national levels enhancing delivery of Sligo Library Services.
- Implementation of *Opportunities for All* and associated new services despite summer closures in 2015 and rolling closures in 2015, 2016 and 2017.



Achievements: Community and Culture

- Over 1,500 participants in our Summer Stars reading scheme 2018.
- Over 1,200 activities programmed annually for children adults, families and special interests (workshops, festivals, exhibitions, networking, information, consultation, national programmes)
- Universal Free Membership for all
- Leading out and delivering many nationally recognised events and programmes including Yeats Celebrations 2015, Cultural Peacebuilding Projects (SEUPB), Sligo 400, Decade of Commemorations (including 2016) and Creative Ireland.



DRAFT

5.2 Draft Development Plan 2019 – 2023

The main development requirements for Sligo Library Services for the next five years will be:

1. Capital Development Plan incorporating a new library facility for Sligo and a mobile library
2. Workforce Plan / Staffing Requirements
3. Further development of Collaboration and Partnerships including the Alternative Collaborative Approach
4. Communications and Promotion of Plan
5. Extended Opening Hours
6. Books and other stock

5.2.1 Capital Development Plan incorporating a new library facility for Sligo and a mobile library

The development of a new Central Library in Sligo City is acknowledged as a key priority of the County Council. Current National policy on libraries promotes and emphasises an expansion of services. To comply with National Library policy a Central Library with an area of 2,400m² is required to meet Public Library Standards and Benchmarks 2015. The importance of a Central Library is clearly referenced in Sligo County Council strategic and statutory plans. A new Central Library is required to meet current future national standards for Library users. The National Library Standards and Benchmarks 2015 outline the following spaces that libraries should encompass:

- Reading areas for adult users, teenage users and juvenile users
- Meeting rooms
- Activity rooms
- Study space
- Personal laptop workspaces
- Recommended reads and book displays
- Dedicated, flexible exhibition/events space



Furthermore, the development for a new library facility for Sligo to include new head quarters and state of the art facilities has been included in an application for funding as part of a joint project with Sligo Institute of Technology for a Sligo Learning and Ideas Generation Centre, to the recently announced Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF) from the DHP and LG.

The total funding sought is €16.2m. A decision on the success of the application to the URDF is expected to be announced in early 2019.

5.2.2 Workforce Plan / Staffing Requirements

A review of the library service organisation and has been undertaken in recent years to establish more effective and efficient public libraries. The review was carried out against a background of local government reform and shared services. The output of the review, including proposed management and service delivery arrangements, standards for workforce planning and an implementation framework was set out in the report *Managing the Delivery of Effective Library Services (MDELS)*. The report was agreed by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government and the City and County Management Association in 2014.

The review identified the need for improved resourcing and increased scale across smaller local authorities to ensure sufficient capacity for strategic planning, development and implementation in those authorities relative to the larger authorities. A single senior management structure across two or more smaller library authorities was proposed that would address the issues of scale, resources and strategic capacity across the smaller local authorities.

A WRC Proposal has now been agreed which includes an alternative model – “An Alternative Collaborative Approach”. The result of the Library Services review and “An Alternative Collaborative Approach” as outlined in the WRC Agreement now obliges the three Library Authorities of Sligo, Leitrim and Roscommon to work together on a collaborative basis to address the issues of scale, resources and strategic capacity.

Meetings have already commenced between the three library services. It is hoped to achieve the agreement between the three on a number of areas, including staffing numbers at Mid Management grades and the breadth and variety of programming and activities that can be included and implemented as part of the “Alternative Collaborative Approach”.

The following is a proposed staffing model put forward in workforce planning guidelines for Library HQ staff operating across the three Collaborating Authorities.

Proposed Staffing Numbers – Senior HQ Staffing Operating across Three Collaborating Authorities:				
	Local Authority A	Local Authority B	Local Authority C	Local Authority A + B + C
City / County Librarian (Grade 8)	1	1	1	
Senior Executive Librarian (Grade 7)				1 + 1
Executive Librarian (Grade 6)				1 + 1

Assistant Librarian / Staff Officer (Grade 5)	1	1	1	
Total	10			

Negotiations are ongoing between the three Library Services. It is hoped that “Alternative Collaborative Arrangements” will be agreed before the end of 2018 or early 2019.

The staffing requirements for Core Branch Library and HQ activity will be considered and reviewed by the Local Authority over the next couple of years, subject to the Councils financial resources and adherence to the Councils financial plan agreed with the DHP and LG.



A staff training plan will be put in place to ensure highly skilled and professional staff that is enabled to fully deliver the wide range of specialised services we provide. This will also incorporate mechanisms for staff career paths. Training will be delivered internally, externally and collaboratively. The Library Service Work Force Plan will enable staff to

deliver a professional, effective and responsive service to users. The Library Service will:

1. Maintain and enhance professional skills of staff in line with changing environment of the service as it meets national economic, social and cultural policy objectives
2. Provide opportunities for staff to obtain professional qualifications in librarianship
3. Set annual professional development training targets for staff
4. Provide staff training for partner organisations where required

Provide internal opportunities for staff to work in a range of settings, supporting them to achieve personal and professional work goals in specialist interest areas that relate to library services.

5.2.3 Further development of Collaboration and Partnerships including the Alternative Collaborative Approach

Delivering the modern vibrant library services requires consistent and extensive resources, particularly from Sligo County Council, Local Government Management Agency and Department of Rural and Community Development. While larger local authorities have the advantage of economies of scale in delivering their brief, we collaborate and partner with many stakeholders to deliver our services. Sligo Library Services recognise that to meet the current and evolving needs of our users our collaborative approach needs to continue, as outlined in the programme for Local Government. By working

collaboratively, more opportunities and initiatives that further our Services will be created. Appendix 2 outlines many of the collaborations currently undertaken.

5.2.4 Communications and Promotion of the Plan



Sligo Library Services will deliver internal and external communication systems. This will form the basis for communicating our work internally and to the wider public in the following ways:

a) **Internal Communications/Promotion:**

1. The Library Service will identify and utilise networks of formal, informal and technology based communication channels within Sligo County Council and our delivery partners.
2. The Library Service will continue to highlight services within Sligo County Council, building on existing partnerships and seeking new cross collaborations where we believe input will enhance the projected outputs, complement strategies, and give the best possible value for money.
3. The Library Service will continue to use existing networks of collaboration to communicate the work, keep up to date with local, national, international developments relevant to our work and use this information to identify and foster further opportunities for collaboration, partnership and exchange of ideas.

b) **External Communications:**

Sligo Libraries external communications will focus on listening to the communities served and provide information about library services to them.

Listening to our communities:

- Professional staff will continue to interact informally daily with users and use this information to further inform and improve our Services.
- Library staff will continue to regularly formally and informally consult with communities to evaluate services provided and to ensure that changes made are relevant to their needs.

Providing Information about Library Services to Communities:

A five year marketing and communication plan will be put in place to target existing users and non-users in branch and online users to increase our membership to national benchmark of 30% of our population¹.

It will be implemented by an internal marketing team, and will highlight awareness of service, increase membership and uptake of services and change perceptions of our services and buildings. Initiatives will include (but are not limited to):

1. Outreach programme with touring presentation to community groups, businesses, schools etc.
2. Annual joint calendar of events for all branches (online and hard copy) to be published at start of each year and linked to social media networks countywide
3. Social media campaign (linked to national initiatives)
4. Traditional media campaign (linked to national initiatives)
5. Opportunities to tie in with national media campaigns (e.g. *Summer Reading Programme*, *Healthy Ireland*).
6. Put in place in information format policy in Sligo Library Service to ensure that information is presented in an age/ability appropriate manner

5.2.5 Extended Opening Hours

Any new library capital development such as Sligo Central Library will be required to review its opening hours, design facilities for an Open Library while increasing the number and range of staffed opening hours. This is a requirement under the *National Public Library Standards and Benchmarks* and the draft *Transforming Irish Public Libraries 2018 – 2022* and will be a pre-requisite for funding of the new Central Library.

5.2.6 Books and Other Stock

The book stock level of Sligo Library Service has been increased in recent years, albeit at a low level. The new Library Management System however provides access to all members in Sligo to libraries stock on a national scale. *Opportunities for All* recommends a book fund at a per capita spend of €3.77. More recently Libraries Ireland has set a target of minimum of €4 per capita by 2023. In Sligo the figure is €1.14 in 2019.



¹ Current membership nationally is 15% of the population, current membership in Sligo is 12% of population

Sligo Library Services will endeavour to address the following over the lifetime of the plan:

- Annual book purchase fund.
- Replacement of old and out of date stock.
- Access to storage facilities for book stock.

6. User Profile: Who uses the library? What you think of the service.



When preparing this plan, Sligo Library Service undertook a countywide public consultation. 507 groups and individuals, representative of Sligo's diverse population, took part in the process. This is we were told:

Your perception of Sligo Library Service:

- A trustworthy source of information and an essential free community service.
- High level of satisfaction with staff and most of the services and a strong user loyalty to each branch.
- A socially inclusive service with loyal, diverse, users who are supportive of Sligo Library Services.
- Spaces for different cultures to interact.
- High level of awareness of one off events and programmes, showing the community value of library spaces and services.

Changes you requested:

- Regular/extended opening hours
- More staff
- Increase and upgrade in stock
- New library in Sligo City (Sligo Central Library and Sligo Reference/Local Studies library)
- More space in some branches (for reading, study, children)
- More computers in some branches
- More use as a community venue
- More promotion of existing services
- More business services support
- More literacy and learning support
- Point of contact /resource for new business
- Target non-users and promote importance of the library to the

community as a community
venue/meeting place

Your feedback and observations reflect the areas to be addressed in this Development Plan

Comments

I am a regular user of the Central Library in Sligo - but it is soul destroying to see the building that it continues to live in - while services around the county and country have beautiful, bright, large attractive spaces

It is free and friendly

Excellent atmosphere generated by friendliness of staff

Example of proper public service at its best. Courtesy, civility, value for money

I am curious about nearly everything. I went to school and it was good, but I got my education from the library.

Library is so much more than books. It's a community; it's where you meet friends that you haven't met. It's where the young, old all groups in society have an excellent choice of facilities groups, exhibitions, talks, music to attend. Being rural it's worth fighting to keep open.



Overview of profile of socio-economic trends in Sligo – this tells us about the community we serve

Population of Sligo is **65,535** and has not increased significantly since 2011. Overall population growth is lower than the national average.

Sligo has a diverse community with several minority ethnic groups. In **2016 there were 7,632 people from minority ethnic groups** (including 384 members of the Travelling community).

14% of the population is over 66 years of age
20% of the population is between 0 and 14 years of age.

Anticipated that by 2025, 26% of the population Co Sligo will be over 65 years of age (higher than the national average)

Sligo City is a designated Centre for Regional Development under Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework. The plan acknowledges Sligo's significance as a centre of employment and services as being much greater than its scale in terms of population.

The projected population of Sligo by 2020 is between 72,000 and 76,000

Sligo has a higher proportion of people with disabilities (15%) than the national average (13.5%)

Unemployment rates at 2016 was just under 14% (down from 18.5% in 2011)



Computers and **Broadband access** and PC ownership in Sligo lags quite significantly behind the national average

7. Strategies and Goals - Where Sligo Library Service wants to be in 2023 and beyond.



This plan sets out where we want to be in 2023 and how we plan to make it happen. **Our vision, mission and values underpin all our work.**

VISION:

Sligo County Council Library Services will be at the heart of our communities, providing a free library service for all, in neutral inclusive spaces.



MISSION: Sligo County Council Library Services will deliver our vision by fostering reading, stimulating the imagination and contributing to life-long learning and cultural recreation. Our strategically developed library network will adapt and respond to community needs through and beyond the life of this five-year Development Plan.

7.1 Our Strategies – The steps we will take to realise our Vision

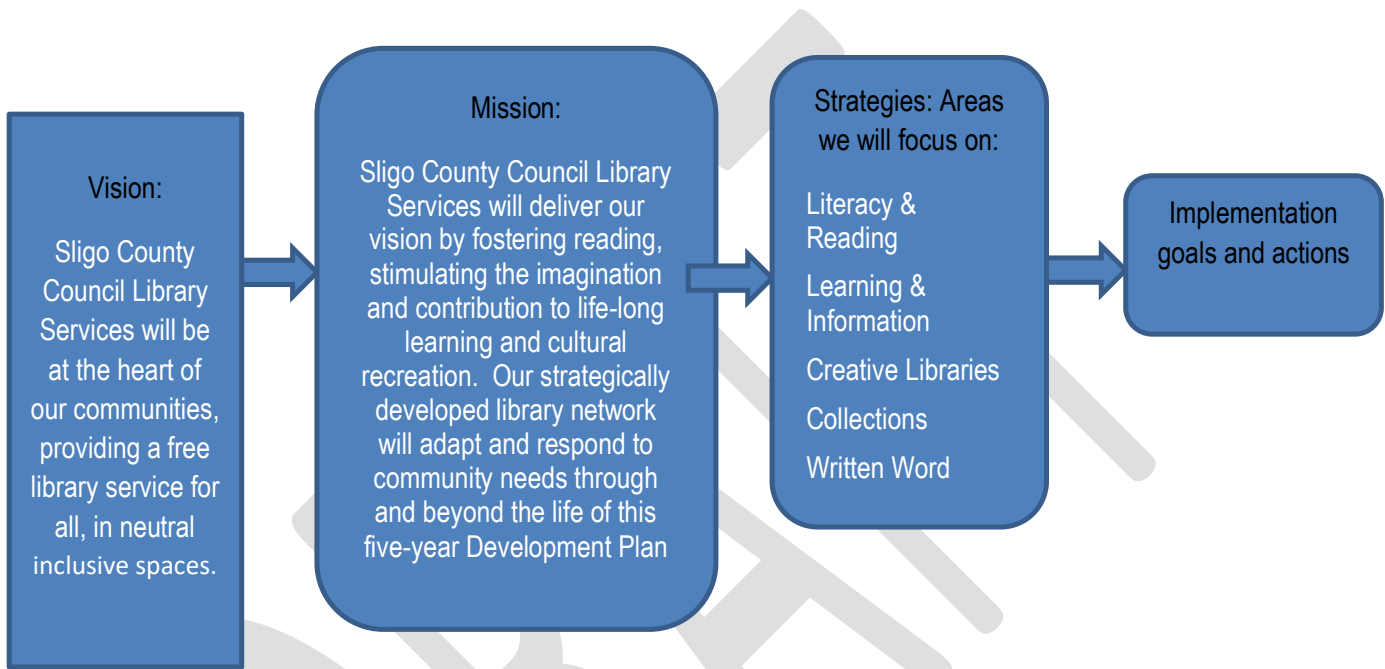
Five key strategies have been identified to deliver the vision for this plan:

1. Placing **Literacy and Reading** at the centre of our services
2. Ensuring the library is a centre of **learning and information**
3. **Creative Libraries** development – active spaces leading and facilitating culture and creativity in our communities.
4. Continually develop a comprehensive up to date **library collection** (print, digital and archives)
5. Placing the **Written Word** at the centre of our Services



Values

Reading and literacy –Collaboration – Inclusion – Communication - Safe spaces –Flexibility/ Innovation - Public Service



Resources needed for successful delivery:

Capital Development programme - Communication and Promotion Plan - Workforce Plan - Extended Opening Hours

Strategy 1: Placing Literacy and Reading at the centre of our service

Goal

- To continue to promote and support literacy and reading development, focusing on child, family and adult literacy.

Actions

1. Continue to deliver and expand the *Right to Read* Programme annually (including Spring into Story time, Summer Stars and Children's Book Festival programmes)
2. Deliver a library support service to pre-school, primary and secondary schools
3. Provide resources to deliver adult literacy programme with local stakeholders and partners



Strategy 2: The Library as a Centre of Learning and Information

Goals

- Sligo Library Services will continue to collect, organise and present information, operating as a trusted access guide to a range of online and in library resources. Our skilled staff of information professionals, will also empower communities and users to self-access information as needed
- Sligo Library Services will continue promote and support business, enterprise and job seeking through a programme of business information and training activities and supports, delivering *Work Matters* and co-operating with Local Enterprise Offices, Intreo Offices, Citizen Information, Sligo Mayo Leitrim Educating and Training Board and other stakeholders

Actions

1. Ongoing promotion of library services as an accessible place for information and knowledge
2. Delivery of lifelong learning programme
3. Countywide delivery of *Work Matters* Framework
4. Countywide deliver of and *Healthy Ireland at your Library* Framework



Strategy 3: Creative Libraries – The library as an active space leading and facilitating culture and creativity in our communities

Goals

- Sligo Library Services will continue to lead, support and collaborate around cultural development initiatives and programmes. We will continue to devise, commission and delivery a range of culture and creativity activities through our libraries.
- Sligo Library Services will further develop and utilise its network of free, safe physical and virtual spaces, for use by all members of the community, for cultural and creative information and ideas exchange, creating opportunities to enhance community creativity
- Sligo Library Services will continue to develop its unique position as umbrella section for delivery of cross-sectional educational, cultural and social programmes on behalf of Sligo County Council, including Creative Sligo 2018 – 2022

Actions

1. Annual programme of arts, cultural and community events and initiatives in partnership with local communities and organisations, informing, reflecting and showcasing projects and programmes
2. Put in place a Sligo Library Culture and Creative Spaces Policy and continue to facilitate and expand use of library spaces by communities and creatives for workshops, meetings, displays, exhibitions
3. Delivery of Creative Ireland Framework in collaboration with Sligo Culture Team in Sligo 2018 – 2022
4. Supports for creatives and creative industries sector via *Creative Ireland* and *Work Matters*, including further use of space in MyOpenLibrary, Tubbercurry as part of this Strategy



Strategy 4: Collections Policy: Update and development our printed and digital collections

Goals

- Increase per capita stock expenditure annually to reach national standards
- Put a books collections policy in place for the next five years that enables us to offer a network of libraries with an up to the minute book collection (printed and digital). This collection will cater for the needs of all our users and visitors ranging from reading for leisure, literacy, learning or special interest. It will have a wide collection of current publications and relevant older publications.
- Continue a programme of digitisation of archives and local studies records
- Make reference and archive material more easily accessible to users, in line with national standards

Actions

1. Target a book budget of €4 per capita by 2023
2. Research and put in place Collections Policy to address the increasingly diverse needs of our borrowers, to include purchase of new books, replacing of old books, addressing gaps in stock (e.g. juvenile books, special interest books).
3. Continue to update Local Studies Library stock
4. Identify a dedicated space for cataloguing and storage and use services of Sligo County Council archivist



Strategy 5: Written Word at the centre of our service

Goal

Sligo is home to many established and up and coming contemporary writers. Historically, we have a wealth of written word heritage through internationally renowned literature associations with our County.

- We will preserve this heritage and nurture and develop our literary talents through programmes of literature and reading.
- We will support and promote emerging writers in Sligo.
- We will further raise the literary profile of Sligo nationally and internationally.

Actions

1. Re-establish a resident writer in Sligo Libraries
2. Celebrate the work of the writer in Sligo Libraries
3. Support the further development of creative writing groups and book clubs
4. Further develop *The Word* programme to showcase new Sligo writing in partnership with Institute of Technology Sligo to include established, new and upcoming author readings and events
5. Further develop collaborations with Sligo Arts Services, Sligo Heritage Office, Institute of Technology Sligo and others, to explore, promote and preserve our literary heritage.

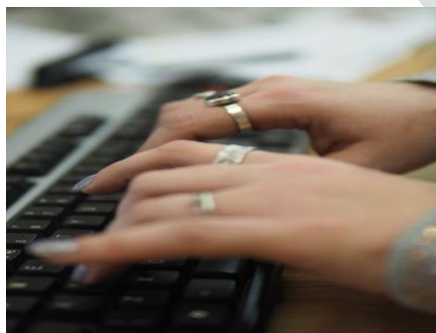
Our established programmes and events link to our five strategies as follows:

	1: Literacy & Reading	2: Learning & Information	3: Creative Libraries	4: Collections	5: Written Word
Education/training Events	x	x	X	x	x
Music Projects		x	X		
Seasonal storytelling & Activities	x	x	X		x
Exhibitions	x	x	X		x
The Word – new and established writers	x	x	X		x
Age Friendly Initiatives	x	x	X		x
Healthy Living Ireland	x	x	X	x	x
Community Clubs/workshops/ discussion groups	x	x	X	x	x
Writing Groups	x	x	X	x	x
Bookclubs	x	x	X	x	x
Knitting Group		x	X		
Library tours and inductions	x	x	X	x	x
Computer classes	x	x	X	x	
Film clubs		x	X		
Documentary Club		x	X		
Festivals	x	x	X	x	x
Public Consultation Events	x	x	X	x	x
National Recreation Week and National Play day	x	x	X		x
3D printing		x	X		
Author readings	x	x	X	x	x
Open days and promotion events	x	x	X	x	x
Creative Ireland Events	x	x	X	x	x
Decade of Commemoration Events		x	X		
Craft Groups		x	X		

8. Implementation of the Library Development Plan 2019 – 2023

In line with Libraries Ireland Strategic Plan (2018-2022) Sligo Library Services are ideally positioned to implement a transformational funding plan to better enable a library that is central to economic and cultural life, as a vibrant and essential civic and community space. Notwithstanding current financial restraints of Sligo County Council and in conjunction with the adherence to the Council's Financial Plan for the next few years, Sligo Co. Co. will endeavour to provide adequate funding on an annual basis to deliver on the new Sligo Library Development Plan as well as use every available opportunity to source additional external funding as such opportunities arise.

In recent years the Department of Rural and Community Development have provided grant assistance to Libraries to encourage the provision up to date technology and equipment necessary for self check services, ICT equipment and Work Matters support. The highly successful 3D design and printing *Fab Lab* are a legacy of this intervention. It is envisaged that the Department may continue to support Libraries nationally with similar schemes but in order to make the most of this opportunity the provision of match funding is required by the County Council.



Similarly, Sligo Library service provides on an annual basis over **1200** events through its countywide network of branches as part of its programmes and marketing strategy. These events are delivered without a dedicated budget to fund them.

The successful delivery of the Sligo Libraries Development Plan will more than double current membership figures and significantly increase our programmes of activities. Sligo

Library service will continue to identify and acquire annual operational budgets for general staff and infrastructural running costs.

The following are an outline of the projected budgets that would be required to implement the Plan over the next five years:

Projected Annual Funding Requirements:

Item	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Book Fund	€70,000	€100,000	€150,000	€200,000	€262,140 ^[1]
Activities Fund	€15,000	€22,000	€30,000	€40,000	€50,000
Marketing and Advertising	€15,000	€20,000	€25,000	€30,000	€35,000

Projected Capital Funding Budgets:

Sligo Central Library Rebuild (2,400 square metres) to include a stock fund of €1,000,000.	€ 6M - €9M approx (A proposal to build a new Public Library facility is included in a €16.2M project proposal for SLIGC to the URDF in conjunction with Sligo Institute of Technology)
Mobile Library	€ 300,000

Appendices

^[1] This figure reflects Libraries Ireland Target of minimum spend of €4 per head of population by 2022

Sligo County Council: Sligo Library Services continues to work with many sectors/departments in Sligo County Council and this is reflected in their respective strategic plans.

Local Economic and Community Plan references many collaboration opportunities including:

- development of priority cultural and recreational infrastructure in Sligo
- development of shared business development and support spaces and programmes
- Collaborate on their wellbeing policies through our Healthy Libraries and Bibliotherapy programmes,
- Scope for supportive roles from for Sligo Library Services around Local Economic and Community Plan education and training proposals to boost sustainable economic and community development. In this context, we continue collaborative delivery of the Work Matters programme in Sligo.

Regional: Collaborative Services These include:

Right to Read, Work Matters and Healthy Ireland and the location of *Europe Direct Information Centre* in Sligo.

Sligo Arts Services: A programme of partnership between Sligo Library Services and has steadily developed since our last plan using our spaces and networks for workshops, exhibitions, events and outreach services.

Culture Team. The community, arts, heritage, tourism department are all represented on the Sligo County Council

Staff training programme. Our staff facilitated to engage with regional and national library related training programmes. This also provides opportunities for exchange of information, networking and exploration of further collaborations. Staff also share their expertise with other sectors through informal training and mentoring in areas such as social media, book collections for schools, literacy and health.

Heritage Office Natural synergies between Heritage Office and the Sligo Library (cultural heritage and other heritage, archives section, local studies collection and the events that Sligo Library runs on behalf of SCC (e.g. historical lectures, Decade of Centenaries)

Reading and Literacy

Learning and Information

- HSE Bibliotherapy programme
- Healthy Ireland
- Solas
- Sligo Local Enterprise Office
- Sligo Leader
- Europe Direct Information Centre
- Local Community Development Committee (Sligo)
- Local Economic and Community Plan 2015-2021 (Sligo)
- Local Government Management Agency (LGMA)
- Citizens Information Office
- Intreo
- E-Cubers

Collaborations and Partnerships

Community and Culture



Appendix 3. Locations of Sligo Central Library, Community / Branch Libraries and Mobile Library Stops

DRAFT



- **Sligo Central Library/EDIC**, Stephen Street, Sligo. Telephone 071 9111675. Email: sligolib@sligococo.ie
- **Local Studies and Reference Library**, Stephen Street, Sligo. Telephone: 071 9111681. Email: sligolib@sligococo.ie
- **Tubbercurry Community Library/ Open Library**, Teach Laighne, Humbert Street, Tubbercurry, Co Sligo. Telephone 071 9111705. Email: tubberlibrary@sligococo.ie
- **Ballymote Community Library**, Teeling Street, Ballymote, Co Sligo. Telephone 071 9111669. Email: ballymotelibrary@sligococo.ie
- **Enniscrone Library**, Pier Road, Enniscrone, Co Sligo. Telephone 071 – 9111653. Email: enniscronebranchlibrary@sligococo.ie
- **Online services:** www.slighlibrary.ie



Sligo Libraries



Sligo Central Library

Ballymote Community Library

Tubbercurry Community Library

