

LAMBETH LIBRARIES: YES, THERE IS AN ALTERNATIVE!

Published at last is the plan that can end all the protests, end the threat of strikes, remove the threat of judicial review and - above all - preserve a popular, high-performing library service that is bringing national kudos to Lambeth.

IT IS WRITTEN BY SUSANNA BARNES, HEAD OF LIBRARIES, who in two short years (with full support of staff and residents) has made this under-funded service:

- the TOP performer nationally for increases in usage
- nationally recognised for a whole list of successful new services.

COMPARED TO THE CURRENT HIGHLY UNPOPULAR CULTURE2020 GLL LIBRARIES-INTO-GYMS PLAN:

- It makes EXACTLY THE SAME SAVINGS short-term
- In the mid-term it makes MORE SAVINGS
- It also offers MORE WAYS TO GENERATE future income.

ALSO: It can be put into action quickly, while the GLL plan is still barely worked out, and is struggling to get even basic provisions set up.

IT AVOIDS THE MANY DRAWBACKS OF THE GLL PLAN, WHICH INCLUDE:

- Massive staff redundancies (25%)
- Five out of 10 libraries reduced to a small 'lounge' with few books or PCs
- The same five libraries to have NO staff at all to help people
- Consequent serious harm to vulnerable groups including: small children, families, schoolkids and students, old people, disabled people, women, BME communities, people on low incomes, benefits claimants, and more.
- Extra pressure on council services from those deprived of help and advice.
- Heavy expenditure on unwanted gyms (£3m capital, £1m+ revenue)
- Long closures while the gyms are installed
- Elaborate mish-mash of up to five different trusts to run just 10 buildings - including handing valuable buildings to GLL at a peppercorn rent, already recognised as a financial risk to the council.
- Very, very unpopular - as shown in demonstrations by hundreds of people, and over 10,000 signatures on petitions.

IT SAVES A HUGELY USEFUL SERVICE:

- It keeps all 10 badly-needed libraries, offering a full service, fully staffed.
- It provides longer opening hours at all of them.
- It maintains Lambeth's nationally famous, ground-breaking access service for people with sight problems or dyslexia - this won't survive in the GLL plan.
- It introduces a much-needed schools library service.
- It develops a range of new, innovative specialist services including a computer design 'fab lab', extra support for unemployed people, business support, extra healthy living advice/activities - and more.
- It focuses clearly on Lambeth residents' real needs and the council's priorities, including: mental health, unemployment, poor IT skills and access, poverty, poor housing, social cohesion.

AND IT HAS THE FULL SUPPORT OF LAMBETH RESIDENTS & COMMUNITY GROUPS.

REMEMBER - ALL THIS COMES AT LESS COST THAN THE CURRENT Culture2020 PLAN

- and the financial details are thoroughly worked out.

LAMBETH COULD REMAIN - AS IT IS NOW - A NATIONAL LEADER IN LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT, A SOURCE OF PRESTIGE FOR THE COUNCIL - AND A BEACON OF CO-OPERATIVE WORKING. Will the council see sense at last? They can't fail to do so - can they?

FIND OUT MORE - AND FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN HELP MAKE THE COUNCIL SEE SENSE:

<http://defendthe10-lambeth.org.uk>

Friends of Lambeth Libraries