

Date • Dyddiad 02 April 2014

Your ref • Eich cyfeirnod

My ref • Fy nghyfeirnod BP/RJ

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Ms Christine Chapman AC/AM  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
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CF99 1NA



Dear Ms Chapman

## Re: Inquiry into Public Libraries in Wales

The Chief Executive has asked me to respond to your letter dated 26<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

Pembrokeshire County Council has undertaken equality impact assessments when considering the potential closure of libraries in our area. We are not considering any library closures at the current time. However, a review of our mobile library service has been commissioned. A copy of the equality impact assessment carried out as part of this review is enclosed.

Local representatives of vulnerable users have been consulted in relation to the review of our mobile library service. An extensive consultation exercise was undertaken in January 2014. As part of the exercise, a wide range of stakeholder groups were directly targeted for their views, e.g. Pembrokeshire People's First (adults with learning disabilities), Pembrokeshire Access Group, Carers coordinator, etc. We also included questions about the review as part of a separate review of our domiciliary care provision.

There are close links between our library and education services. For example, this year our library and school improvement service will be piloting a summer learning project targeted at children in the Communities First Cluster at Pembroke Dock. The project will deliver a range of activities that will develop creativity, confidence and an interest in reading for pleasure. There is a wealth of evidence indicating that children who read for pleasure do better in school exams and go on to live more socially mobile lives. We know that the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers grows over the summer holidays, and the work we are doing seeks to reduce this gap.



This project is referenced in the recent landmark report by Baroness Kay Andrews, on Culture and Poverty. If the pilot project is successful, we will seek to develop it further during 2015/16.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ben Pykett', with a stylized, cursive script.

Ben Pykett  
Assistant Chief Executive