

February 1, 2017

Dear Councilors,

This morning, February 1<sup>st</sup>, BANES council finally allowed for the first public consultation regarding plans to relocate the Bath Central Library to the One Stop Shop. That announcement states, “This planned move will contribute to **an annual saving of £800,000.**”

This is a figure I’ve heard many times already. It has been quoted everywhere from the Bath Chronicle, the BBC and ITV.

In Councilor Veal’s own words to the Bath Newseum on 17<sup>th</sup> January “by transforming the library service into a modern library it enables us to save **800K a year**. So over 4 years you can work the sums out for yourself. It is a significant amount of money.”

Well I did work out the sums, and I’m afraid they simply do not add up.

According to the Public Reports Pack for the 1st February 2017 Council meeting, on page 146: £800,000 is hoped to be saved but not per year, however over three years, 100K in 17/18, 0 in 18/19, and the remaining 700K in 19/20 for a total over 3 years of £800K.

So that’s a saving of a little over £260,000 per year across Bath and North East Somerset.

Agreed?

Ok, that’s not an insignificant amount especially given the budget shortfall council needs to address. So far, so good? But here’s where it gets confusing and I’d like the cabinet to please walk me through this.

ON PAGE 93, appendix II of the public reports pack, there is a request for provisional approval of £5.953 MILLION POUNDS to “re-design Library services as described in the Strategic review of the service. It aims to replicate the Keynsham model for joint OSS and library service in Bath and Midsomer Norton...”

So, relocating the library will **cost** us £5.93M. The next column in cabinet’s buget

projects borrowing and capital costs, the number there being £5.95 MILLION. Finally, cabinet lists grants and external funding of £358,000. (As a side question, I'd like to know if council has already secured these grants and funding or is this just a projection?)

To summarize: council proposes to spend £5.5 Million pounds over 5 years to relocate the single, Bath central library, in order to save the council £260,000 per year in library services across BANES.

And as the council states they are moving council offices into the existing Central library space, then you can't say, as you do in the budget, that you will save on rent as you will still need to pay O+H developers the same rent.

Why mess with the city's much-loved, purpose-built library if it's not going to save us any money - it's going to cost us money. *A lot of money.*

Why exclude the public from this conversation?

Why are you choosing to jeopardize our library service and spend public funds to a degree that suggests gross incompetence?

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dionne Pemberton