

# THE FUTURE OF THE NORTH KENSINGTON LIBRARY

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KENSINGTON  
AND CHELSEA

Following the tragic events at Grenfell Tower in June 2017 the leadership group at the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea ("the Council") announced a new resolve to engage fully with the community in North Kensington and to start to develop a new culture of trust, where the voice and views of local people are placed at the centre of all decisions. As a clear expression of that resolve the Council has agreed to make this firm commitment, on 20 October 2018, regarding the future of the North Kensington Library at 108 Ladbroke Grove, London, W11 1PZ (the "Library").

The Council has listened to the community and understands that the Library provision and the building in which it is located is much valued and cherished. It is a public resource that has supported the community since 1891. Having listened and reflected on previous plans, the Council is now committed to ensure that the Library, a recognised community asset, continues to provide the local community with high quality library services. For clarity, the Council has no plans in the short, medium or long term to close the North Kensington Library building nor to end its use as a public library.

1. To deliver on this commitment, the Council, as a whole, declares the following:

The Council guarantees that, for as long as the Library offers a valued and well-used service to the local community, the Library and the building will remain as a permanent public asset. Throughout this period, the Council undertakes to:

- (a) provide the relevant operational funding and resources required to run the library to a high standard of service, access and quality;
- (b) and to maintain the Library building as required.

This guarantee is not time-limited and will not expire on account of the passing of time nor the change of personnel. Rather, the guarantee is only subject to change after active consultation as outlined in section 4 below.

2. The decision as to whether the Library offers a "valued and well-used service" will lie with the resident user base of the Library and the local community who live in North Kensington (as defined as all wards north of Holland Park Avenue), whose opinion will be sought through unbiased consultation and surveys. Key measures that will be used to review whether the Library offers a "valued and well-used service" will include: usage levels; library users' satisfaction levels; specific surveys for the users of the library and the local community (as above); and CIPFA public library surveys and benchmarking. This will be done in collaboration with users of the library.

3. Any proposals regarding any substantial change to the building and service (apart from general management of the Library) will be co-developed and co-designed from the outset, and will place the interests of the community at the centre of any plans.

4. Any substantial change or proposal put forward, whether proposed by the Council or the community, will only be enacted after active consultation with the resident user base of the Library and the local community who live in North Kensington (as defined as all wards north of Holland Park Avenue), and if the proposal is supported by the majority of those consulted. For clarity, a proposed change, will only be agreed and implemented if over 50% of those who respond to the consultation make a positive choice for the change. Any consultation questions will be signed off by an independent party to ensure that they are neutral and non-leading in their design.

Signed,

Councillor Elizabeth Campbell  
Leader of the Council

Councillor Kim Taylor-Smith  
Deputy Leader of the Council

Councillor Catherine Faulks  
Lead Member for Skills and Enterprise

Councillor Monica Press  
Councillor for Colville Ward

Councillor Robert Atkinson  
Leader of the Labour Group

Barry Quirk  
Chief Executive Officer

Sue Harris,  
Executive Director, Environment  
and Communities

And with the support of,

The Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP  
Minister for Grenfell victims