

# Library Strategic Plan 2022 – 2030



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## Background

In 1958, one of the first public libraries in Western Australia was opened on Jull St, Armadale. The City of Armadale Library Service has since developed to be well-regarded within Western Australia. It is considered a progressive service which has evolved and adapted in response to community demand. It has been at the forefront in implementing technology and services which respond to the increased impact of the digital world on its membership.

Locating the Armadale Library inside a shopping centre in 2010 had a significant positive influence on library usage patterns. This decision generated a great deal of interest from other local governments and became a benchmark for service delivery from a multi service location, rather than the library being a separate and independent destination.

In 2012 the impending expiry of the lease for Kelmscott Library created a catalyst to review the existing Strategic Plan. It was not considered possible to determine the best option for a Kelmscott Library in isolation from other future library developments.

Council endorsed the *Library Strategic and Development Plan 2012* in February 2013 and adopted seven recommendations for the future direction of the library service.

Following the successful relocation of Kelmscott Library in January 2016 these recommendations were reviewed and updated. This review expanded on the options and budgetary implications, and considered the impact of digital resources on public library usage. Eight supplemental recommendations were included in the updated document.

Council endorsed the *Library Strategic and Development Plan Review and Update 2016* in July 2016.

In addition to the adopted Strategic and Development Plans, library services provided by the City are governed by the following legislation, standards, and guidelines:

- Library Board of Western Australia Act 1951
- Library Board (Registered Public Libraries) Regulations 1985
- The UNESCO Manifesto for the public library
- Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries 2021

In late 2017 the State Government released the *WA Public Libraries Strategy*. This document sought to drive significant, transformational change in order to deliver more efficient and flexible public library services to meet Western Australia's growing and diverse community needs. That Strategy has reached its conclusion and a new state-wide strategy is being developed at the time of this review.

An enhanced *Library Strategic Plan 2019-2026* was adopted by Council in April 2019. This document reviewed, revised, and consolidated the recommendations of the previous strategies. It also referenced updated legislation and national standards and guidelines to help determine service delivery into the next decade.

The document provided new guiding principles for the library service with a focus on the customer experience and removing barriers to library use. It also guided the redevelopment of Seville Grove Library and the planning for new libraries in Piara Waters and Hilbert.

The City's Library Strategic Plan will be reviewed progressively, with a fully updated document to be developed following the opening of a full service library in Piara Waters.



# 1. Library Services in the 21st Century – Strategic Directions

"Bad libraries build collections, good libraries build services, great libraries build communities."

This maxim by Prof. R. David Lankes is a key consideration in the development of library services. The three key tenets of public libraries in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century are People, Place, and Purpose. This Strategic Plan seeks to unite these three tenets as the overarching aim for the City's library service.

When thinking about public libraries, many people refer back to their childhood, with images of dated buildings, dusty bookshelves and staff insisting on silence. The continued relevance and need for public libraries has been debated for many years, particularly in light of the increased availability and reach of digital services.

Any library strategy needs to address this question of relevance and convince its funding body that the public library is a viable and sustainable institution which provides a dynamic, multi-purpose environment for learning, socialisation, and recreation. It is not intended as an operational blueprint, recognising that libraries evolve and adapt rapidly to meet community expectations, but serves to guide the provision of well-located, accessible, and attractive libraries which provide the services required to create a literate, informed, and connected society.

The modern public library is far removed from the outdated images in people's memories. They are no longer dry repositories of literature, but are dynamic and vibrant community facilities. They are open and welcoming to all, serving all members of the community from birth to centenarians. Their primary focus is on providing access to the tools and opportunities to develop literacy skills, and encouraging the development of community capacity and engagement through their collections and services.

At the highest level, the UNESCO Manifesto for the public library states:

*The public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups.*

*This Manifesto proclaims UNESCO's belief in the public library as a living force for education, culture and information, and as an essential agent for the fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women.*

*UNESCO therefore encourages national and local governments to support and actively engage in the development of public libraries.*

The City's original *Library Strategy Plan* from 2005 examined best practice and trends in library services at the time and recommended a 10 year strategic direction framework based on projected outcomes and growth measures for the City.

This document focused on the physical library space and collection considerations when planning for new libraries, however by this time libraries were adopting 'place' as a third, more significant factor. Although pertinent, much of the statistical data and prescriptive recommendations were no longer relevant to a contemporary library service.

Since 2012 the major consideration in public library planning has been determining the location of libraries, and agreeing that the preference for future libraries is a compromise of selecting the "right" place (location) over the physical configuration.

For public libraries, location is widely recognised as a key component to their success. A library isolated from places people already congregate will, at best, be underutilized. Numerous options for the co-location of libraries exist: with recreation or community centres; and in retail precincts. Although siting libraries with educational facilities seems a logical choice, co-location of public libraries with schools has been less successful.



The primary recommendations of the City's library strategies from 2012 onwards have embraced the concept of "place" and the importance of co-locating the City's public libraries with other facilities and services in order to maximise usage and return on investment. These recommendations remain at the core of the future direction of the City's library service and have been combined into one underpinning recommendation.

The concept of locating libraries in shopping centres originated in Singapore. The National Library Board of Singapore reported that:

An unexpected phenomenon that kick-started the image overhaul of public libraries in Singapore was the shopping mall libraries. Originally meant as a stop-gap measure to open libraries quickly.....they have since become irresistible attractions in their own right.

This trend was adopted by Tower Hamlets Council in London which discovered:

That people did really value libraries.....but they wanted libraries to fit in with their lives. Location was crucial....

At a time of significantly reduced funding for public libraries throughout the UK, a major relaunch of Tower Hamlets libraries saw £20 million invested in new libraries and learning services, located in shopping precincts. The ethos was that customers should not have to make a special journey to visit their local library.

This investment dramatically transformed library and information service performance from being the worst performing in London to one of the best, and among the most heavily visited library services in the UK. They are still regarded as a benchmark for library service development.

Evidence from other library services throughout the world is that public libraries which are attractive, well located, and proactive in providing the places, spaces, and resources that the community is seeking, will remain relevant and integral to the lives of that community.

Within Western Australia, the importance of "place" has already been demonstrated by the decision to relocate the Armadale Library into the redeveloped Armadale Central Shopping Centre. Although only a few hundred metres from the old library, a 1970s building on Orchard Avenue, ongoing usage of the new library remains considerably higher than that of the previous facility.

Following the successful relocation of Kelmscott Library to the Stargate Shopping Centre, a review of the *Library Strategic and Development Plan* was undertaken in 2016. This referenced the positive feedback and increased usage of the new library. The review recognised the work undertaken in the previous years, and identified some of the challenges facing the City in planning for future libraries.

These challenges include:

- population increases in the City;
- the growing population spread and diversity
- other commercial developments taking place in the City;
- opportunities to plan library development in conjunction with community infrastructure plans;
- the need to budget accordingly for new, refurbished, or relocated library services; and
- the impact of digital developments in libraries, and the City's Digital Strategy.

During this review and update, an officer recommendation was made that Seville Grove Library be considerably reduced in size and service levels, providing a digital-focussed service in a shop front library. This change would have been made with the opening of a library serving the communities of Piara Waters and Harrisdale with the collection and staff being moved to the new library.



In considering the review, Council amended the officer recommendation and endorsed a five library model in the *Library Strategic and Development Plan Review and Update 2016* in July 2016.

In 2016 WALGA released the *Vision 2025: Framework for Strategic Action* which recognized the key role that public library services play in developing stronger communities. This document formed the basis for the Background Paper *Western Australian Public Libraries: Our Future* which culminated in the creation of a *Public Library Strategy for Western Australia*, by the State Government.

The core outcomes of this Strategy included:

- Updated legislation and relevant governance and funding models
- Integrated planning
- Best value service delivery
- Strategic positioning demonstrating the intrinsic value of libraries.

A new Strategy for WA public libraries is expected to be released in mid-2022. This document will focus on three pillars:

1. Libraries strengthening communities  
Focusing on the work libraries undertake in supporting literacy, lifelong learning, and community wellbeing and resilience.
2. Digitally inclusive libraries  
Libraries build digital skills and confidence while providing free and universal access to computers and the internet.
3. Public Libraries as essential community assets  
Determining the impact, value and return on investment of public library services.

The ongoing development of the City's public library services will be enhanced and strengthened following the implementation of the changes envisaged in the state-wide strategy. However, adequate State funding for service provision remains critical if the concept of a partnership is to be maintained at a state-wide level. This funding has not been addressed in State strategies, nor has there been any discussion of additional funding from the State to implement strategic outcomes.

In 2012, ALIA (the Australian Library and Information Association) released an evidence-based guide for the development of public libraries in Australia. It established national principles, based on standards and guidelines developed for New South Wales and Queensland. This document, *Beyond a Quality Service: Strengthening the Social Fabric; Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries* helped inform service planning, assessment, and continuous improvement, and was envisaged as a practical tool for comparison among library services.

In consultation with public libraries across Australia these standards and guidelines were reviewed and updated in 2016. The revised document, *Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries* recommended both Basic and Enhanced standards for library service provision and funding. Adoption of these revised guidelines was also proposed as part of the Public Library Strategy for Western Australia, albeit as an aspirational goal initially.

The City has adopted some of these aspirational goals, implementing incremental funding increases for library materials to meet per capita standards for library stock provision. Recognising that the standards could not be realistically accommodated in the City's existing libraries, funding has been allocated to ensure adequate resourcing of the City's libraries as new facilities are planned and implemented.

The unique partnership between State and Local Government in Western Australia differs from the funding arrangements in place in other states and makes it slightly more complicated to compare funding and service levels. Funding for many electronic resources and items in languages other than English is provided on a state-wide basis and is not calculated on a per capita basis to each local government.



These standards were in place for four years before being comprehensively reviewed and replaced by the *Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries* in 2021.

These guidelines and standards present a cohesive, modern benchmarking framework for Australian public libraries which addresses the essential components of a public library. The document pinpoints key areas of service development and focuses not only on what public libraries should be doing but why this is important.

This framework for Australian Public Libraries examines the Strategic Community Focus for providing responsive library services, and the outcomes for both individuals and the community as a whole. The framework is included as Appendix One.

Appendix Three provides examples of the current standards and demonstrates how the City's libraries are benchmarked against them using current funding models. In addition to increased local funding, lobbying of State Government will be required to ensure that equitable partnership obligations are upheld.

The modern public library is a vibrant community hub, a hive of activity delivering a diverse range of services which bring the community together. Although the intrinsic value of libraries is understood by many, it is difficult to measure library services in terms of economic return and social outcomes. Extensive studies undertaken in Australia and internationally concur that the return on investment for every dollar spent on public library services is approximately \$4, with more recent studies estimating the return around \$7 owing to the increased contribution libraries make to literacy, education, and health outcomes, particularly in lower socio-economic communities.

Although public libraries throughout WA perform the same core services – lending of items and promoting literacy – community awareness of the wide range of other services provided by their local library is often low. For many people, their concept of a library remains grounded in the facilities they would have used when growing up. Somewhat surprisingly this is true not only of those who do not use libraries but also of customers who are regular library users.

Public Libraries Western Australia (PLWA) is the recognised peak body representing public libraries in Western Australia and plays a crucial role advocating for public libraries and their associated services. It works with state government and WALGA on behalf of its membership both locally and nationally in conjunction with the Australian Library & Information Association, the Australian Public Libraries Alliance, and the peak bodies in each state and territory.

PLWA has played a significant role in previous campaigns advocating for funding security to maintain a sustainable future for public libraries in Western Australia. PLWA's platform is agreed by its local government membership, represented by library managers, and as an incorporated body it presents a collective voice on issues affecting public libraries.

Priority 5.3 of the previous Public Library Strategy for Western Australia was to develop a State-wide marketing campaign which promotes the diverse service offerings and value of public libraries in Western Australia. PLWA has been tasked with leading the development of this campaign advocating for, and promoting, the diverse service offerings and value of public libraries in Western Australia. An integrated marketing and advocacy strategy will enable libraries to promote a single, united message to decision makers, funding bodies, and the public.

Public libraries throughout WA have often collaborated on projects, and the sharing of information between colleagues in the industry is invaluable. These collaborations have seen economies of scale associated with shared library management training, library resource sharing, consortium purchasing agreements, grant funding applications, and other initiatives which benefit library users and local governments.

This strategic plan recommends that the City of Armadale library service continues to collaborate with other local governments across the state, and particularly in the South East Metro WALGA Zone, recognising the communities of interest in this area, and the mutual benefits of a collective approach to providing increased library services to those communities.



In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly established the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". The aim is for these to be achieved by the year 2030. Although there are no specified roles for libraries, it is widely recognised that public libraries, and their role in providing access to information through their resources and services, play a significant part in achieving these Goals.

The *Australian Digital Inclusion Index* shows that nearly 10% of Australians do not have access to internet at home and this number increases to approximately 30% of all Indigenous households. This divide has been more evident in recent years as the move to working from home has seen many people disadvantaged.

The *Digital Nation Australia 2021* report states that nearly 90% of Australian jobs now require some level of digital skills. The research further reports that approximately 60% of Australians are not confident they have the skills to adapt to the speed of technological change. Groups most at risk in this area are First Nations people, recent migrants and refugees, and low income households.

Libraries remain key to helping bridge this digital divide, with the provision of free access to computers, internet and Wi-Fi, supported by digital literacy programs and assistance in accessing essential services online, such as access to Centrelink, job applications, internet banking etc.

Finally, COVID-19 has had a particular impact on libraries, both positive and negative. There has been a significant shift to reliance on online access to services and communication, but also increased need for human contact, socialisation and access to in person services.

Libraries across Australia have been able to introduce new ways of providing services to enable safe operation for the benefit of the community and meet the need for resources and connection, even with the doors closed.

COVID-19 lockdowns saw increased take-up of digital resources and services. However, many libraries which have been able to reopen fully have reported customers reverting to printed materials and in person visits for much of their borrowing. The outlook for print and online resources is still that print would remain the dominant medium for library collections until at least the middle of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The strategic considerations which follow are based on the endorsed recommendations from the Library Strategic Plan 2019-2026 and have been updated to reflect changes in external strategies and standards, and position the library service to be best placed to meet the challenges of a post-COVID world.

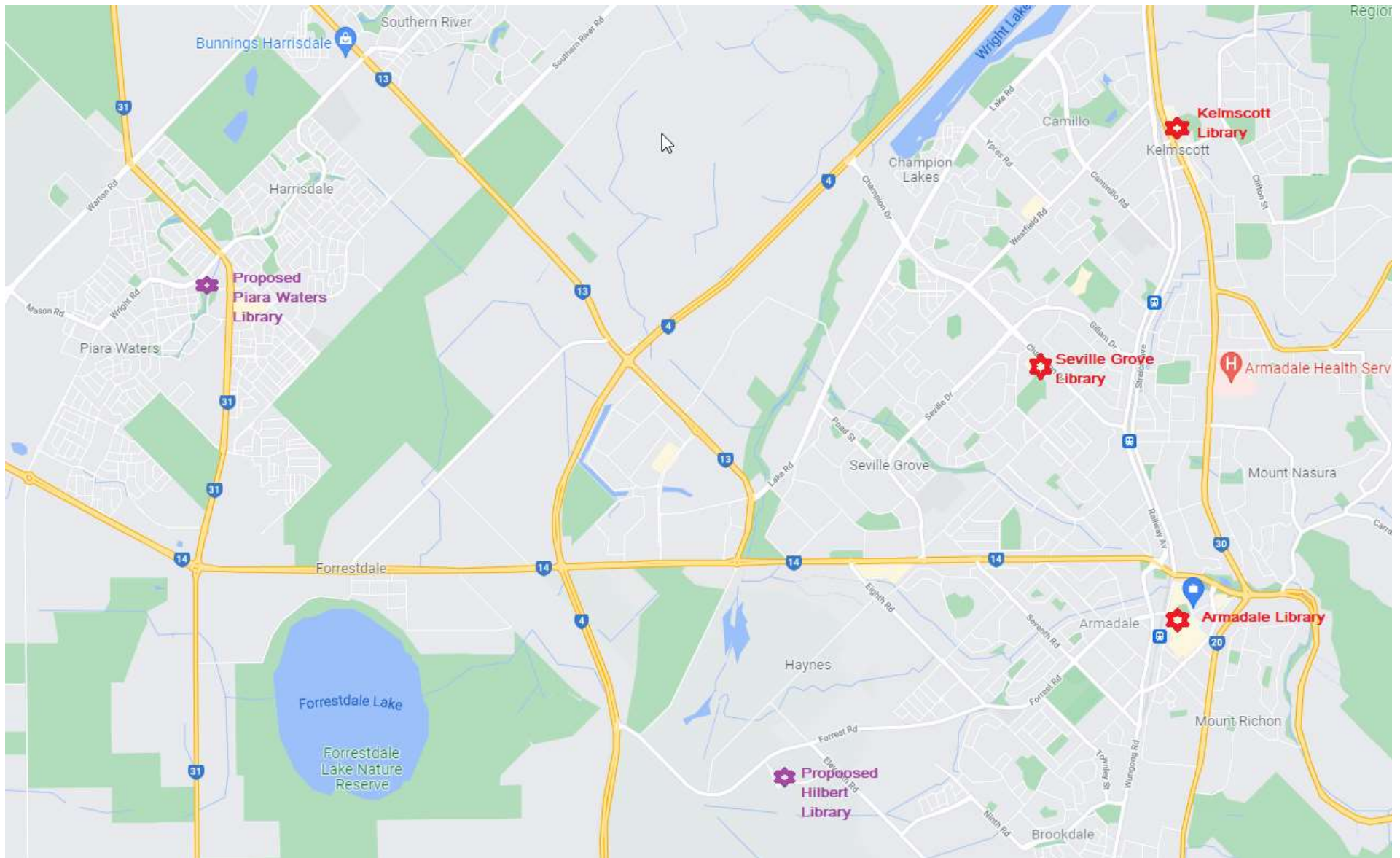


## Recommendations

1	<b>Strategic directions for public library services in the City of Armadale</b>
1.1	That place (i.e. location) is the major consideration in future development of the City's public libraries. Where possible libraries will be co-located with other facilities and services in order to attract higher visitor numbers.
1.2	Recognise that the development and implementation of state-wide Public Library Strategies for Western Australia may impact on future operational requirements of the library service.
1.3	Acknowledge the continually changing nature of library services and ensure that the City's libraries are positioned to be flexible in response to future community needs and demographic changes, as well as providing access to a convenient range of City services.
1.4	Adopt the <i>Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries 2021</i> as a benchmark for public library service provision within the City of Armadale.
1.5	Progress funding for library services and resources towards the benchmarks set in the <i>Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries 2021</i> by 2025/26.
1.6	Ensure the City's library service remains a leader in the digital sphere, providing access and support for new and emerging technologies and service requirements.
1.7	Ensure that library staff are trained to be able to meet the challenges and requirements of an increasingly digital-reliant society.
1.8	Recognise the role public libraries play in providing ongoing socialisation and community building in the recovery period of COVID-19.
1.9	Recognise the contribution of public libraries to improved outcomes across the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
1.10	Support the City's library service working in partnership with other libraries in the South East Metro WALGA Zone.



## 2. Existing Library Facilities and Services



The City's three existing public libraries are a heavily used and valued service in the community. Nearly 1,000 people per day visit one of the three libraries to read, to study, attend an event, use a computer, borrow items, or simply use the space.

Despite significant disruptions owing to COVID-19 and lockdowns, during the two year period July 2019 to June 2021 the library service achieved the following:

**510,000** visits to at least one of the City's libraries.

The three libraries were open a total of **13,528** hours.

The library service is also open 24/7 for online access to electronic resources. Customers can use their membership over the internet and borrow from anywhere in the world.

**295,000** interactions with the library service online, either through the website, the online catalogue, or through the range of electronic resources available.

**4,900** new memberships were created.

**580,000** items were borrowed from the libraries.

**117,300** electronic loans were recorded. This includes ebooks, electronic magazines, downloadable audiobooks, and streaming video.

**44,000** reservations for items were placed.

**3,300** titles were requested from other libraries across WA as part of the State-wide resource-sharing agreement.

More than **100,000** sessions of public computer and Wi-Fi use.

Over **1,140** regular and special library sessions were held, with more than **22,200** attendees.

Regular sessions include: Storytime, Baby Rhymetime, school holiday programs, English conversation classes, reading & writing groups, computer training sessions, 3D printing workshops, games mornings and the Men's Social Group.

Special sessions include: author talks, workshops, presentations, demonstrations, specialist programs, and community information sessions.

**230** early literacy visits to schools (including home school groups) kindergartens and childcare centres. These talks reached over **10,000** children and parents.



## 2.1 Armadale Library

The opportunity to locate a library in the Armadale Central Shopping Centre was eagerly taken up by the City. Approximately 1,100sqm of area was allocated and The Library opened in January 2010. It was the first full-service public library in Australia to be located inside a shopping centre. The library also houses the Birtwistle Local Studies Library which is key to preserving and celebrating the history of the district.

Opportunities to increase both the space available and range of services provided have been actively embraced in recent years. This culminated in an additional 120sqm of space being allocated to the library for the construction of a “Creative Space”. This area provides a range of areas for library users to explore new technologies and collaborate with other users.

Located in the heart of a shopping centre, with well-designed and attractive spaces, the Library continues to demonstrate that it has become the third place in the lives of many of its community. Many users had never been in a public library before they came across this one, simply because of its location. Others who are regular library users are overwhelmingly positive about the library and its location.

Armadale Library remains one of the most heavily used libraries in WA, with over 162,000 visitors in 2020/21.



## 2.2 Kelmscott Library

The limitations of the former leased building on Albany Highway had hampered service delivery for many years. Significant upgrades to the building would have been required to resolve the many structural deficiencies and poor layout which impacted on service delivery.

Recognising that a smaller, well-designed library with a flexible layout in the right location would better meet the needs of the catchment population, the City was able to take advantage of a vacancy at the Stargate Shopping Centre. A new library facility of 500sqm was constructed and opened in January 2016.

The interior design of the library is based on the “discovery layout” model which combines a sense of arrival with a mix of intimate spaces and open areas. This concept is designed to minimise barriers, showcase the facilities, and encourage visitors to explore the collections. Bold use of colours, furnishings, and graphics have been used to build a vibrant experience with minimal visual clutter.

The impact of the ongoing works to Albany Highway and COVID-19 lockdowns during 2020 and 2021 has seen a decrease in usage which will hopefully reverse when Albany Highway is reopened. More than 51,000 library visits were made in 2020/21.



## 2.3 Seville Grove Library

The oldest of the City's Libraries in terms of the building, Seville Grove Library is a Council-owned facility located adjacent to the Champion Centre and Seville Grove Shopping Centre.

The library building's proximity to both Armadale and Kelmscott Libraries, combined with analysis of low usage patterns, has previously prompted discussion on the feasibility of relocating the library to a new Harrisdale library. This elicited a negative response from the community and the 2016 Strategic Plan Update recommended maintaining the library in its current location.

Lotterywest provided funding of \$4.1 million to undertake a complete refurbishment of the Champion Centre and Seville Grove Library was refurbished at the same time, enhancing the library's dated appearance. The facility was better able to meet the changing needs of library users in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

More accessible use is now made of the library space, drawing on the Kelmscott Library "discovery layout" experience. Although the updated Seville Grove library provides a more modern facility with flexible and attractive spaces, usage remains lower than the City's other libraries. Over 35,000 visits were made to the library in 2020/21.

Further investigation is recommended to determine future outcomes for Seville Grove Library in providing a range of core library services which meet community needs, combined with options for health and allied service providers to operate in the building.



## Recommendations

<b>2</b>	<b>Maintain the City's existing library facilities</b>
2.1	Support the retention of the City's central library in the Armadale Town Centre, with options for its future location to be identified and presented to Council prior to the expiry of the current lease term in 2024.
2.2	Support Kelmscott Library remaining in the Kelmscott Town Centre, preferably within a shopping centre, with long-term agreements to be negotiated prior to the expiry of the current lease term in 2025.
2.3	Support the investigation of future opportunities for core library service provision at the Seville Grove Library and explore options for allied community uses of the facility.



### 3. Future Library Facilities

The valuable role of public libraries in today's world is demonstrated by the significant investment in new library buildings both nationally and internationally. Many local governments in Australia and overseas have focussed on landmark buildings, designed as architectural destinations, as evidenced recently in the City of Belmont, and Marrickville in Sydney's inner west.

Predictions for libraries to remain as physical places for the foreseeable future are universal. However, an increasingly important part of a public library's service offering is not just the fabric of the building. The successful library combines vibrant, contemporary place or space where people come together to meet, to connect with each other, to create, and to celebrate their community. Feedback shows that the library is seen to be a safe place where all are welcome, access is free, and there are no judgments.

Objective 1.3.1 of the City's Corporate Business Plan 2020-2025 states "Ensure the equitable provision of Community Facilities throughout the City". The challenge for the City of Armadale has been determining the locations which would best service the library needs of its growing population, as well as maintaining the economic viability of library services.

The suburbs of Forrestdale, Harrisdale and Piara Waters have some of the fastest population growth in the country. The expectation of residents of these localities, as well as those of new developments in Hilbert, Wungong, and Haynes is of a public library service closer to their homes than those currently provided. The City's existing library service does not have the capacity to meet the needs of these growing populations within the existing facilities.

The Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries 2021 state that libraries need to be inclusive, offering services to all members of the community. Library services should be structured to maximise accessibility and convenience to potential users both when using the physical library spaces and accessing the library's digital services.

The number of public libraries provided by a local authority is at the discretion of each local government and is not prescribed in the national standards. Decisions on the number and location of facilities will be influenced by the total area and population spread, and the size and service offering of each library. Within the Perth metropolitan area, smaller local governments such as Bassendean and Kwinana have one library each. Larger authorities provide between two library facilities (South Perth) and six (Stirling), each serving an average population of 31,000 residents.

The City of Armadale currently serves an average resident population of approximately 33,000 at each of its three libraries. Additional use of the libraries, particularly Armadale, is made by non-residents, including local workers and visitors.

	<b>2021</b> <b>3 Libraries</b>	<b>2023</b> <b>3 Libraries /</b> <b>4 Libraries</b>	<b>2028</b> <b>3 Libraries /</b> <b>4 Libraries /</b> <b>5 Libraries</b>	<b>2036</b> <b>3 Libraries /</b> <b>4 Libraries /</b> <b>5 Libraries</b>	<b>2041</b> <b>3 Libraries /</b> <b>4 Libraries /</b> <b>5 Libraries</b>
<b>Total Forecast Resident Population</b>	97,705	103,800	119,300	141,200	151,900
<b>Average resident population per library</b>	32,570	34,600 / 25,950	39,800 / 29,800 / 23,900	47,000 / 35,300 / 28,200	50,600 / 38,000 / 30,400



The number of libraries also impacts on the division of the State Government expenditure for stock purchases. This funding is allocated to local governments on a per capita basis and the library service determines how it is allocated among its libraries.

This per capita funding is also dependent on the State Government's total allocation to the Western Australian public library service. This figure is highly variable. For example, in 2015/16 the City of Armadale received \$191,000 for stock purchases, whereas, in spite of its population increase, the allocation for 2021/22 was under \$160,000.

The State Government does not provide any additional funding for resources when an additional library is built. The expectation is that local governments will stock new libraries from within existing collections or provide additional funding at a local level to purchase new items.



### 3.1 Piara Waters Library

The City's projected population growth supports the proposal to establish a library in the Harrisdale locality. Its catchment area would include the populations of Harrisdale and Piara Waters as well as residents of neighbouring suburbs. The current population is approximately 27,000, and is predicted to increase to 37,000 by 2036.

Of the residents of Harrisdale and Piara Waters, approximately 1,400 were members of a City of Armadale library. A further 4,300 were members at a City of Gosnells library, predominantly Amherst Village library. Although there is some overlap between these numbers, it is evident that proximity to a library determines usage from residents of a locality.

In October 2020, Council adopted a location near the Piara Waters Pavilion as the preferred site for a library to service the communities of Piara Waters and Harrisdale. The Library has been identified as a Key Strategic Project in the City's *Corporate Business Plan 2020-25*. Budgetary allocation for a library of approximately 1,000sqm has been provided to meet the needs of the forecast population.

The library will offer a contemporary design with flexible spaces throughout to enhance library programs and services and provide spaces for individual and group study, and community groups.

Residents of new localities within a local government area are often unaware of their district's history. It is therefore envisaged that a library in Piara Waters should incorporate a connection with the City's Museums and Local Studies Library. Options include flexible exhibition space suitable for housing some of the Museum's temporary exhibitions and, enhanced opportunities for local schools to engage with the Museum Education Officer.



Piara Waters Library (Concept image)



## 3.2 Hilbert Library

Population predictions for the Hilbert, Haynes and Forrestdale area show a significant growth trend to 30,000 residents by 2036, with approximately half of those residents being in the suburb of Hilbert. Resident population is expected to climb to 36,300 beyond that period.

The 2016 Strategy Update recommended that a commitment would need to be made in the Long Term Financial Plan for a new Library to service the suburbs of Hilbert, Haynes and Wungong for the 2026/27 financial year. A library in this area could also attract residents from western parts of the suburbs of Brookdale and Wungong.

The proposed Stockland development of the Wungong Urban Town Activity Centre located off Forrest Road in Hilbert has an allocated 5,000sqm community site for the City of Armadale. Determining exactly where a public library should be located in this area was the subject of a feasibility study in 2019.

Council endorsed the proposal for an integrated multi-level Community Centre and Library to be located on a site adjacent to Shipwreck Park in the Hilbert town centre.

The community use space would provide greater opportunities for partnerships with other community service providers and potentially attract a broader range of clients. Concept designs have been prepared for the multi-level integrated facility, but no detailed design has been prepared for the library component at this stage.

Funding for the project is provided through developer contributions as part of the *Hilbert (North) District Community Centre and Library* project. It is identified as a Key Project in the City's *Corporate Business Plan 2020-2025*, with construction of the facility scheduled for completion in 2024/25 and the library operating by 2028.



Hilbert (North) District Community Centre and Library (Concept image)



## Recommendations

<b>3</b>	<b>Develop new library facilities to meet community growth</b>
3.1	Support the development of a Library to serve the communities of Piara Waters and Harrisdale, to be operative in 2023/24.
3.2	Support the ongoing consideration of a library serving the suburbs of Hilbert, Haynes and Forrestdale, to be operative by 2028.



## Conclusion

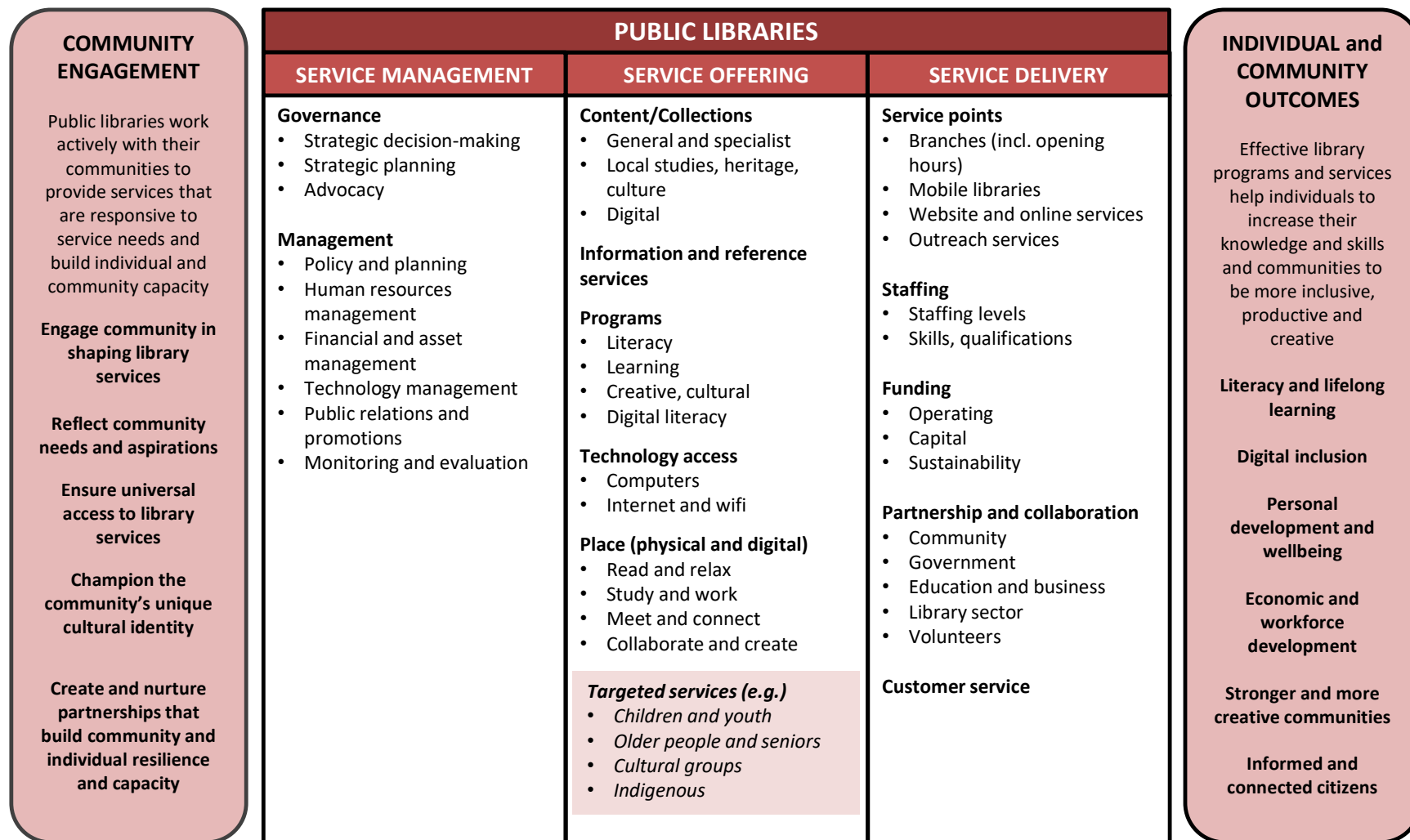
For over 60 years, the City of Armadale has demonstrated its commitment to the support of public libraries. Libraries contribute significantly to the recreation, education, social, and information related needs of the community.

Implementing the recommendations of this Strategic Plan will give the City the flexibility to adapt to future community needs, service priorities, and demographic changes, locating libraries where they are required in response to the City's continued growth.

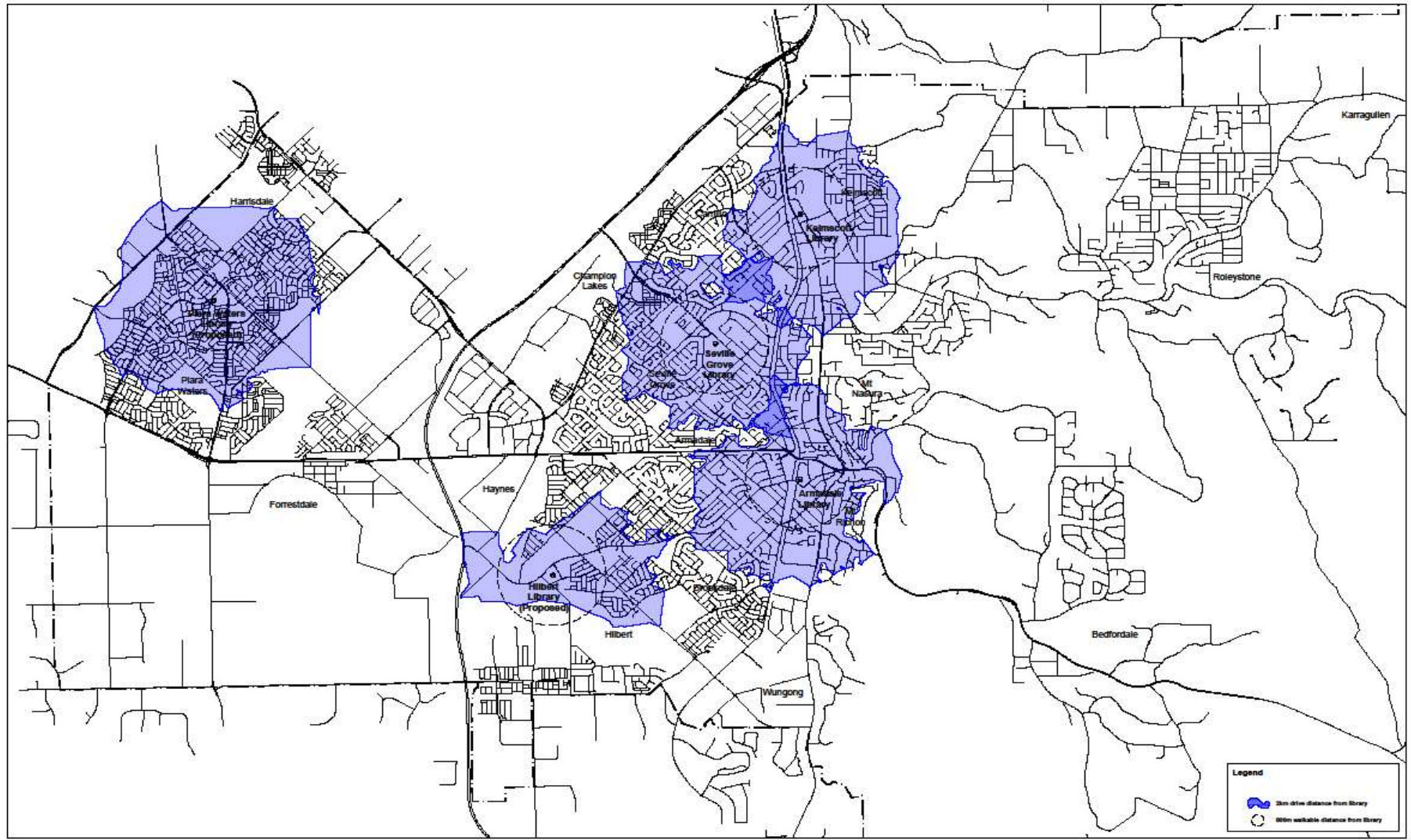
The Strategic Plan also allows the City to be responsive to opportunities and able to change to ensure a sustainable library service which provides a positive return on investment and a measurable social and economic benefit to all members of the community.



## Appendix One – A Framework for Australian Public Libraries



## Appendix Two – Map of City of Armadale showing Library locations



Library locations with driveability and walkability overlaid

DATE 14 March 2022 - REVISION 2201  
tab:file:///C:/Users/Community\_Admin/Desktop/Library/Strat\_Plan/Map/Map.docx

500 0 500 1000m SCALE 1 : 60000



## Appendix Three – Benchmarking to the National Standards

### **2021/22 snapshot**

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Basic Standard</b>	<b>CoA Current</b>
Materials expenditure per capita <sup>1 2</sup>	\$6.06	\$7.56
Total materials expenditure <sup>1</sup>	\$592,092	\$738,400
Municipal funds – library materials only <sup>1</sup>		\$514,000
State Government allocation <sup>3</sup>		\$224,400
Items per capita <sup>2 4</sup>	1.4	0.92
Total items <sup>4</sup>	136,800	90,600 physical 8,300 e-resources

Notes:

1. Includes \$200,000 additional resources funding for the establishment of Piara Waters Library.
2. Est. Population 2021: 97,705 (forecast.id).
3. State Library contribution of \$156,900 for physical stock and nominal share of e-resource and funding for materials in Languages Other Than English (LOTE) of \$67,500.
4. Physical and locally owned electronic items only – does not include state-wide electronic resources.

### **2025/26 estimates – proposed standards of resources and funding**

<b>Standard</b>	
Materials expenditure per capita <sup>1</sup>	\$6.06
Total materials expenditure	\$686,828
Municipal funds <sup>3</sup>	\$426,528
State Government allocation <sup>4</sup>	\$260,300
Items per capita <sup>5</sup>	1.2
Total items <sup>6 7</sup>	136,000

Notes:

1. Based on 2020 standards – CPI increases to be assumed
2. Est. Population: 113,305 (forecast.id).
3. Depending on the scheduled opening date of Hilbert Library, additional funding may be applied in 2025/26 to ensure adequate resource levels for the new library.
4. Based on 2021 per capita funding. Includes estimated State Library contribution of \$182,000 for physical stock and estimated nominal e-resource and LOTE funding of approx. \$78,300.
5. Items per capita decreases as population rises owing to economies of scale.
6. The library service determines the type and number of items needed to meet community demand with varying average costs per item, possibly resulting in fewer items being purchased.
7. Physical and locally owned electronic items only – does not include state-wide electronic resources.



## Appendix Four – Guiding Principles

The City of Armadale Library Service will:

- Provide life-long opportunities for members of the community to develop as literate and informed individuals.
- Promote the benefits of literacy and assist with reading development for all ages.
- Recognise the need for increased digital and information literacy skills and assist in closing the digital equity divide.
- Ensure users have access to resources that support employment, health, education, and personal development, as well as leisure.
- Continue to minimise barriers to library use, working in a Customer First service model.
- Ensure library staff are skilled, encouraged, and supported to be able to meet the challenges of an increasingly digital-reliant society.
- Ensure the City's libraries provide opening hours which meet the changing needs of the community.
- Review the *Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries 2021* to assess their impact on the quality of library buildings, services, and resources.
- Liaise and partner with under-represented user groups, including Indigenous, migrant, and LGBTQIA+ communities, to ensure library services meet the needs of existing and emerging users.
- Ensure the City's libraries and services are accessible and inclusive, reflecting the communities they serve.
- Develop partnerships internally and externally to the City to promote local libraries as vibrant centres of community, culture, and learning for all residents of the City.
- Work with the City's ICT team to ensure that the libraries' IT infrastructure is adequate for customer needs, and underpins the development and implementation of innovative and responsive services.
- Improve and promote access to collections and services, including local history and museum collections, through the Library Management System.
- Maintain flexible guidelines for collection development including digital resources, (ebooks and other online resources), which are responsive to community needs.
- Assist in the collection and celebration of the cultural memory of local people and communities.
- Work with Public Libraries WA in implementing a State-wide advocacy and marketing plan for public library services.



## Appendix Five – Consultation Documents

### City of Armadale Documents

- Library Strategic and Development Plan 2012
- Library Strategic and Development Plan Review and Update 2016
- Library Strategic Plan 2019-2026
- Demographic Insights 2018
- Digital Strategy 2017-2022

### WA State Government and WALGA Documents

- Literacy Matters: State Library of Western Australia Literacy Strategy 2017
- Vision 2025: Framework for Strategic Action – WALGA 2016
- Western Australian Public Libraries: Our Future Background Paper – WA Dept of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, 2017
- Public Library Strategy for Western Australia – WA Dept of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, 2017
- WA Public Libraries Strategy Consultation Report – State Library of WA 2018

### National and International Documents

- UNESCO Manifesto for the public library – UNESCO 1994
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals – UN General Assembly 2015
- Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries – ALIA 2021
- Australian Digital Inclusion Index – Australian Research Council 2021
- Digital Nation Australia 2021 – Good Things Foundation 2021
- People Places – a guide of the planning public library buildings – State Library NSW 2020
- The intrinsic value of libraries as public spaces – University of Technology Sydney/Civica 2016
- Physical-digital, communicating the new normal – University of Technology Sydney/Civica 2018
- Indigenous Spaces in Library Places – State Library of NSW, 2016
- Libraries Change Lives – Public Libraries Victoria 2018
- Library Return on Investment – IFLA 2019
- Libraries Work! The socioeconomic value of libraries – State Library of Victoria 2018
- The Library Dividend – Library Board of Queensland 2012



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