



## **Update from the Trustees of Denby Dale Community Library**

**June 2024**

You may be aware that, in March 2024, Kirklees Council announced a feasibility study to consider moving 8 Kirklees libraries to a “community managed model”. The 8 selected libraries included Denby Dale, Skelmanthorpe and Shepley.

Under this proposed model, the library would be entirely staffed by volunteers, although Kirklees Library Services would continue to provide books and IT.

The Denby Dale Community Library already has a dedicated pool of volunteers who manage the building and support the current Kirklees Library Services part-time member of staff. The building is owned by Denby Dale Community Project, a charitable incorporated organisation, with volunteer trustees from the community.

Trustees and library volunteers met with Kirklees Library Services as part of the feasibility study. We explained that the current model works very well, with strong community support. We provide an accessible and welcoming building with lots of groups and activities. Kirklees Library Services get all of the benefits for just the cost of the part-time member of staff, as all of the running costs of the building are met by the charity.

We were clear that moving to a “community managed” model would put all of these benefits at risk. Although our volunteers are committed and dedicated, they are typically people in retirement who have family and other commitments beyond the library. It is not reasonable to expect volunteers to take on the responsibility of managing a full library service.

We know that our views are shared by the other libraries proposed for the “community managed” model and, as such, this model is not feasible.

The next stage is for Kirklees Library Services to present the results of the feasibility study to Kirklees Cabinet, together with options for the future. We don't know when this meeting will take place, but it is very unlikely to be before September.

If there are going to be any changes from the current model, including staffing and/or opening hours, a formal 3 month community consultation will take place before a final decision. This means it is very unlikely there will be any changes to the current library hours or ways of working until April 2025 at the earliest.

If you would like to find out more about our library, its future and how you might be able to help, please drop by and ask to speak to one of the trustees, or e:mail us on [chair@ddcp.org](mailto:chair@ddcp.org).

**Janet Johnson**

Chair of Trustees