

## **Cllr Glover's letter and queries re Canada Water Library**

“Furthermore the committee has noted the potential for community councils and council assembly meetings to be held in the building and requested officers ensure that this can be realised, particularly given the recent Democracy Commission report recommendation that other venues be explored for assembly meetings.

However the committee is concerned that the cuts will impact on the running costs of library. I am therefore writing to ask if partnerships with organisations such as Learn Direct & Sure Start have been explored to reduce costs and to request the outline plan to cover operational costs, given the impending cuts.”

### **Response**

It had always been intended for the exhibition and performance space to be made available for important public and community meetings, including community council and council assembly. The space will seat up to 150 people so is ideal for this kind of event.

The revenue budget for Canada Water Library will be confirmed as part of the Council's budget setting process in February this year. This includes reducing the previously proposed net budget identified by your committee of £1,293,961 (comprising the £143,961 net costs for the current Albion Street library plus the additional £1.15m budget agreed by the previous administration). We are recommending in the 2011/12 budget that this is reduced by £147,000 to £1,146,961 through a reduction in operational hours to equal that of Peckham library, which currently has both the longest hours and is our most expensive at the moment, with total annual costs of £865,557.

Challenging income generation targets have been set and officers will be maximizing income from the building through the hire of space, fees and charges generated by library users, sales of publications and other items and through a number of charged ticketed events within the building. At the same time we are conscious of the need for affordable and in some cases free access to some of the programme of activity.

Partnerships with cultural and learning providers have been under discussion for some time and it is anticipated that a range of activity will be provided through third parties at no cost to the Council, allowing value added services to be offered and the core service maintained. The library service already works with Sure Start and has three staff funded through that programme, although the future of this arrangement is currently unclear. Other partnerships continue to be explored.