



**Craig Whittaker MP**

**CALDER VALLEY**

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## **The Future of Libraries**

Thank you for contacting me about libraries.

I believe that libraries provide a vital public service for the community. Libraries are run by local authorities and it is for local authorities to decide how to fund their library services.

Many local authorities have managed to avoid library closures despite reductions in their budgets. You can be reassured that the 151 library authorities in England already have a statutory duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for their local area under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964.

Calderdale Council has recently launched a review into the provision of community libraries and I will be very interested in its conclusions. I hope the consultation will be as wide-ranging as possible. I hope too that a wide range of options as to the use of library resources will be examined in order to make the most effective use of library resources to the benefit all our communities.

You may also be interested to know that the Government's Leadership of Libraries Taskforce, which brings together the Local Government Association, the Society of Chief Librarians and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, published '*Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-2021*' in December 2016.

This set out a bold and dynamic direction of travel for the next five years, and described how library services in England can transform people, communities and society as a whole. It is supported by an action plan, which includes a £4 million library fund to help disadvantaged communities and promote new projects including literacy, reading and digital access schemes.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP