



Andrew Rosindell M.P.

Member of Parliament for Romford

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Councillor Paul Middleton

Cabinet Member for Customer Services

Havering Town Hall

Main Road

ROMFORD

Essex RM1 3BB

Thursday 16th May 2024

Dear Cllr. Middleton

Collier Row and Gidea Park Libraries

As Member of Parliament for Romford, I am writing to register my strong objection to the proposed closure of both Gidea Park and Collier Row libraries, as proposed within Havering Council's recently published consultation entitled 'Havering Library Strategy 2024-2029'.

Gidea Park and Collier Row are major communities within Romford, both with their own distinct character and community spirit that have been well served over many years by their local libraries. To close them would have a very detrimental effect on local people, both young and old. **This must not happen!**

Residents of Gidea Park and Collier Row deserve to be able to keep their own community libraries open for public use, especially when you consider there is a growing number of children and a high population of older people, both of which are avid users of library facilities in Havering.

I object to the on-going loss of community facilities, such as Post Offices, Police Stations and now Libraries. This adds to the erosion of our local communities and the loss of social interaction between local people. I believe that any library closure in Romford risks a severe adverse impact on the good people that I proudly represent.

Havering Council must think again and look at innovative ways of bringing together a multitude of public bodies and organisations such as Community Centres, Neighbourhood Police, Post Offices, Council Services, the Voluntary Sector and Libraries into one hub or "community hall" that is accessible for all local people to use and enjoy. Creating such a facility would be bring people together and help to prevent isolation.

This would also be a cost-effective use of resources, by bringing public services together onto one site, whilst releasing land for other purposes. It would re-establish strong local identities to historic villages and neighbourhoods like Collier Row and Gidea Park, providing a renewed sense of belonging and local pride.

I urge Havering Council to stop any plans they might have to close either Gidea Park or Collier Row Libraries and instead, formulate a new strategy to maintain and enhance public services, whilst at the same time, giving something back to the council taxpayers of Havering who feel they are currently not getting the level of service that they are paying for. Please re-consider your proposals and go back to the drawing board. Thank you.

Yours ever,

Copy for information to:
Cllr. Ray Morgon
Leader, Havering Council