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Title of meeting:	Culture, Leisure and Sport Decision Meeting
Subject:	Sale of rare and antiquarian library books not relevant to Portsmouth collections
Date of meeting:	9 October 2015
Report by:	Director of Culture and City Development
Wards affected:	All

1. Requested by the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport

2. Purpose

- 2.1 To update the Cabinet Member for Culture Leisure and Sport on the sale of rare and antiquarian library books.

3. Information Requested

- 3.1 The Portsmouth Libraries Stock Disposal Policy approved at the Culture, Leisure and Sport decision meeting held on 13th October 2013 identified areas of stock held in the library store that fell outside the policy. Options for disposal were considered. The following methods have been identified and agreed in the policy for the disposal of surplus library stock:
- Temporary book sales in held in branch libraries.
 - A permanent second-hand bookshop in the Central Library
 - Specialist items offered for sale on Amazon Marketplace
- 3.2 The disposal of this stock has been approved by the Director of Procurement and Contracts in accordance with PCC's Financial Regulations.
- 3.3 These outlets enable the Library and Archive Service to gain the highest return on the sale of the majority of surplus library stock. However, a proportion of the book stock was identified as of potentially higher value than was likely to be realised though these options. This material was housed in the store at the Central Library and did not form part of any permanent collections such as the local and naval history collections. The subject matter of many of the titles was botanical in nature, some with attractive coloured plates. Others were of architectural, genealogical, historical, literary and religious interests. They were not suitable for display on the library shelves because of the age, and in most cases condition,

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being of more specialist and antiquarian interest. A list of the items offered for sale can be found at appendix A.

3.3 This material raised several issues for the Library and Archive Service:

- The items put pressure on the insurance of the collections
- The concerns over the day to day security of the material
- The items were unrelated to any collections of importance to Portsmouth and occupied valuable space in the store.
- The usual methods of selling would not reach the widest potential market and thus not realise the full value of the items
- The requirement to raise income

3.4 The Library and Archive service approached a number of national auction houses to enable us to offer the material to a wider range of potential buyers than could be reached locally. Bonhams auction house was chosen as the vendor as they offered favourable terms and conditions and they had previously worked with the Library and Archive service to value the material. Bonhams hold regular sales of printed books and have an international client base. A list of the material was provided to Bonhams who advised on the likely sums to be raised at auction. Their main book sales are held at their London auction house and the most valuable items were packed and delivered to this venue. Other material of less significance and in poor condition was delivered to Bonhams Oxford site for a later sale. The items were prepared for auction with full colour catalogues produced that were available both in printed form and on the web.

3.5 The most valuable items were first offered for sale at Bonhams auction of fine books, atlases, manuscripts and photographs held in Knightsbridge on 12th November 2014. A total of sixteen lots were reported as sold on the day although a number of sales did not finally go through. Items remaining unsold were offered for sale at subsequent auctions.

3.6 The books sent to the Oxford venue were auctioned on the 26th November 2014 at Bonhams' sale of books, maps and photographs. Additional specialist and separate items have subsequently been sold at Bonham auctions as identified below.

3.7 Summary of auction dates:

12 th November 2014	Fine books, atlases, manuscripts and photographs, London
26 th November 2014	Books, maps and photographs, Oxford
18 th March 2015	Fine books, atlases, manuscripts and photographs, London
24 th March 2015	Books, maps and manuscripts, Oxford
21 st April 2015	Islamic and Indian art, London
24 th June 2015	Fine books, atlases, manuscripts and

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	photographs, London
29 th July 2015	Books, manuscripts and literary portraits

- 3.8 Results of the auctions to date and the sums realised can be found at appendix B.
- 3.9 A small number of books that are the property of Portsmouth City are still held by Bonham's and will be taken to auction as appropriate. Any outstanding items will be reviewed before the end of the financial year 2015/16 to determine if Bonham's can offer a suitable forum for sale, if there are more appropriate mechanisms for sale and disposal or if they should be returned to the Library and Archive store.
- 3.10 The receipts received from the sale of stock amounting to £70,149.84 have been provisionally allocated towards building improvements for the Central Library. The sum will be used to attract additional funding. In the first instance a bid to Arts Council England's capital programme will be sought, in order to develop the Central Library 1st floor administration area as a flexible space for cultural activity. This will be used to support creative, health and wellbeing and literary agendas.
- 3.11 Any progression of these works will be subject to a formal report and full financial appraisal of the proposal being brought to the Cabinet member for Culture, Leisure and Sport for decision.

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 Signed by:
Stephen Baily
Director of Culture and City Development

- Appendices:**
- Appendix A: Sale of rare and antiquarian library books, list of items sent for sale.
 - Appendix B: Sale of rare and antiquarian library books, income received from the sales to date.

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location