

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has been included in the relevant Forward Plan

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES TO CABINET

COMMUNITY LIBRARIES REFURBISHMENT PROGRAMME

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval to proceed with the Community Libraries Refurbishment programme and associated procurements, community engagement, communications and operational management to progress the works.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 **Approve the procurement of a provider (through the Warwickshire Framework Agreement) to deliver the design and the supply of the furnishings for the Community Libraries Refurbishment programme.**
- 2.2 **Approve that individual library refurbishment proposals are submitted for consideration by the Capital Oversight Board in line with existing governance arrangements.**
- 2.3 **Receive further reports on individual library schemes as the designs are created.**

3. INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 Following the investment in the new town centre Library @ The Lightbox, the Council recognised the need and benefits of improving facilities to ensure that community libraries are fit for purpose to deliver a modern public library service, in support of the Library Strategy 2019 - 2022 and to provide a consistent offer across the borough.
- 3.2 The Library Strategy sets out the council's intention to re-energise the Library Service by creating vibrant, flexible library spaces, enabling them to become community and digital hubs, responsive to customer needs, at the heart of our communities.
- 3.3 With books and reading remaining at the heart of the library offer, the refurbishment of community libraries will enable them to be fit for purpose in delivering a fresh, modern facility for the 2020's for use by individuals, community groups and partner organisations. A flexible space will facilitate the creation of a diverse range of

activities, support and access to services, including health, well-being, digital, education and culture.

- 3.4 Cabinet approved a £1m capital budget for the refurbishment of community libraries in June 2018 (Cab. 13.6.2018/8) as part of the ongoing investment for the Libraries Review.

4. PROPOSAL AND JUSTIFICATION

- 4.1 It is proposed to carry out a procurement process to appoint a library furnishing company to work with the Council to design and provide library furnishings for the whole community libraries refurbishment programme over the next 3 – 5 years. An initial piece of soft market testing has been completed to inform the Library Service on the best options for procurement and evaluation of submissions.
- 4.2 Each library refurbishment project will commence with a piece of community engagement to inform the design of that library space and determine local requirements. The engagement process will involve users and non-users, Elected Members, community organisations and partners. By appointing a specialist library supplier to design the layout of library spaces at the outset of the programme, the successful supplier will be involved in the engagement activity at each library and able to discuss options and incorporate the engagement outcomes into the designs.
- 4.3 The engagement activity will be undertaken with support from the Area Council teams, Communications and the Community Engagement Team, and combined where appropriate with the Community Buildings Review.
- 4.4 Strategic Procurement and Commissioning Services have advised the Library Service on the procurement options available and the intention is to undertake a mini competition under the Warwickshire Framework Agreement.
- 4.5 The Warwickshire Framework Agreement has been developed by Warwickshire County Council for use by any local authority in England and Wales. The framework offers a choice of three leading suppliers who have been selected to offer value for money, quality and choice covering all aspects of innovative library design, supply and installation of goods, signage and graphics. The services offered specifically recognise the needs of library customers as well as the increased demand for flexible spaces that deliver a range of services and attract new audiences.
- 4.6 This option has been selected as it provides best value and the flexibility to use the Framework for the initial library project and call-off for the remaining branches with the same provider for a fee of £2,500. Using an established framework delivers a financial saving in relation to the procurement process. This Framework has been established for the sole purpose of refurbishment programmes of this nature and the appointed providers have already been assessed to ensure they meet all the relevant minimum criteria.
- 4.7 As part of the procurement process the framework suppliers will be requested to outline options for embedding social value into the contract and throughout the programme opportunities to involve local companies will be considered.

- 4.8 Following approval to proceed, the Library Service will liaise with colleagues working on the Community Buildings Review and Principal Towns projects to agree the first library for refurbishment. The order of subsequent refurbishments will be determined in the same way, managing the order to ensure access to the public library service by customers is reasonable across the borough throughout the programme of works.
- 4.9 The Library Service will also work with the Council's Property Services to identify any changes or improvements to the physical fabric of the buildings and to liaise with partners where libraries are in shared buildings.
- 4.10 The Library Service will also work with Customer Information and Digital Services to ensure early awareness of and planning for IT requirements.

5. CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

- 5.1 A different framework agreement could be used for the procurement of a library furnishing company but this would require a separate tender process for each library, adding time and cost to the programme. There is also a risk of different companies being successful for different libraries which could affect the consistent approach and outcomes across the borough.
- 5.2 A full tender process could be conducted to appoint one provider to deliver the refurbishment programme without using existing framework agreements but this would involve considerably more work and cost for the Council due to the overall value and complexity of the programme.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE/SERVICE USERS

- 6.1 The programme has positive benefits for members of the public as valued community facilities will be refurbished to ensure they are fit for purpose in the future and can be used flexibly to deliver a diverse range of activities and events for the local area.
- 6.2 The scale of work will vary between different libraries but will involve a period of closure for most to enable building and/or refurbishment work to be completed. This will affect customers and groups in those communities, but library members can use any library in the borough to borrow items or use public access PCs or access online library resources. The Service will liaise with any library groups affected on alternative options for meeting and also ensure as far as practical that libraries in neighbouring Wards are not refurbished and therefore closed simultaneously.
- 6.3 Disabled or older residents unable to travel to a different library during any closure period will be offered a temporary service from the Home Library Service.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The representative of the S151 officer has been consulted in drafting this report

- 7.2 Funding (£1M) has been set aside from reserves for the Community Library Refurbishment programme. Approval is now sought to commence the programme and to select a library furnishing company to work with the council to design and provide the furnishings for the various community libraries over a 3 to 5 year period.
- 7.3 The process for selecting the furnishing company would be undertaken using the Warwickshire Framework Agreement (at a cost of £2,500), with call off made under this framework for the refurbishment of the individual community libraries. The cost of using the framework will be contained within the Library service budget.
- 7.4 On appointment of the company, the schedule of cost and the timescales for refurbishment would be assessed to ensure it is within the £1M approved funding. Individual library plans would be presented to the Capital Board and Cabinet for information and approval.
- 7.5 Monitoring of spend and progress on implementation will be reported via the Council's capital budget reporting process.

8. EMPLOYEE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no employee implications other than some staff will be re-located to other libraries during any closure periods. All library staff are currently required to work at any location across the borough.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no legal implications.

10. CUSTOMER AND DIGITAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The refurbishment work will require support from IT in relation to connectivity, Wi-Fi, the procurement of digital equipment and IT project management.

11. COMMUNICATIONS IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The Communications team will be involved in each library refurbishment including advertising engagement activity, media requests, marketing and promotion of the Service and facilities and celebrating each area's incredible new space. A model communications plan will be developed to be used and adapted for each library, linking the branding from the Lightbox through to our other centres.

12. CONSULTATIONS

12.1 Human Resources and Business Support

Sue Sleight, HR Business Partner

Business Improvement and Communications

Helen Derbyshire, Equality and Inclusion Manager

Katie Rogers, Head of Communications and Marketing

Finance, Assets & Information:

Joshua Amahwe, Strategic Finance Manager

Jenny Lockwood, Category Manager

Rachel Tyas, Group Leader – Operational Estates

Employment and Skills:

Tom Smith, Head of Employment and Skills

Others:

Sarah Norman, Chief Executive

Matt Gladstone, Executive Director - Place

Rachel Dickinson, Executive Director - People

Wendy Lowder, Executive Director, Communities

Andrew Frosdick, Executive Director – Core Services

Phil Hollingsworth, Service Director – Stronger, Safer, Healthier Communities

Dave Robinson, Service Director – Customer Information & Digital Services

Graham Terry, Programme Lead, Provider Services

13. PROMOTING EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

13.1 The Equalities Team and Forums will be involved in each project, particularly in relation to the community engagement and design for each library. Advice will be sought for the completion of EIAs for each library.

14. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

14.1 The following risks associated with the project have been identified:

Risk	Mitigation
Capital budget insufficient to refurbish all community libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Procurement to secure most advantageous contract with partner • Re-using existing good quality furnishings from Central Library and community libraries • Establish Project Management Board to challenge and monitor expenditure throughout programme
Negative reaction from existing customers to changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve existing customers, groups and non-users in engagement activity on design from the outset
Conflict with other developments e.g. Community Buildings Review, Principal Towns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with other projects to inform decisions.
Inability to procure a suitable library furnishing company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial soft market testing indicates interest amongst suppliers and the potential to meet the specification.
Reduced access to public library service or customer service appointments during refurbishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library members can use any library in the borough. • Customers unable to use other libraries will be offered the Home Library Service. • Other services and partners to be kept informed of arrangements

Risk	Mitigation
Increased complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customers to be kept informed of progress of works, closure periods and alternative arrangements

23. LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Finance
Appendix 1: Equalities Impact Assessment

24. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

If you would like to inspect background papers for this report, please email governance@barnsley.gov.uk so that appropriate arrangements can be made

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